

HORNET ALUMNI MESSENGER

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Harris-Stowe president Albert Walker retires; university executive vice president Constance Gully named interim president



Mrs. Constance Gully
HSSU Interim President

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Harris-Stowe State University president Dr. Albert Walker retired after two years leading the institution, the university's Board of Regents announced. The university board named Constance Gully, the university's longtime executive vice president for business and financial affairs, as interim president. A search for a new president will be launched promptly, and the Regents anticipate that a new leader will be selected prior to the beginning of the 2014 fall semester or earlier.

Dr. Walker was appointed Harris-Stowe president in August 2011, succeeding Dr. Henry Givens, who had served as president for 32 years. Dr. Walker informed the Regents of his decision to retire in August in a letter in which he said, "I wish to thank you, the Board of Regents, faculty, staff and students for allowing me the opportunity to serve the university and the citizens of Missouri. I have enjoyed working at the university and the opportunity to make a positive difference in the education of our students."

"We are very grateful for Dr. Walker's leadership and service at Harris-Stowe," said Thelma V. Cook, chairwoman of the Board of Regents. "Harris-Stowe is a valuable educational resource, and we are proud that the university continues to grow in size, scope and service to students and the St. Louis region. An outstanding educational opportunity for our scholars has always been and will continue to be Harris-Stowe's focus."

Interim President Constance Gully has been a key senior officer at Harris-Stowe for nearly 15 years, serving first as comptroller and since 2001 as vice president for business and financial affairs. More recently, she has served as an executive vice president. She has been deeply involved in university operations during a period of significant growth of the

university and its campus footprint, including leading the campus expansion committee that oversaw the planning and construction of the university's most recently built facilities. She came to Harris-Stowe after practicing public accounting for 10 years, specializing in auditing and management consulting for government and not-for-profit clients. Mrs. Gully assumed duties as interim president in mid August.

"Our goal is to make sure that Harris-Stowe is the right choice for every student we serve," said Interim President Gully. "I look forward to working with students, faculty, staff and the overall St. Louis community to continue Harris-Stowe's proud tradition of excellence in education. We will continue to foster and embrace our community partnerships."

"Constance Gully has been a vital force for the growth and development of Harris-Stowe as a full service university for more than a decade, and she is widely respected on campus as a sensible, capable leader," said Chairwoman Cook. "We know she is the collaborative leader that will continue the university's progress during this transition time. We are confident that during the search process we will attract an outstanding president to bring vision, growth and excellence to Harris-Stowe for the benefit of the St. Louis region."

In addition to her campus roles, Mrs. Gully is an active leader in the St. Louis community, serving on Metro's Board of Commissioners which oversees the region's transit agency, chairing the Dr. Martin Luther King State Celebration Committee, as well as serving on the board of directors of the St. Louis Zoo Association and the United Way Women's Leadership Cabinet for Education. Interim President Gully is married to Andre and has a son, Nicholas.

Dr. Art McCoy Appointed to Harris-Stowe Board of Regents



Missouri Governor Jay Nixon has appointed Art J. McCoy II, Ph.D. to the Harris-Stowe State University Board of Regents. Dr. McCoy, who is an alumnus of HSSU, will join the seven-person board that governs Harris-Stowe, to be effective immediately, with a term ending July 28, 2018.

Dr. McCoy currently serves as the superintendent and chief executive officer of the Ferguson-Florissant School District, where he oversees some 2,000 employees, 13,000 students and 24 schools. A school reformer and leader, he has been noted as the first African-American and the youngest to serve in each of his professional positions, which includes starting as the youngest certified teacher in Missouri at age 19 and being named as superintendent of Ferguson-Florissant at age 33. Additionally, he is the president and founder of Severing the Achievement Gap in the Education of Students, an organization that hosts professional development and leadership summits for students. Prior to his role as superintendent, Dr. McCoy held positions as the assistant superintendent of Secondary Education and

Curriculum for Ferguson-Florissant; adjunct professor at the University of Missouri – St. Louis and executive director of Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation for the Rockwood School District. Dr. McCoy received a B.S. in secondary education from HSSU and earned an M.Ed. and Ph.D. from the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

Among his many honors and awards, he has received the Iota Phi Lambda Apple for the Teacher award; been recognized as the St. Louis Business Journal's 40 under 40; Urban League Young Professionals award and been named a Harris-Stowe State University Distinguished Alumnus, to name a few. Dr. McCoy was honored with a *St. Louis American* Foundation Salute to Excellence in Education Stellar Performance in Education award on September 13.

