

December 2010 Volume 2, No. 4

### HSSU Alumni Enjoy Class Reunion Theme at the 2010 Gold Gala



The Harris-Stowe Alumni Association's Gold Gala offers a wonderful opportunity for the entire HSSU family to mingle. From left, Charles Gooden, dean of Student Affairs; Dr. Francis T. Gooden; Joan Moehl, Gold Gala Committee member; and Catherine Stenger, HSSU Alumni Association Board Member and Gold Gala Committee member.

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The Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association celebrated its annual Gold Gala with a new twist: a class reunion theme. As such, the Gold Gala honored the classes of 1945, 1950, 1955, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and special guests, the class of 1960, who celebrated their 50th class reunion!

The event was certainly a success as more than \$11,000 was raised for student scholarships, an increase over last year! Much of the money raised was made as donations from the classes celebrating their reunions, who presented their gifts at the gala. Also, gala attendees had the opportunity to bid on 50 fabulous silent auction items. Integral to the success of the silent auction and the souvenir ad booklet were Joan Moehl, Gold Gala Committee member, and Catherine Stenger, HSSU Alumni Association Board Member and Gold Gala Committee member. Of course, congratulations are in order for Shirley Brown, who chaired the event, and who has already agreed to chair another fantastic class reunion-themed Gold Gala in 2011.

Following the auction and cocktails, guests were thoroughly entertained by the vivacious and humorous mistress of ceremony, Ida Goodwin Woolfolk, who is a member of the class of 1965. Remarks were brought by Candace Dickson, HSSU Alumni Association president; Shirley Brown, Gold Gala Chairperson; Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., president of Harris-Stowe; and Nisa Schmitz, interim director of Communications, Marketing and Alumni Affairs. Following a delicious dinner, attendees enjoyed the upbeat sounds of Hot Chocolate Soul.

For more photos from the Gold Gala, please see page two.



The Crowne Plaza Hotel was packed as nearly 200 Harris-Stowe alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends attended the Gold Gala.



Ida Goodwin Woolfolk, a member of the class of 1965, kept the audience entertained as the mistress of ceremony.



Special guests and members of the class of 1960, who celebrated their 50th class reunion, present their class donation to fund student scholarships. From left, Mary Bond Spencer, Sandra Lucado and Ray Stahl.

## Message from the HSSU Alumni Association President



Candace M. Dickson
HSSU Alumni Association President

Dear alumni and friends,

Harris-Stowe State University Board members continue to be very active on behalf of their alma mater. Several Board members and alumni took time out of their busy holiday schedules to gather for an alumni Holiday Happy Hour at Lola Absinthe Lounge. At the event we had the opportunity to become reacquainted with fellow alumni. It was a festive occasion to share stories about our families, professional careers and new business ventures. Check out page four to see photos from the event. Harris-Stowe alumni are certainly making an impact on the community in many ways, and I am extremely proud to be part of this illustrious network. I look forward to seeing more alumni at our next networking mixer in July.

As we move through our 2011 calendar, we look forward to our spring recognition luncheon. The event will be held April 9, and the theme, "Celebrate the Magic of Alumni," is sure to be a fabulous follow-up to last year's event! I encourage you to begin thinking about alumni you want to see honored this year. The event details will be posted on the University's website. Additionally, the Luncheon Committee is working diligently on planning details; to serve on the committee, please contact Jeanine Riley at y2kmom@sbcglobal.net.

I hope to broaden the numbers participating in alumni events and deepen the scope of participation. There are so many opportunities for involvement and attending an alumnisponsored event is a great start for becoming a member of the Alumni Association! I encourage you to enhance your connection with Harris-Stowe State University!

With Hornet Pride,

Candace M. Dickson

Landace M. Dickson

## The HSSU Alumni Association's First Holiday Happy Hour Is a Success!

The holidays are about family, so the Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association thought it appropriate to celebrate the holidays with the HSSU alumni family. On December 16, the HSSU Alumni Association held its first Holiday Happy Hour at Lola Absinthe Lounge, and many alumni and friends came to partake in the

holiday cheer. The Alumni Association treated its guests to free appetizers, and guests enjoyed the delicious drinks unique to Lola. The event was arranged by the Harris-Stowe Alumni Association Membership Committee and Chairperson Stacy Shaw.



