

CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

A special sculpture serves as the college's "Welcome Scottie."

SUPPORTING SUCCESS

The SUMMIT peer advisors program helps first-year students adjust to college life.

TAKING ACTION

Students show passion and purpose in helping the Agnes Scott community during the pandemic.

AGNES SCOTT

SPRING/SUMMER '20

THE MAGAZINE



Journey Through a Crisis

Inside Agnes Scott's Response
to the COVID-19 Pandemic

spring/summer '20

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Mission: Agnes Scott College educates
women to think deeply, live honorably
and engage the intellectual and social
challenges of their times.

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to the Class of 2020

Agnes Scott celebrates you!

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View the graduation celebration video.

OUR
FUTURE
OUR
MAIN

A Campaign for a
Stronger Agnes Scott

THIS CAMPAIGN IS A LOVE LETTER TO MAIN.

She's asked us for restoration. And we respond with all our heart.

Long known as the heart of the college, Main Hall is the building that Scotties recognize as a marker of home. She is the brick-and-mortar symbol of our alma mater, the soul of the Scottiehood and the pulse of our future.

Main Hall is the most historic building on campus and is central to Agnes Scott's identity. As student enrollment continues to grow, Main's restoration has become increasingly necessary.

An investment in this campaign is an investment in the mission of Agnes Scott. For more information on helping us reach our \$31 million goal, please visit agnesscott.edu/givetomain.





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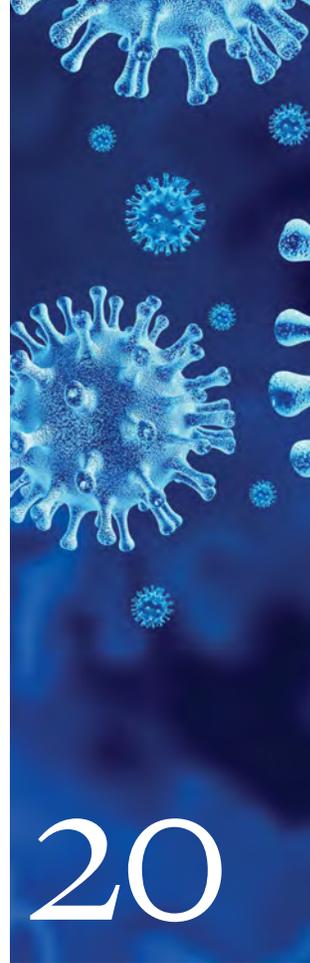
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We Will Build a Better Future



On April 26, 2019, the day of my inauguration as Agnes Scott College's ninth president, I was filled with pride and joy as I officially became a part of this incredible community. I knew Agnes Scott was a special place on my first visit to the campus and felt honored to have the privilege of being its new leader. In my address, I

talked about all of the wonderful things about the college that drew me to it, and near the end of my remarks, I made this promise: "That I will treasure this opportunity. That I will love Agnes Scott as much as you do. That I will always remember the trust you all have placed in me."

Today, I think about my promise more than ever as the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the world and the college in ways that none of us could have foreseen. I also think of that pledge when I reflect on the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and countless other Black people, which have impacted our country, college and community in ways we should have foreseen. At Agnes Scott, we emphasize the importance of leading everywhere, and in times of crisis, this means also leading through any challenges that may come our way and addressing the social challenges of our time.

During the spring semester, the college had to make some difficult decisions that greatly affected everyone in the Agnes Scott community. I recognize that it was not easy to learn, teach, work or stay connected remotely but because of the courage, creativity and commitment of our students, faculty, staff and alumnae, we were able to do so successfully. I thank everyone for the grace and resilience they have shown in adapting to the challenging situations brought on by the pandemic. I am inspired by the sacrifices people have been willing to make and their positive attitudes in making them, and I am touched by the many ways people have taken care of and supported each other. As Agnes Scott has navigated its way through the turbulent waters of the pandemic, we have seen examples of extraordinary leadership. In this issue of the magazine, you will be taken inside the college's response to the crisis during this past semester, learn how several students took action, and get a glimpse of how we immediately engaged the long-standing social inequities exposed by the pandemic.

We saw these inequities compounded by the senseless deaths of George Floyd and others, which are heartbreaking and troubling signs of how racism remains

pervasive in our country. As individuals who live honorably, we cannot — and should not — sit in silence as lives, dreams and opportunities are lost simply because of the color of a person's skin. Instead, we must confront and condemn racism and injustice in all of its forms wherever it exists. We cannot "hope" for there to be equality; we have to do the hard and necessary work to create it. We have to hold each other and ourselves accountable, and for those of us in positions of power and privilege, we have to be fearless allies and advocates. We have shown that we can stand together to face a pandemic, and now we must stand together to address racism. I encourage you to stay connected with the college so that you can remain informed on what we are doing as an educational institution and caring community to fight racism and to support people of color within Agnes Scott and beyond.