He serves as an executive board member of the Boy Scouts of America; a board member of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, the Missouri Health Initiative, the Magic House St. Louis Children's Museum; and an advisory board member of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, among many other community-based organizations.

Harris-Stowe Commemorates 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington During 2013 Welcome Week Activities

As citizens across the country converged on August 28, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington – where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his legendary "I Have a Dream" speech – Harris-Stowe State University along with Missouri State Representative Michael Butler and other area legislators and community leaders welcomed back students for the fall semester by celebrating this historic event in the Emerson Performance Center.

Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech was a defining moment of the American Civil Rights Movement. His speech, delivered from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom to more than 250,000 civil rights supporters, called for an end to racism in the United States.

"We are looking forward to hosting this event on our

campus, and exposing our new freshmen class and returning students to community leaders who, on a daily basis, work to preserve Dr. King's legacy," said HSSU



Missouri State Representative Michael Butler (left) greets an attendee at the 50th Anniversary celebration.

Interim President Constance Gully, who also chairs the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. State Celebration Commission of Missouri. "Dr. King's words were historic that day in Washington, and we're hoping to emphasize for our students what an important event that was in America."

Rev. Earl Nance, Jr., pastor of Greater Mt. Carmel Baptist Church and member of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. State Celebration Commission of Missouri, served as the keynote speaker. Admission was free and open to the public and music was provided by the HSSU Don and Heide Wolff Jazz Institute.

Message from the Associate Vice President of University Relations



Courtney Z. McCall
Associate Vice President of
University Relations

Greetings Alumni,

Fall is upon us, and a very wonderful homecoming celebration is behind us! This year, our theme, "Turn Up; Going From Good to Great," foreshadowed all of the amazing things on the horizon for Harris-Stowe State University. Homecoming 2013 was memorable. There were many fresh additions that enhanced the festivities and will hopefully become annual traditions, such as the kick off being held outside near the Administration Building and the Carnival and Family Fun Festival that was part of the President's Tailgate Party. Also new this year was the Gold Extravaganza, a revitalized version of the Gold Gala that was held on campus in Bosley Hall. It allowed alumni in attendance to get a closer look at the new HSSU and to simply come home for homecoming! Many thanks to all of the alumni that came out to support the culminating event!

We at HSSU are excited about our new leadership and interim president, Constance G. Gully. She is a passionate advocate for the university and its students and is working tirelessly to ensure that HSSU is the right choice for every student! In her former role at Harris-Stowe, she served as the executive vice president of business and financial affairs. With this new transition, LaShanda R. Boone, who formerly served as the executive director of enrollment management, was promoted to vice president of student affairs and enrollment management. James Fogt is now the vice president of information technology and strategic planning. What was formerly the Office of Communications, Marketing, Alumni Affairs and Development, is now the Office of University Relations. Our office still functions the same and encompasses all of the aforementioned areas; it's just less of a mouthful to say!

I am happy to announce that the second phase of the Buy-A-Brick program is underway, and new bricks will be placed in about six weeks. I encourage you all to think about purchasing a brick and leaving behind a permanent gift at your university. In addition to this being a scholarship fundraising effort for the HSSU Alumni Association, we would like to see the project expand significantly. We know that with your help, we can make this happen! Please see the application that is included in this newsletter.

We, at HSSU, are all about putting our students first and making sure that their college experience is supreme! We welcome any input and ideas from you, our graduates, as you are Harris-Stowe's best marketers. Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for your alma mater. If you are not a paid Alumni Association member, please think about becoming one. Also, please see the donation envelope that is included as well. Our students need you! Your university needs you!

For HSSU,

Courtney Z. McCall
Associate Vice President of University Relations

Buy-A-Brick Campaign—Second Phase Underway

The second phase of the Buy-A-Brick Campaign is underway. All proceeds from the Buy-A-Brick project benefit the University's campus expansion fund. For a gift of \$250, \$500 or \$1000, those who donate to the Buy-A-Brick Campaign can have their name and year(s) of attendance or graduation date inscribed on a brick.

You do not have to be an alumni to buy a brick. You don't even have to buy the brick for yourself. This is an excellent way to honor a friend or loved one — parent, child, favorite teacher or anyone to whom you would like to give a permanent place in history. Groups can purchase a brick as well. Don't miss this chance to ensure that you, or someone you care about, will have a lasting memorial on the new Harris-Stowe State University campus. For more information or a Buy-A-Brick application contact the Office of University Relations at (314) 340-3390 or visit the Buy-A-Brick link on the HSSU Alumni Association webpage at hssu.edu.