Harris-Stowe alumni enjoyed having a private section of Lola Absinthe Lounge to themselves. Lola provided a delightful atmosphere, appetizers and drinks for the holiday festivities.



From left, Reese Archibald and his wife, Sarah, HSSU Alumni Association corresponding secretary, enjoy the Holiday Happy Hour.



From left, Maranda Witherspoon; Darryl Haley; Candace Dickson, HSSU Alumni Association president; and Gregory F.X. Daly, Collector of Revenue for the City of St. Louis, socialize.



From left, Jeanine Riley, HSSU Alumni Association vice president; Bunny Goodwin; Suzanne Goodwin, HSSU Alumni Association Board member; Ebony Wilson, class of 2004; Chatories Jones, class of 2007; Aysha Chambers; and Alesha White, class of 2006, hang out at the alumni event.

### Special Eye on Alumni: Leonard Johnson, III



HSSU alumnus Leonard Johnson, III, outside Harris-Stowe's U.S. Bank Entryway Arch.

Allstate Insurance Company, the nation's largest publicly held personal lines insurer, recently named Leonard Johnson, III, a Harris-Stowe State University graduate, as one of its 2011 Allstate "Give Back Day" Heroes. The program, a tribute to the heroic community service of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., recognizes those who have helped create positive, sustainable change in their communities by volunteering to address important causes such as domestic violence, elementary education and mentoring at-risk youth. Johnson will be honored at The King Center's "Salute to Greatness" awards program on January 15, 2011, in Atlanta, GA. He is one of only four 2011 award recipients nationwide.

Johnson, 24, spearheaded a collaborative with Saint Louis University's Student Government Association to form a St. Louis chapter of Dream Keepers, a coalition of students and young professionals working for racial harmony and economic justice. Through Johnson's leadership, more than \$12,000 was raised for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project. He credits his experiences at Harris-Stowe State University for developing his leadership skills.

"While at HSSU, I had the opportunity to become president of the Student Government Association, the Welcome Week Committee and Kappa Alpha Psi simultaneously," Johnson said. "I was also appointed by Governor Jay Nixon as the student representative to the Board of Regents. This exposure helped foster my leadership abilities and played a crucial role in my quest to co-found and establish St. Louis Dream Keepers."

Johnson also founded a mentoring program called the Young Man Achievement Academy and Project Youth Impact, a nonprofit organization for low-income students living in urban areas.

Johnson graduated from HSSU in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in Professional Interdisciplinary Studies, with emphasis areas in education, history and sociology. He is currently pursuing a master's in public policy administration from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Johnson aspires to obtain a J.D. or Ph.D. by the age of 30.

"We are so proud to count Leonard Johnson among our graduates," said Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., president of Harris-Stowe State University. "The positive impact he has created in the St. Louis community through Dream Keepers and its Project Youth program truly embodies the leadership and values we strive to instill in each of our students here every day at the University."

### Eye on Alumni



Alumna Arlene Ackerman

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Harris-Stowe alumna Dr. Arlene Ackerman has been named the nation's top urban school leader.

Dr. Ackerman was recognized this past summer at the Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association's Sixth Annual Recognition Luncheon, and now she is being recognized as the 2010 winner of the Richard R. Green Award. She was chosen from a pool of nine finalists, weened down from 65 urban districts.

Dr. Ackerman has led the Philadelphia School District for more than two years. "Arlene Ackerman is one of the best big-city school superintendents in the country and is most worthy of the nation's highest individual award in urban education," said Michael Casserly, executive director of the council, a nonprofit that represents 65 of the nation's largest school districts. "She is smart, dedicated, innovative, effective, and completely committed to our urban schoolchildren."