With the ongoing pandemic and concern for Black lives, many of us are understandably experiencing pain, anger, frustration, anxiety and sadness. But just as you placed your trust in me when I became the president of this great institution, I am placing my trust in you as I make another promise: that we will face these challenges together, that we will remain steadfast in our mission and that we will build a better future.

— PRESIDENT LEOCADIA I. ZAK

Leocadia I. Zak is the ninth president of Agnes Scott College. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Mount Holyoke College, which recognized her as a Woman of Influence in 2012, she holds a J.D. degree from Northeastern University School of Law.

The Engaging Social Challenges Series

The Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion is hosting podcasts highlighting the social inequalities of the pandemic and webinars on courageous conversations about racism and hate. Visit the [series website](#).

AGNES
SCOTT
COLLEGE

THE GAY JOHNSON
MCDUGALL CENTER
FOR GLOBAL DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION

Arboretum Earns Upgraded Certification



With 108 (and counting) unique tree species, the Agnes Scott Arboretum was elevated last year to Level II certification by ArbNET, the international accreditation program of Morton Arboretum near Chicago. Only five other Georgia arboreta are certified at Level II. In addition to a minimum of 100 species, criteria for Level II include staff dedicated to arboretum management and enhanced educational programming.

Agnes Scott College's trees have been used for instruction for more than a decade. Strategically placed QR-coded plaques at 18 locations deliver facts and stories about the trees, campus history and liberal arts themes. When scanned, the plaques provide information as varied as the trees: the planting of southern magnolias by longtime music professor Christian Dieckmann, the surprising ecosystem that exists high in the campus canopy, the brilliant yellow ginkgo as a "living fossil" and more.

Former adjunct professor of classics Jim Abbot conceived of turning Agnes Scott's trees into "teachers" in 2006. He collaborated with Center of Sustainability Executive Director Susan Kidd '78, M.A.T. '07, to transform the campus tree walk into an educational platform and eventually into an accredited arboretum.

Several trees are more than a century old, and at least one — a stately white ash — is said to predate the founding of Agnes Scott in 1889. Along with an incense cedar on campus, the white ash ranks among Trees Atlanta's "Champion Trees," distinctive for their age or size.

Other trees have been planted more recently as individual tributes. Established in 2008, the Honor Tree program recognizes a faculty or staff member who has 25 years of service. The honoree can elect for another tree to be planted for each additional five years of service. Trees also can be given as memorials. A February planting ceremony of

seven trees brought the total number of honor trees on campus to 48.

According to Karina Leung '18, the center's sustainability fellow, honor trees are a key strategy for sustaining the arboretum. Leung authored Agnes Scott's comprehensive five-year tree care plan that addresses a range of factors from tree health to aesthetics, and she works closely with the Arboretum Advisory Committee, an interdisciplinary group of faculty, staff and students.

The latest ArbNET certification milestone came as part of a push to bring at least one specimen of all 32 subspecies of native Georgia oaks to campus. Only four rare and hard-to-find oak varieties remain to be added, and Leung is confident they will be located. To learn more about the college's arboretum, visit arboretum.agnesscott.edu.





New Master's Program Provides Data-Sharing Power

Agnes Scott College recently announced a new Master of Science in data analysis and communication program intended to meet a growing need among professionals today. Founded by faculty director Wendy Kallina, this program pairs advanced data analysis with communication courses for students to effectively disseminate their findings to all levels of analysts and professionals within an organization. Students will explore topics such as the ethical use of technology and data and the principles of data visualization.

Professional analysts at any level will benefit from this program, which will help them bridge the gap between understanding data and articulating that understanding to different audiences, including colleagues within their own organizations. The skills they learn in this program are transferable across industries and geared toward all levels of professionals, from program evaluators and research analysts to program administrators — not just data scientists.

“Continued high job growth in the field of data analytics makes this an important time for Agnes Scott to offer this degree,” notes

President Leocadia I. Zak. “We are building on the success of our undergraduate and graduate programs by offering a new cutting-edge program that can prepare working professionals for success in an evolving economy.”