Harris-Stowe Celebrates Homecoming 2013

Harris-Stowe State University invited alumni, students, faculty and staff to join us as we celebrated our 2013 Homecoming with this year's theme, "Turn Up! Going From Good to Great! HSSU Homecoming 2013," September 29-October 5, 2013.

This year's highlights included the Kick-off Block Party on September 30, which took place outside on Laclede Avenue, under the Bank of America Entryway Arch. The "So St. Louis" Comedy Show, featured the talents of Javon Bibbs, Terrell Tate and DeAndre Whitner on October 2, in the Henry Givens Jr. Administration Building Main Auditorium at 7 p.m. And, this year, the university was especially proud to introduce a new activity during its Homecoming week. The Family Fun Festival and Carnival, complete with festive foods,


rides and games for the entire family, held October 4. Showcased this year were the Honeycombs and Hornettes and all of the university's athletic teams. Alumni and current students battled for class recognition and faculty and staff were excited to also show their support.

On Saturday, October 5, Homecoming concluded with the HSSU Alumni Association Evening Jazz Reception at 6 p.m. in the Bosley Dining Hall and featured songstress Uvee Hays and Point of View, a student jazz ensemble from Riverview Gardens School District. The evening comprised of great jazz and food was a wonderful opportunity to mingle and catch up with former classmates.





HSSU Alums Honored at the St. Louis American Salute to Excellence in Education on September 13, 2013



Harris-Stowe State University
 congratulates alumnus
Dr. Lynn Beckwith,
 2013 Lifetime Achiever in Education

and alumnus
Dr. Art McCoy,
 2013 Stellar Performer in Education.

Congratulations to our very own
Deborah Thomas,
 lead infant teacher at the HSSU William L. Clay Sr.
 Early Childhood Development/Parenting Education Center,
 2013 PNG Early Childhood Education Award.

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HSSU, staying true to its enduring tradition of teacher education and producing only the best!

Class Notes: Pelagie Green Wren dies; first black dancer at the Muny

Written by Laurie Skrivan of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*



Pelagie Green Wren made St. Louis history 51 years ago when she became the first African-American performer in the Muny dance chorus.

Her debut in 1962 was marred by death threats. St. Louis was still heavily segregated.

Charles Wren, a St. Louis police officer, was assigned to watch over the 19-year-old dancer. They married seven years later. He later became a high-ranking officer in the

Police Department, one of the first generation of black officers to do so.

Ms. Green went on to become an iconic member of the St. Louis dance community. She founded a dance studio that bore her name and that regularly held recitals at Kiel Opera House.

A family member found Ms. Green dead in her bed at her apartment in the Central West End about 6:30 p.m. Thursday (Sept. 19, 2013). She was 71.

An autopsy was being performed, said her sister-in-law, Wanda Darby of St. Louis. She last saw Ms. Wren on Sunday, four days before she found her body.

Ms. Wren had been in declining health and increasingly reclusive for about three years, Darby said.

As a child, Ms. Wren attended dance schools. She loved seeing shows at the Muny, she recalled in an interview with the *Post-Dispatch* last year.

"I knew I always wanted to be part of the shows," she said. And she was, after her successful audition for the dance ensemble.

Backstage, race was never a big deal, she said. "Everybody was too busy trying to learn the new numbers for that kind of nonsense!"

After Ms. Wren joined the chorus, other African-American performers followed her.

Ms. Wren was named for her great-grandmother, Pelagie

Rutgers, who married a son of Jacques Clamorgan, an adventurer and fur trader who built a house on Laclede's Landing and lived there until he sold it to Pierre Chouteau in 1788, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported in 2001.

He was an entrepreneur and explorer who laid claim to thousands of acres throughout Missouri and Kansas. Historians differ on Claymorgan's parentage but agree that he had some African-American blood. Researchers say that his father might have been Welsh, Portuguese or Spanish and his mother of mixed races.

Ms. Wren said she had been shocked to learn that her great-great-grandfather had owned slaves.

"How can I be proud of a slave owner and a scoundrel?" she told the *Post-Dispatch*. "No one should own anyone else. No human being should have the power to own another person."

The history of the Claymorgan family is outlined in a book, "The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis," published in 1858. It describes people of African descent who had influence, education and wealth, including vast amounts of property in the St. Louis region.

