

The Black History Intercollegiate Consortium Presents



Mission Possible:

Protecting Freedom, Justice, and Democracy in
the Spirit of Nonviolence

**35th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Commemorative Celebration**

January 21, 2025 | 6:30 p.m.

Medical University of South Carolina
Drug Discovery Auditorium

About the Black History Intercollegiate Consortium

The Black History Intercollegiate Consortium (BHIC) is comprised of Trident Technical College (TTC), Charleston Southern University (CSU), the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), The College of Charleston (CofC) and The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina.

BHIC's purpose is to provide a forum to enhance racial harmony between the five member institutions and the communities they serve. BHIC also strives to create opportunities for minorities and their allies to celebrate the achievements of African Americans throughout the year.

BHIC was created 35 years ago by Dr. Earl B. Higgins (MUSC Director of Minority Affairs), Bob Gillis (CofC's second affirmative action officer), and Lee Martin (The Citadel Director of Human Resources) as a way to enhance racial harmony between the Peninsula's three major colleges. Dr. James B. Edwards – former president of MUSC – believed in the organization's cause so much that he provided seed money for the group to get started. TTC and CSU joined two years later, and BHIC held its first program in 1990.

BHIC Executive Committee

Dante Pelzer, PhD, President

Associate Director, Student Diversity
Medical University of South Carolina

Sonya Cromwell, Vice President

Student Life Director
Trident Technical College

Colonel Robert Pickering, Treasurer

Chief Inclusive Excellence Officer
The Citadel

Courtney A. Howard, PhD

Chief Diversity Officer & Vice President
for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
College of Charleston

Justin Brown

Associate Vice President, Student Affairs
Charleston Southern University

Kimberly Gailliard

Assistant Director, Multicultural Student
Services
The Citadel

Emeritae Members

Angie Anderson, Past President

Retired, Medical University of South Carolina

Vertelle Middleton

Retired, Trident Technical College

Lucille Skaggs

Retired, Medical University of South Carolina

Lottie Otto

Retired, Trident Technical College



Program Outline

Presiding.....*Dr. Dante Pelzer, BHIC President*
Invocation.....*Natassia Allen, MUSC Student*
Host Institution Welcome.....*Dr. Lisa Saladin, Provost, MUSC*
Opening Selection.....*The Citadel Gospel Choir*
Greeting & Purpose.....*Sonya Cromwell, BHIC Vice President*

MLK Student Reflections

Cadet Christian Scott, *The Citadel*
Davis McNeill, *Charleston Southern University*
Tyler Gadson, *College of Charleston*
Donovan Gadsden, *Trident Technical College*
Jessica R. Baxter, *Medical University of South Carolina*

Choir Selection.....*CSU One Accord Gospel Choir*

MLK Humanitarian Award Presentations

The Citadel

Honoree: Mr. Norman Seabrooks
Introduced by Cadet Jamille Hagan

Charleston Southern University

Honoree: Dr. Chelsea Rogers
Introduced by Kariel Burg

College of Charleston

Honoree: Dr. Shannon C. Eaves
Introduced by Dr. Ashley Dennis & Dr. Antron Mahoney

Trident Technical College

Honoree: Mr. James Lewis
Introduced by Nathaniel Brown

Medical University of South Carolina

Honoree: Dr. Colleen Halliday
Introduced by Dr. Sudie Back & Dr. Carla Danielson

Choir Selection.....*CofC Gospel Choir*
Presentation of BHIC Scholarship.....*Col. Robert Pickering, BHIC Treasurer*
Closing Remarks.....*Dr. Michael de Arellano, Chief Equity Officer, MUSC*
Closing Prayer.....*Natassia Allen, MUSC Student*
Closing Selection.....*"Black National Anthem"*

Program Outline (cont.)