Ashley Yates '13, who is currently a student in Agnes Scott's evaluation and assessment methods graduate certificate program, has applied for the new degree program and is excited about how it will enhance her career in the nonprofit sector.

“Before returning to school, I discovered there is a real need for evaluators, as many of the grants I saw lacked a solid evaluation plan,” she says. “Program evaluation is so important; it ensures that a program is needed, it is meeting the target population and it is cost effective. I look forward to helping community-based organizations get the funding they need to continue providing services to the underserved populations that are in the metro Atlanta area.”

According to Kallina, students such as Yates will be prepared to provide organizations with this kind of evaluative support.

At Agnes Scott, Kallina is also director of the graduate certificates in

data visualization and in evaluation and assessment methods, as well as an associate professor of psychology. She comes from a nonprofit and higher education background with experience as an administrator, instructor and researcher. She holds a Ph.D. in human development and family studies from Auburn University and a master's degree in information systems with an emphasis in knowledge management from Oklahoma State University.

“A graduate of this program will be fluent in the language of analysis and skilled in multiple methods of communication,” Kallina says. “This combination allows the graduate to be both the analyst and the presenter. I am delighted to have this opportunity to dispel any myths about data analysis being simply about statistics or an unappealing area of study for creative souls.”

The Office of Graduate and Extended Programs is now accepting applications for fall 2020. To learn more about the data analysis and communication graduate program and to apply, visit agnesscott.edu/forwardthinkers.



Agnes Scott Ranks 13th Among Green Colleges

Agnes Scott College’s sustainability profile rose in 2019 with a number 13 ranking in The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges, the smallest institution by enrollment and the only college or university in the Southeast to crack the top 15. This marked the first time Agnes Scott has been ranked in the top tier, having previously only been listed in the guide.

The ranking reflects data self-reported to the Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System. STARS gave Agnes Scott a gold rating, the highest level possible for a small college. The Princeton Review Guide uses the STARS data in its rankings along with qualitative data, such as placement of students in sustainability jobs.

Elizabeth Rowe ’15, a former sustainability fellow, took the lead in providing Agnes Scott’s data for the rigorous STARS system. Now in an environmental management graduate program at Duke University, she says, “It is the commitment to sustainability across campus and building trust across the community that helped Agnes Scott attain this ranking.”

IGNITE-ing Political Change



IGNITE at Agnes Scott’s Zion Martin ’21, president, (standing, fifth from left) and Loren Walter ’21, fellow, (seated, second from left) with current and past members.

A powerful part of Agnes Scott College’s mission is to educate students to engage the intellectual and social challenges of their times. One student organization on campus is living this mission by tackling civic engagement as one of its areas of focus.

The Agnes Scott chapter of IGNITE National, a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy organization that prepares young women to be the next generation of political leaders, supports students taking action to effect change. The chapter’s activities have included helping Scotties register to vote, hosting the Young Women Run Atlanta conference featuring members of the Atlanta-area political world, advocating HB 5 and HB 8 at the Georgia State Capitol and participating in collaborative events with other Agnes Scott student organizations.

IGNITE at Agnes Scott has approximately 160 members, and the current chapter president is Zion Martin ’21.

“I enjoy being a part of IGNITE at Agnes Scott because it helps join two communities — those who are open-minded, opinionated, passionate and driven and those who are passionate about politics, want their voices to be heard and strive to make a difference,” Martin says.

“Members learn that they really can make a difference, contrary to what a lot of people are told about the gravity of their voices and contributions,” adds Martin. “We plan activities at the Capitol around voting and advocacy, and I believe those events truly make a change.”

Loren Walter ’21, past vice president and past president of the chapter, currently serves as a fellow for IGNITE National’s Atlanta office and echoes Martin’s thoughts on students using their voices and not standing on the political sidelines.

“We feel young people need to know that everything is affected by politics, from street lights to climate change. Civic engagement is important for all students,” says Walter. “It’s important to tell people to vote and to write their representatives because it all makes a difference.”

“We also encourage and prepare our students to run for public office and connect them with current elected officials in the community. Our organization is very centered around learning, training and empowerment,” notes Walter.

SCALE Takes Students' Career Preparation to a Higher Level



From left to right: Journey Bradham '22, Maddy Franklin '22, Ryan Hayes-Owens '22, Rachel May, artistic director of Synchronicity Theatre, Camryn King '22 (seated) and Amelia Handly '21 go over the processes of building, lighting and blocking a set.