Pelagie Green grew up in north St. Louis and attended Catholic schools. Her mother was a nurse and her father a mail carrier. She had three half-brothers.

She graduated in 1965 from what now is Harris-Stowe State University. She taught performing arts and physical education in the St. Louis Public Schools and retired in 1997.

At the old Pelagie Wren Dance Studios in Midtown she taught students who became some of St. Louis' best known dancers.

Her husband died last September. He retired from the Police Department as a major and was named police chief in East St. Louis.


She was laid to rest at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

Survivors include a brother, Roswald Darby of Tampa, Fla.

Join the HSSU Alumni Association Today!

The Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association offers graduates an ongoing opportunity to share memories, enjoy camaraderie and continue their life experiences together. As a community-serving institution, HSSU is fortunate that many of its graduates remain in the St. Louis area; as such, our alumni are able to maintain long-term connections. The Alumni Association also enables graduates to share the gift of

education with deserving, yet financially challenged students. Fees paid to the Alumni Association, a registered nonprofit entity, are 100 percent tax deductible. Everyone, whether you graduated from Harris-Stowe or are a friend of the institution, can join the HSSU Alumni Association. Join now and your membership will be valid through May 31, 2014! Regular Membership costs just \$25.




HARRIS-STOWE

STATE UNIVERSITY

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



- ☞ *Rekindle college friendships*
- ☞ *Free admission to HSSU athletic events*
- ☞ *10 percent off all University Bookstore merchandise*
- ☞ *Support scholarships to your beloved alma mater*

WE NEED YOU. PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

Membership Form

Membership valid through May 31, 2014: \$25

Date _____ Referred by (if applicable) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

I attended (check all that apply): Friend of Harris-Stowe
 Harris (HTC) Stowe (STC) Harris-Stowe College
 Harris-Stowe State College Harris-Stowe State University

Year of Graduation _____

Payment

Everyone, whether you graduated from Harris-Stowe or are a friend of the institution, is welcome to join the HSSU Alumni Association. You may join the Alumni Association online at www.hssu.edu/alumni or you may mail in your application. Make all checks payable to the "HSSU Alumni Association."

I have enclosed a check for \$25 for Regular Membership.
 I have paid \$25 online for a Regular Membership.

MAIL TO: 3026 Laclede Avenue • St. Louis, MO 63103 • (314) 340-3390

Membership Benefits

Your HSSU Alumni Association membership also grants you access to many exciting benefits and discounts, such as:

- Free admission to HSSU athletic events
- 10 percent off all University Bookstore merchandise
- Free alumni news updates
- Free use of the University weight room
- Discount to the Hornet Dining Hall
- Full access to the AT&T Library and Technology Resource Center
- 10 percent off University facility rentals
- 5-10 percent off Enterprise locations
- Membership to Working Advantage, an online discount provider

On the Horizon...

A View of HSSU Open House

Friday, November 1, 2013, at 10 a.m.
Emerson Performance Center

Hornets Women's Basketball Home Opener

Friday, November 8, 2013, at 8 p.m.
vs. University of Great Falls

7th Annual Distinguished Gents Concert

"The Journey Home"

Sponsored by Pea-Stain Productions & the Don & Heide Wolff Jazz Institute

Honoring HSSU Alumnus the late David Peaston

Saturday, November 9, 2013, at 2 p.m.
Emerson Performance Center

Hornets Men's Basketball Home Opener

Saturday, November 16, 2013, at 2 p.m.
vs. Philander Smith College

Distinguished Alumni Nominations Deadline

December 1, 2013

2014 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Missouri State Celebration

"Focusing on Family Financial Freedom"

Saturday, January 11, 2014, at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Henry Givens Jr. Administration Building

Stay Connected with HSSU!

Harris-Stowe State University is on Facebook and Twitter! Reunite with University friends, look at pictures, watch videos and learn about all the exciting upcoming University events! Don't forget to sign up as a "fan" of Harris-Stowe State University to show your school spirit. Go Hornets!

Friend us at www.facebook.com/HarrisStowe or follow us on Twitter at HarrisStowe.



To submit an article for the *Alumni Messenger* please email Courtney Z. McCall at McCallC@hssu.edu.

Harris-Stowe State University Board of Regents

Thelma V. Cook, Chairwoman

Reginald D. Dickson, Vice Chairman

Christine Chadwick, Board Member

Debra A. Hollingsworth, Board Member

Dr. Art McCoy II, Board Member