Dr. Ackerman's success is evident in Imagine 2014, her five-year plan for school reform and strategy to secure more resources to needy schools. Under her leadership, half of all Philadelphia schoolchildren met standards on state exams, a first for the district since federal No Child Left Behind laws have been enacted.

"Philadelphia is a school system that has seen some improvements over the years, but Arlene is clearly committed to trying to take those improvements to the next level," Casserly said.

Ackerman, 63, previously led school systems in San Francisco and Washington, and worked as a professor at Columbia University. She began her career in St. Louis as a second grade teacher and holds degrees from Harris-Stowe State University, Washington University and Harvard University.

"I'm still in shock," said Ackerman about receiving the award. "I feel so blessed that I've had 42 years to give in service of children. I've been a warrior for children. I've always took on the toughest assignments."

Dr. Ackerman said the award is particularly gratifying because the decision to honor her was made by her colleagues and school board members.

The prize comes with a \$10,000 college scholarship that Ackerman will present to either a Philadelphia district student or a 12th grader from her high school alma mater in St. Louis.



Alumna Kimberly Moore

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HSSU alumna Dr. Kimberly Moore, 62, was crowned 2010 Ms. Senior America during the annual pageant held at Harrah's Resort in Atlantic City, NJ.

Dr. Moore grew up in the Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex and used to teach elementary school in north St. Louis.

Moore is one of 13 kids and graduated from O'Fallon Technical High School. She attended Harris-Stowe State University and taught at Harrison School for 11 years before leaving in the early 1980s to study dentistry in Kansas City.

At 61, Dr. Moore is now a dentist in the U.S. Virgin Islands and has had her own practice there for 17 years.

At the Ms. Senior America pageant for women 60 and older, Dr. Moore distinguished herself from her 33 competitors by performing to Tina Turner's "Proud Mary." Dr. Moore said, "...that's what brought the house down. When I put that blond wig on and that fringe dress, I turn into another person."

Photo unavailable.

#### Alumnus Mohammad Ranji

Harris-Stowe alumnus Mohammad Ranji has been promoted to director of Technology at Search Optics. Search Optics, Inc. is an interactive marketing firm that specializes in helping automotive industry customers generate leads that result in sales opportunities.

Ranji was previously a Lead Software Developer at Search Optics before his promotion. In his new role, Ranji will make critical decisions related to the technology strategy and management of the company.

With more than a decade of experience, Ranji has worked in several senior-level capacities for companies such as Anheuser-Busch, Bridgepoint Education, Z57 Internet Solutions, and Adicio, Inc. Ranji is a certified Zend PHP Engineer and is fluent in numerous software languages, technologies and databases.

"Since Mohammad has joined the Search Optics team, the development department has been exponentially improved," said president and founder, Troy Smith. "We are excited for Mohammad to take on this new role to further advance the efforts of our development team."

Ranji holds Bachelors of Science degrees from AZAD University of Technology and from Harris-Stowe State University. Additionally, he has his Master's in Computer Science from California State University-San Marcos.



Alumnus Charles Williams, Jr.

#### Alumnus Charles Williams, Jr.

Harris-Stowe alumnus Charles Williams, Jr. passed away earlier this year.

Williams was born April 27, 1949, to Deacon Charles Williams, Sr. and Rae Gatlin Williams, both of whom preceded him in death. He had a younger brother, Steve.

Williams matriculated St. Louis Public Schools, and he graduated from Harris-Stowe State University and the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Following, he worked in sales at Graybar Electrical Distribution for 32 years.

As a child, Williams frequented the Kennerly Temple Church of God in Christ and Martin's Temple Church of God in Christ (formerly known as West End Temple). In 1972, he joined Paradise Temple Church of God in Christ.

On June 10, 1973, he married Cindy Mae Nunley, whom he often described as the "prettiest girl" he had ever seen. They had three children: Charles, III; Charity and Chrystal.

Especially in his younger years, Williams was known for his musical talent and was nicknamed the "Magician Musician." He is remembered for his rendition of "Amazing Grace" on the organ. He recorded two albums and was featured on various other musical projects.