Seated from left to right, Eduige Kayigirwa '20, Isabella Cronin '22, Jessica McFarland '21, Lisset Rojo Ramirez '21 and Anabel Braziel '22 listen as Cavelle Benjamin, a senior manager of product development at CribMaster, A Division of Stanley Black & Decker, discusses the company's new product development process.

When SUMMIT was launched at Agnes Scott College five years ago, it was designed to evolve to be responsive to changing student needs. One growing area of interest for Agnes Scott students was their preparation for life beyond college and for their careers in a global and competitive job market. To take students' education from the classroom to the boardroom, the college created the Sophomore Class Atlanta Leadership Experience, or SCALE, which transforms academic learning into real-world experiences in professional settings.

Joining the portfolio of signature SUMMIT courses and shaped by student input, SCALE is a one-credit interdisciplinary course taught by faculty across departments and supported by staff from the Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership and Service and the Office of Internship and Career Development. Each March, sophomores take part in weeklong leadership immersion experiences at nonprofits, organizations and businesses in and around Atlanta, where they receive hands-on learning opportunities to deepen their knowledge, build career literacy and become equipped for postgraduate success. For 2020 and 2021, all sophomores, juniors and seniors have the option to participate in SCALE, and starting in 2022, the course will be required for all sophomores.

Student teams begin with two days of academic preparation with faculty followed by four days at the host sites. On the final day, students return to campus to reflect on and integrate the learning with the teaching faculty. Host sites for this inaugural year included Atlanta Dream, Fernbank Science Center, Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance, Atlanta Music Project and Morehouse School of Medicine, with more than 100 students participating. The COVID-19 global outbreak intensified during this year's SCALE, with host sites and the college making appropriate adjustments. The inaugural launch and student experiences were still successful, and feedback received was positive.

"The students were highly engaged and enthusiastic in the class as we prepared them for their site visits.

Unfortunately, we didn't get to meet with them afterward as planned, but they produced some excellent video presentations reflecting on their SCALE experiences," says Harald Thorsrud, professor of philosophy and chair of the Faculty SUMMIT Committee-Leadership. "We designed SCALE as an integration of career preparation and leadership development and to help students answer the 'What are you going to do with that?' question. We hope that SCALE, along with SUMMIT more generally, will reaffirm the practical as well as the intrinsic value of a liberal arts education."

"While certainly not ideal, COVID-19 presented a relevant and timely leadership lesson as our students watched our SCALE partner organizations navigate the demands of their work and the impact that it would have on their respective industries. It also allowed them to witness creative problem solving, resourcefulness and resiliency," says Honi Migdol, associate dean for integrative leadership and SUMMIT co-curricular programs. "Our students pivoted every step of the way, adapting beautifully to the rapidly changing circumstances around them."



Rachel De Las Casas '22 (left) and Taelyn Reid '20 learn about the importance of positive work culture from Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance's Chief Operating Officer Ashley Blackwell '10.



Attendees at the 2019 STEM Summer Research Exhibit view one of the undergraduate research posters.

Science Center for Women Advances STEM Student Success at Agnes Scott

The Agnes Scott College Science Center for Women has demonstrated a five-year trend of improved student persistence and success in science, technology, engineering and math degrees while nationally, colleges struggle to graduate even 40 percent of students interested in STEM fields. By contrast, 73 percent of students interested in STEM as first-years graduate with STEM degrees in four years. And beyond? More than 82 percent of STEM graduates are employed or pursuing advanced STEM education one year after graduation. By using best practices such as supplemental instruction with peer-to-peer support, mentored research and living-learning communities and by fostering inclusive community in collaboration with colleagues across campus, the Science Center for Women has moved the needle in response to the national need for more STEM graduates to solve 21st-century problems. While gender and diversity gaps persist in STEM professions nationally, the Science Center for Women is helping to achieve equity in access and student outcomes, including graduation rates.

The Science Center for Women was awarded a three-year \$300,000 National Science Foundation

Improving Undergraduate STEM Education grant to advance these efforts. The center will use the grant to enhance peer-led supplemental instruction in the Resource Center for Math and Science (the college's STEM tutoring center) and to study the effect of coordinated curricular and co-curricular programs on STEM students' degree completion and pursuit of STEM careers. The center will also study student development of confidence, higher order skills and self-identity as

scientists, and their decision-making about pursuing STEM careers.

The project, "Testing a Theoretical Model of Social Influence and High-Impact Pedagogical Practices for Sustaining Undergraduate STEM Student Success," is directed by Lilia C. Harvey, Charles A. Dana Professor of Chemistry and associate dean for STEM teaching and learning; Molly Embree, director of STEM Mentored Research and the STEM Scholars Program; LaShandra Owens, director of the Resource Center for Math and Science and Generating Excellence in Math and Sciences program; and Ruth Riter, professor of chemistry.