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 list'ning 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.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

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MLK Humanitarian Award Honorees

Dr. Chelsea Rogers is an Assistant Professor at Charleston Southern University. Dr. Rogers focuses her research on Children's Literature and African American Studies. In the course of her service in the classroom, she works to bring out the varied perspectives provided by texts that represent individuals from varied and diverse backgrounds. In the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr., Dr. Rogers upholds the importance of teaching diverse materials that give broad insight into the lived experiences of the world around her students. She

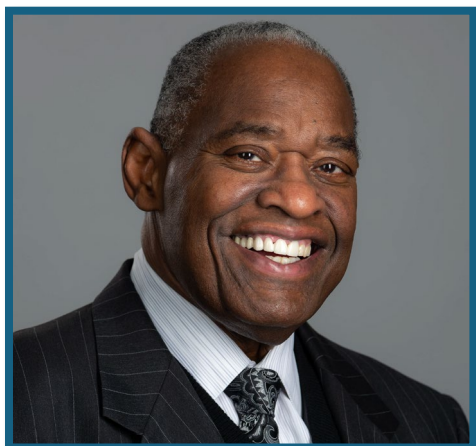


is a firm believer that both in and out of the classroom varied perspectives can bring people together as they understand the many things that bind rather than separate them. She hopes that this effort towards understanding can improve the lives of her students and the people who they encounter.



Dr. Shannon C. Eaves is an Associate Professor of African American History at the College of Charleston. She specializes in slavery and gender in the antebellum American South. Eaves is the author of *Sexual Violence and American Slavery: The Making of a Rape Culture in the Antebellum South* and has held postdoctoral research fellowships from Rutgers University and the American Association of University Women.

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Mr. Norman Seabrooks was the first African American to play football for the Bulldogs. Amid the challenges of the times, Mr. Seabrooks distinguished himself on the gridiron. A three-year starter on the football team, he earned first-team All-Southern Conference recognition in 1972, and served as team co-captain. A Dean's List history major who obtained the rank of cadet

first lieutenant, Seabrooks graduated in 1973 and went on to a successful career in the health insurance industry with Aetna Inc. Norm Seabrooks retired in 2020 as Pacific Northwest President after a 47-year career with Aetna. In 2024, was he elected as a Commissioner for the Evergreen Healthcare System in Kirkland, Washington. In addition to his public service, he also shares his experiences with colleges and business organizations on the importance of leadership, ethics and diversity.

Mr. James Benjamin Lewis Jr. is a dedicated professional and community advocate from Charleston, South Carolina, with a BA in Business Administration from Morehouse College. His diverse career spans banking, financial markets, entertainment, martial arts, security, and real estate. Currently, as the Palmer Campus Generalist at Trident Technical College, he excels in advising and student registration while also championing



humanitarian efforts like the Grocery Vault, which helps over 50 families weekly through the college's food pantry. Mr. Lewis actively participates in outreach programs to recruit students and forge community partnerships, demonstrating his passion for education and community engagement. His forward-thinking leadership and compassionate advocacy continue to make a significant impact.

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Dr. Colleen Halliday is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences in the Division of Global and Community Health at the Medical University of South Carolina. She also serves as the Co-Director of Research Training for the Charleston Consortium Psychology Internship Training Program as well as a Co-Director of Diversity in the Addiction Research Training (DART) Program. Her program of research is focused on 1) the effects of direct and vicarious racial/ethnic discrimination on youth mental health and behavior

outcomes and the mechanisms these effects, and 2) schools as sources of racial/ethnic disparities in youth mental health and behavior outcomes as well as contexts for interventions to reduce these disparities. Dr. Halliday has developed a strong program of extramurally funded research, with five active projects principal investigator or multiple principal investigator.

BHIC MLK Scholarship Recipient

Avery Ofoje is from Aiken, SC, where she grew up in a blended Nigerian-American family. She found her “why” in medicine when her childhood best friend died from a rare brain cancer. Growing up Black in the South, she learned the ways that marginalization shapes our lives and carried that into her undergraduate education at Boston University. There, she found passion in justice and equity work, particularly in healthcare. She graduated in 2020 then worked as a medical assistant in Boston during the height of the pandemic. She enrolled at MUSC in 2021 and has spent her time here advocating a culture of inclusivity, social accountability, and equity. She hopes to match into a combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency and champion culturally inclusive care within a dysfunctional healthcare system.



THANK YOU

BHIC thanks all member institutions for encouraging the participation of student representatives from each school. BHIC would also like to thank the musicians, choir directors, and other program participants and guests for their engagement. Also, a special thank you to the MUSC Office of Equity and the Office of Student Engagement for supporting this year's program.

Student Ushers

Dimple Patel

College of Dental Medicine, MUSC

Sydney Fogle

College of Medicine, MUSC

Adrianna McCray

College of Pharmacy, MUSC

Carla Wilson

College of Pharmacy, MUSC