In 1979, Williams became a pastor to Paradise Temple Church of God in Christ, and later he united the church with Martin Temple Church to create Martin-Paradise Temple Church of God in Christ.

## **HSSU Students Enjoy Alumni Conversations Event**



Homecoming is really about all members of the University family coming together to celebrate Harris-Stowe. At the Alumni Conversations Homecoming event, HSSU alumni came to the Gillespie Residence Hall to talk about their experiences at Harris-Stowe and offer advice to current students. HSSU students were able to ask questions, and the event was also a great networking opportunity for students. In fact, the event was so successful that the Alumni Association has decided not to limit the event to just Homecoming. Another Alumni Conversations event will be held in March. If you would like to participate in the event, please contact the Office of Alumni Affairs at (314) 340-5754 or at Alumni@hssu.edu.



Katina Stewart, left, shares her Harris-Stowe story and how she has chosen to continue to be active with the University by serving as the Alumni Association's recording secretary.



Benny Lewis, right, tells of his long-time relationship with Harris-Stowe. Not only did Lewis earn his degree from Harris-Stowe, but he now works at the University as the Emerson Performance Center Facilities Manager.

### HSSU Alumni Association Enters Float in Alma Mater's Homecoming Parade



The Harris-Stowe Alumni Association has been a long-time participant of its alma mater's Homecoming parade, but this is the first time in many years that the association has entered a float in the parade. In keeping with the Homecoming theme "Love, Liberty, and Legacy — Always Remembered, Never Forgotten," the association created an oversized Harris-Stowe yearbook on the back of the float, which is open to reveal actual photos of former Harris-Stowe classes.



Every year the HSSU Alumni Association president rides in the Homecoming parade; seen here are Candace Dickson, HSSU Alumni Association president, and Gladys Anderson, Office of Communications, Marketing and Alumni Affairs secretary.



It has become a University tradition for Harris-Stowe alumni to serve as Homecoming Parade judges. This year, HSSU alumni Audrey Gooch, Tasha Sutherland and Terell Wayne all served as Homecoming parade judges.

## Message from the HSSU Interim Director of Alumni Affairs



Nisa Schmitz Interim Director of Communications, Marketing and Alumni Affairs

Dear Harris-Stowe State University alumni and friends,

The Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association has fully embraced the giving spirit of the holiday season and has truly outdone themselves this year with their generosity. On top of their annual \$10,000 donation in scholarship money to deserving HSSU students, the Alumni Association elected to hold a book drive for the University's William L. Clay, Sr. Early Childhood Development/Parenting Education Center. The center's teachers and the children they teach will certainly be delighted to use these new books in their classrooms.

The Alumni Association banded together to contribute to the family of Tihra Devres, a 19-year-old student at Harris-Stowe who passed away in a house fire that also took the life of her father. Harris-Stowe faculty, staff and students also made a donation to the Devres family. This is a true testament of how the Harris-Stowe family wholeheartedly embraces one another, especially in times of hardship.

Of course the Harris-Stowe family comes together in celebration as well. This alumni newsletter is full of celebration, from photos from the 2010 Gold Gala to photos from the first alumni Holiday Happy Hour to photos from the Alumni Association's participation in the Harris-Stowe Homecoming parade.

Another chance for the Harris-Stowe family to celebrate is just around the corner with the 25th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Kick-off program. The 2011 celebration will certainly be a treat as Judge Greg Mathis presents the keynote address and our illustrious Harris-Stowe president, Dr. Henry Givens, Jr. is honored with the Lifetime Achievement award. This program will definitely be a must-see.

May everyone have a wonderful holiday season, and I hope to see you at the 25th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Kick-off program on January 8, 2011!