"Agnes Scott endeavors to provide the best teaching, learning and research experiences to ensure the success of our students in STEM fields. The programmatic support provided by the Science Center for Women has been a critical element in the college's efforts to retain, graduate and advance women in STEM," says Harvey. "Funding from the National Science Foundation allows the center to expand and improve its resources and programs and contribute research outcomes to the national STEM education community about effective practices to retain and advance women in STEM majors and careers."



2019 STEM Scholar Ariba Khan '22 explains her research to Professor of Astronomy Amy Lovell '90 and a student at the 2019 STEM Summer Research Exhibit for undergraduates.



Two Seniors Awarded Prestigious Scholarships



Leah Trotman '21



Furyal Ahmed '21

Two seniors at Agnes Scott College have been awarded prestigious national scholarships this spring. Leah Trotman '21 received the 2020 Truman Scholarship, and Furyal Ahmed '21 was named a 2020 Goldwater Scholarship recipient.

An international relations and public health double major, Trotman is the college's first Truman Scholarship recipient since 2009 and the fifth since the program's inception in 1975. She was one of 62 scholars named from the 773 applicants representing 316 colleges and universities. The Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation selected students based on their leadership, public service, academic achievement, interviews with regional review panels and essays.

While interning at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in their Center for Preparedness and Response, Trotman learned about the detrimental public health effects of exclusive emergency preparedness and response planning. She has written several essays and policy statements on emergency preparedness and

response in the Caribbean and Latin America. She wrote her Truman Scholarship application essay on the natural disaster response in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where she was born and raised.

Upon graduation, Trotman hopes to pursue a Master of Public Health in humanitarian health in disaster relief and gain the skills needed to develop comprehensive disaster relief community health interventions and policies in the Caribbean and Latin America.

As a Goldwater Scholarship recipient, Furyal Ahmed '21 is one of 396 scholars named by the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation from the 1,343 natural science, engineering and mathematics students nominated out of an estimated pool of more than 5,000 college sophomores and juniors. Students were selected based on their strong commitment to a research career, effective display of intellectual intensity and potential for a significant future contribution to research in natural sciences, mathematics and engineering.

A native of Lawrenceville, Georgia, Ahmed is a biochemistry and molecular biology major with a minor in mathematics. She is deeply engaged in Agnes Scott's science, technology, engineering and mathematics community and has received recognition as a learning assistant from her peers and for her outstanding teaching ability from the Resource Center for Math and Science.

Ahmed will be spending the summer participating in a research experience for undergraduates at the University of Michigan, studying enzyme mechanisms. After graduating from Agnes Scott, she plans to obtain a Ph.D. in biochemistry and conduct research in the field and teach at the university level.

Recent Graduate Receives Fulbright Award

Abisola James '20 received a Fulbright U.S. Student Program Award for an English Teaching Assistantship for the 2020-2021 academic year. The highly competitive award is administered by the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic achievement, as well as ambassadorial abilities, leadership potential and language preparation. Teaching assistants help teach the English language while serving as cultural ambassadors for the U.S.

James, who came to Agnes Scott from Memphis, Tennessee, has traveled throughout mainland

China and studied at the University of Shanghai.

"These studies have inspired my interest in writing as a form of expression and political discussion," says James. "My plan is to spend my Fulbright grant as an English teaching assistant in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. I have been taking Mandarin since high school and have continued studying the language while attending Agnes Scott. I thought Taiwan would be a great location for me to advance in Mandarin while also getting the opportunity to teach children English and about my experience living in America. While in Taiwan, I am also planning to explore different cities, meet new people while



Abisola James '20

practicing Mandarin and learn as much as I can about Taiwanese culture during my free time."

After completing the Fulbright, James plans to pursue a master's in international service through the Rangel Program.



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Agnes Scott College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate and master's degrees. Contact the Commission at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097 or call 404.679.4500 for questions about the accreditation of Agnes Scott College.



GRADUATE STUDIES

Georgia Power Foundation Provides Philanthropic Grant to Support Scotties



From left to right: Vice President for Student Affairs Karen Goff, Georgia Power's Senior Vice President for Northwest Region Bentina Terry, President Leocadia I. Zak, Vice President for College Advancement Robiaun Charles and Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations Nicole Blount.

Agnes Scott College proudly celebrates its partnership with the Georgia Power Foundation, which recently provided a philanthropic grant of \$20,000 in support of the college's Student Emergency Fund. The grant, awarded on Feb. 26, was remarkably timely, as the college began responding soon after to student needs associated with the global health emergency, COVID-19.

In a matter of weeks, COVID-19 upended the lives of all in the Agnes Scott community, especially our students who were asked to move off campus and shift to online learning

for their spring semester courses. Thanks to funding from the Georgia Power Foundation, Agnes Scott was able to quickly respond to requests for travel, temporary housing and food assistance from students.

Launched in 2017, the Student Emergency Fund serves as an important part of Agnes Scott's financial assistance programs to support the challenges that our students face during the course of their educational experience. The Student Emergency Fund prevents an emergency or unexpected expense from derailing a student's progress toward a degree by providing limited, one-time financial assistance. The fund is made possible thanks to generous donors who are committed to the persistence of students despite adverse financial circumstances.

Georgia Power states on its community and education webpage, "After all, it's the passionate, educated and driven students of today that become the bright minds of our workforce tomorrow." During this unprecedented and challenging time of great uncertainty and instability in our community, our state and our nation, we are honored to be in partnership with the Georgia Power Foundation.

"On behalf of the students and families who have benefited from the generosity of the Georgia Power Foundation, Agnes Scott is truly grateful for their philanthropic investment," says Robiaun Charles, vice president for college advancement.

Agnes Scott Awarded \$2.715 Million Grant To Foster Postgraduate Success

Agnes Scott College was awarded a \$2.715 million grant from The Goizueta Foundation this past December to support "Positioning Students for Success Through Discovery, Exploration and Connection." This will enhance SUMMIT by prioritizing postgraduate success for all students, which has been identified as a collegewide goal.

The Goizueta Foundation has generously supported Agnes Scott and SUMMIT in the past. The new emphasis on postgraduate success amplifies the shared values and strategic priorities of these two organizations and demonstrates the power of working together to create positive change.

With the funding, all Agnes Scott students can more confidently and knowledgeably take advantage of the full breadth of opportunities afforded by a liberal arts education. Specific activities will include digital skills boot camps via the college's Center for Digital and Visual Literacy; increased access to career coaching and on-demand, interactive, personalized career assistance; guaranteed applied or experiential learning for students across all disciplines with fully integrated professional development; and speakers and events designed to provide students interaction with nationally known role models, local leaders and alumnae from various fields to help them envision their own postgraduate success

Additionally, funding will support the implementation of the Sophomore Class Atlanta Leadership Experience, or SCALE, which is currently piloting and will fully launch in 2022. SCALE will provide students with opportunities to apply the learning from their leadership curriculum and explore hands-on experiences in Atlanta-area organizations. This real-world experience will come at a critical collegiate juncture — when students prepare to declare their majors.

To learn more about the pilot program and its success, see the SCALE Takes Students' Career Preparation to a Higher Level story on page 8.



The Goizueta Foundation funding will allow the college to develop and enhance impactful programs that prepare Agnes Scott graduates for success as they embark upon their careers.



Every Scottie, Every Year

Every year, Agnes Scott students show us what it means to make a difference, to reach the SUMMIT of a liberal arts education and to be #LeadingEverywhere. Just one Scottie can be the difference between the status quo and the extraordinary. Just one gift can strengthen the Agnes Scott experience for a worthy student.

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THE FUND FOR
AGNES SCOTT

Photo by Sharon Gurung '21

faculty focus



Professor of English Charlotte Artese

Much Ado About Shakespeare

Recently Charlotte Artese's mother came across a piece of paper on which 10-year-old Artese had written the words: "When I grow up, I want to be a professor." Not only did Artese misspell her future profession, but she also did not know exactly what a professor was. She was just sure that was what she wanted to be, and years later her childhood wish came true.

As a professor of English and the department chair at Agnes Scott College, Artese spends her days imparting her love and knowledge of books in general — and William Shakespeare's plays specifically — to her students.

"Figuring out what you love and how you can share it with others is one of the most rewarding things," Artese says.

Her love of books was instilled in her early. Because her father was in the Army, Artese's family moved frequently. As she adjusted to being in a new place, she often found herself turning to books, becoming an avid reader.

"I loved fairy tales," she recalls. "They were mysterious, romantic

and provided an alternate universe to growing up on an Army base."

This early passion for reading led to Artese pursuing an undergraduate degree in English at Yale University, and it was at Yale that she discovered an appreciation for Shakespeare and took as many classes as she could.