Sincerely,

Nisa Schmitz
Interim Director

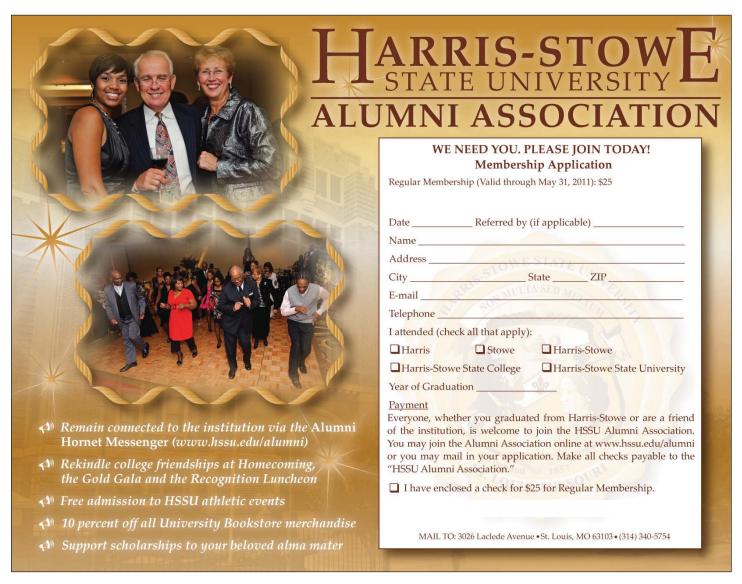
Misa Schmity

Communications, Marketing and Alumni Affairs

## 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. Want to get the most bang for your buck? Join now and your membership will be valid through May 31, 2011! Regular Membership costs just \$25.



#### Membership Benefits

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

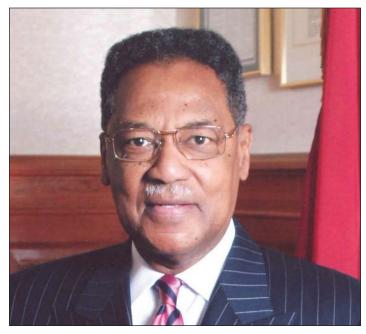
- Free admission to HSSU athletic events
- 10 percent off all University Bookstore merchandise
- Free alumni news updates
- Free use of the University weight room

- 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

## Special 25th Anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Honors Commission Chairman, Dr. Henry Givens, Jr.



Judge Greg Mathis Advocate for Justice Award-winning Television Court Show Judge



Dr. Henry Givens, Jr. Chairman, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission President, Harris-Stowe State University

The 2011 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission Kick-off Program for Missouri will be legendary as the State Celebration Commission celebrates its 25th anniversary!

Appropriately themed "Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission of Missouri under the Leadership of Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., Chairman," the program will recognize the legacy and commitment of the commissioners, who will be honored at the program.

The highlight of the evening will be keynote speaker Judge Greg Mathis. Judge Mathis is nationally recognized as an advocate for justice, for his award-winning television court show Judge Mathis and for his weekly newspaper column. Judge Mathis will be honored with the Chairman's Award at the kick-off program.

Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., chairman of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission and president of Harris-Stowe, will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement award. Dr. Givens has chaired the state celebration commission since its inception and with the assistance of the commissioners, turned Missouri's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. state celebration into the second largest celebration in the nation.

Other awardees include Keith Antone Willis, Sr., publisher of *Who's Who in Black St. Louis*, who will receive the Distinguished Entrepreneur Award; Dr. Dennis Golden, president of Fontbonne University, who will receive the Distinguished Education/Community Service Award; and Attorney Jerry Hunter, charter member of the commission, who will receive the Distinguished Pioneer Award.

Entertainment will consist of The Jazz Edge; Jermaine Smith, international opera tenor; the nationally recognized Harris-Stowe State University Concert Chorale; and New Sunny Mount Missionary Baptist Chancel Choir. The event will be emceed by Rene Knott, sports director at KSDK-TV Channel 5, and Beverly Brennan, Director of Speech and Theater at HSSU.

A number of prominent politicians and local dignitaries have been invited to the program, including Governor Jay Nixon, Mayor Francis G. Slay, County Executive Charlie Dooley, Senator Robin Wright-Jones, State Representative Tishaura Jones, and U.S. Congressman William "Lacy" Clay, Jr.