"Shakespeare's works are one of the central texts in Western culture," she says. "Along with the Bible, fairy tales and classical mythology, so much in his plays can be applied to modern themes, such as gender, race and politics."

After completing her Ph.D. at Northwestern University, Artese moved to Decatur in 2003 to take a position at Agnes Scott, where she began teaching Shakespeare and Renaissance literature courses. Her courses include Shakespeare and the Folktale, which explores the parallels between his plays and folktales, and Shakespeare and the Modern World, which examines how his plays influenced other works of art.

So how is she able to make Shakespeare relevant and interesting to her students who may think the

Bard of Avon's plays are challenging or boring?

"We jump right in," she says. "I think it helps that they read his works for an entire semester. They become comfortable as they start to recognize the vocabulary he uses and the patterns in his writing. I also try to come up with creative assignments."

Artese is also highly enthusiastic in her teaching, noting, "It's important for me to convey my excitement and passion for the subject. If I'm not interested and excited, how can I expect my students to be?"

The classroom culture is also important to her, and she tries to create an environment where students feel comfortable voicing their opinions and concerns.

"I work to cultivate an atmosphere where everyone is interested in what others are thinking, finding gold in what each person is saying and building upon that," she says.

As an extension of her teaching, Artese's research explores how Shakespeare's plays are rooted in folktales. She published "Shakespeare's Folktale Sources" in June 2015, and in October 2019, the "Shakespeare and the Folktale: An Anthology of Stories," which was born out of the course she teaches at Agnes Scott.

Whether it is through studying Shakespeare's plays or some other genre of literature, Artese wants her students to be able to think, write, read and express themselves, no matter what career path they choose. And if they happen to develop a love of reading, this is an added benefit Artese appreciates.

"Language and stories have always been a profound source of pleasure for me," says Artese. "It's so rewarding for me to have my students experience that as well."





Associate Professor of Music Jason Solomon

Teaching the Science of Music

When he was in first grade, Jason Solomon's mother bought him an album titled "Shout at the Devil" by the heavy metal band Motley Crüe. It was then that he decided he wanted to be a rock star when he grew up.

"I was fascinated with music at an early age, and I wanted to play the guitar," Solomon says.

He started taking guitar lessons and fell in love with the classical guitar, which with its narrower neck and steel strings, is slightly different in look and sound from the acoustic guitar. In high school, he and his friends formed Painted World, a rock band that played around the Atlanta area.

It turns out that was as far as Solomon decided to go on the road to being a rock star. When the time came for him to attend college, he decided to pursue the more academic route to music.

"My path curved," he says. "I studied guitar in college because it became clear to me that I wanted to teach."

Solomon went on to receive his undergraduate degree, master's degree and Ph.D. in music, all from the University of Georgia.

Now he shares his skill and love for music with students at Agnes Scott College, where is an associate professor of music and has been teaching in the college's robust music program since 2010.

Solomon teaches all levels of music theory at the college, including the four-semester music theory sequence, which covers fundamentals, diatonic harmony, chromaticism, post-tonal materials and jazz. He also teaches upper-level courses, such as Form and Analysis, Arranging and Orchestration, and Topics in Music Theory.

"Music theory is the science of music," he explains. "It's the framework for interpreting the music, and it teaches the ways in which music works. One objective of music theory is to open students' minds and to show them its relevance and how it will be helpful to them in whatever musical element they pursue."

He had his students in mind when he wrote the textbook "Music Theory Essentials," which was published in March 2019. The textbook is designed for use in all four levels of music theory, so college students have to use only one textbook through the sequence.

"I noticed textbooks were getting so long," Solomon says of the idea behind his writing the book. "I really wanted to streamline everything and make it more concise and easy to use."

In the classroom, one successful tool he uses to help students understand music and make it more accessible is to incorporate examples from popular music.

"For example, I enjoy showing that a certain musical phenomenon or process occurs in works by Beethoven as well as in songs by Radiohead," he says.

He recently added an assignment in his Music Theory II class in which students choose any song in any genre to analyze and then present it to the class through the lens of what they are learning. Doing so allows them to explore more in depth a song they like, and they then find themselves coming away with a deeper appreciation of the song.

When he is not teaching or playing in a guitar quartet, Solomon conducts research, much of which centers on harmonic function (how chords behave relative to other chords in a musical context) and spatialization (looking at the spatial structure of music and how it affects how people hear it).

Having put his early rock star ambition aside, at the end of the day, Solomon is doing what he believes he was always meant to do.