The program will take place on Saturday, January 8, 2011, at 6:30 p.m., in the Main Auditorium of Harris-Stowe's Dr. Henry Givens, Jr. Administration Building. The event is free and open to the public. A commemorative 25th anniversary program and fan set will be available for a \$5 donation, to assist with expenses associated with the kick-off program. Immediately following the program, there will be a reception, featuring Steve Schankman and the Fabulous Motown Revue, on the ground floor of the Dr. Henry Givens Jr. Administration Building.

The MLK Kick-off Program is hosted by the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission, Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., chairman. The commission, which was established in 1985, consists of governor-appointed members throughout the state of Missouri, who come together to host events that preserve Dr. King's legacy. Since its inception, all State Kick-off Programs have been held at Harris-Stowe State University.

## You are cordially invited to attend the 25th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission Kick-off Program for Missouri





Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission of Missouri under the Leadership of Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., Chairman

Saturday, January 8, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. Harris-Stowe State University - Main Auditorium 3026 Laclede Avenue St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Masters of Geremonies

Rene Knott
Sports Director, KSDK-TV Channel 5

Beverly Brennan

Director of Speech and Theater, Harris-Stowe State Universit



Our Keynote Speaker

Judge Greg Mathis

Award-winning TV Court Judge

Advocate for Equal Justice

Special Performances By:
Jermaine Smith, International Opera Tenor
New Sunny Mount Missionary Baptist Chancel Choir
The Harris-Stowe State University Concert Chorale
The Jazz Edge

A reception featuring Steve Schankman and the Motown Revue (sponsored by Anheuser-Busch Companies Inc.) will follow the program.

All seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis, other than those reserved for program participants and awardees.

Admission is FREE and open to the public.

A commemorative 25th anniversary program and fan set will be available with a \$5 donation. For more information, call Harris-Stowe State University at (314) 340-3390.

#### **Recent Harris-Stowe Events**

**NAACP** Chapter Founded at Harris-Stowe On November 4, 2010, nine Harris-Stowe State University students took an oath to the constitution and bylaws of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Claude Brown, Sr., the president of the St. Louis City chapter of the NAACP, and seen second from the left in the photo, came to campus to assist with the founding of an NAACP chapter at Harris-Stowe.





**HSSU Players' Production of** *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf* Not only were all showings of *For Colored Girls* sold out, but people were requesting to buy standing-room-only tickets! The play was directed by HSSU Director of Speech and Theater Beverly Brennan. Brennan said *For Colored Girls* was the HSSU Players' most successful production; therefore, Brennan plans to bring the show back to the stage for a dinner-theater performance this summer.



**HSSU** Remembers **Deceased** Student Harris-Stowe State University honored Tihra Ann Devres, a 19-year-old HSSU student who passed away, at a Candlelight Vigil on December 1. Tihra was in her second year at HSSU and was studying Secondary Education with an emphasis in math. She was an active member of the HSSU Math Club. Tihra played on the HSSU Volleyball Team and was honored as an Academic All-Conference scholar athlete. She is remembered for her humility and for her passion for teaching. The **HSSU** Alumni Association made a donation to Tihra's family to assist with funeral costs and for repairing their house that was destroyed by the fire that took Tihra's life.



**HSSU Concert Chorale's** Annual Sounds of the Season: A Winter Concert On December 3, the HSSU Concert Chorale held their annual winter concert. This year's concert was special as the group surprised Concert Chorale Director Rosalyn England-Henry with a plaque for her many dedicated years to the organization. Dr. England-Henry was also treated to a surprise musical number Concert Chorale alumni.

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Credits

The *Hornet Alumni Messenger* is proudly brought to you by the Harris-Stowe State University Alumni Association and the HSSU Office of Alumni Affairs and Interim Director of Communications, Marketing and Alumni Affairs Nisa Schmitz.

### The 2010-2011

# Harris-stow E STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**Board** 



Candace Dickson President



Jeanine Riley Vice President



Katina Stewart Recording Secretary



Sarah Archibald Corresponding Secretary



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Elaine DuBose Board Member



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