"I'm always inspired by my students," he says. "They are so curious and hardworking. They motivate me to be a better teacher. Music is a gift, and I am so grateful that I get to do and teach something that I love."



At Agnes Scott College, Southern hospitality comes in a surprising and small package. On Rebekah Scott Hall's front porch sits the cutest and friendliest dog one could ever hope to meet — her name is Ramona, and she is the official “Welcome Scottie” on campus.

A custom sculpture designed by Lundeen Sculptures, Ramona was installed in fall 2018 as part of the historic building's renovation. As an inspired representation of the college's spirit and named after Ramona Cartwright, the fictitious student that Scotties from the class of 1958 created, she has quickly become a popular member of the community. Located at the top of the steps leading into the Elizabeth Kiss Welcome Center on Rebekah Scott Hall's first floor, she is the college's full-time greeter. With a tail that looks ready to wag excitedly at any moment, she takes her important job seriously. She does, however, have a little help with her duties from her human counterpart.

Admission Experience Fellow Sydney McClure '18 manages the Welcome Center, where campus tours begin. McClure says she enjoys meeting prospective students and their families and sharing what makes Agnes Scott and SUMMIT such a unique experience.

Of Ramona, she notes, “Future Scotties will often stop and take a picture before they even step foot in the Welcome Center. It is a cool introduction to a newer Agnes Scott tradition that they can participate in even before they enroll.”

Unsurprisingly, Ramona has joined the college's Flat Agnes as a social media star. Everyone is encouraged to take selfies with her and share their photos on Instagram with the hashtag #ASCRamona. And helping to make her camera-ready, Ramona can frequently be found wearing stylish — and sometimes thematic — accessories that she is generously gifted with by students. Because of the positive response to her, she is also now prominently featured in illustrative form in select Agnes Scott recruitment materials, serving as the “face” of the college.

As far as Scotties go, there is much to rave about Ramona.



Ramona celebrates the Fourth of July.



Ramona takes a selfie with new friends.



Ramona greets Scotties joining the community.



CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

Raving About Ramona

BREAKING NEW GROUND



With purpose and innovation, Aleesia Tolliver Johnson '99 heads the largest school district in Indiana.

By Jennifer Jiles

When many new college graduates are recruited to work for a top global information technology company, the opportunity is a dream come true. The recruitment process is highly competitive, and few are chosen to come aboard. Upon her graduation from Agnes Scott College, Aleesia Tolliver Johnson '99 was one of these selected few, winning a coveted position at IBM, one of the most recognized brands in the world. A year later, despite the company being a great place to begin her career, Johnson resigned to pursue a different purpose.

"I quickly determined a job in private industry was not for me," Johnson says. "It was not my calling

and not the way I could best contribute to the world and my community. In my family, we have always placed a high priority on education and service. I wanted to pursue a career that would give me an opportunity to give my time and energies to both."

It was a decision that would change her life and set her on a new course professionally. After her epiphany at IBM, Johnson, who comes from a long line of educators and civil rights advocates, enrolled in graduate school. She earned a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan in 2001 and went on to work as a Teach For America corps member, teaching at a middle school in Paterson,

New Jersey. As she continued to build a career in education, she received a master's degree in teaching in 2007 from Oakland City University.

Johnson moved up the ladder at Teach For America and then at Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) Indy, serving as program director, assistant school leader and school leader, among other positions. Later, she held roles at Indianapolis Public Schools as innovation officer and deputy superintendent for academics. Johnson made history when she became the first African-American woman to lead the Indianapolis school district, first as the interim leader and then being named permanently in July 2019.



With more than 31,000 students, Indianapolis Public Schools is the largest district in Indiana. For Johnson, her history-making achievement is personally meaningful.

“I love children, and, like my mother and grandparents, I have a deep passion for education and service to the community,” she says. “My work is about building on their legacy.”

The Evansville, Indiana, native credits her education at Agnes Scott with helping her find her voice. Surrounded by strong women of diverse backgrounds, Johnson not only discovered her voice as a woman with leadership aspirations but also learned how to leverage this voice through conversations and debates with classmates. These experiences helped her to come into her own, fostering her strength and confidence in her leadership abilities.

Johnson’s arrival at Agnes Scott was part chance, part destiny. She learned about the college at an information session at her high school, and when she visited the campus on Scholars Weekend, she knew it was exactly where she wanted to begin her higher education journey.

“My high school graduating class only had 25 students, which made Agnes Scott’s small campus a perfect transition,” she says. “My professors greeted me by name; they knew me, and that is very important at the college level. I also built friendships with a group of women that continue to this day.”

Her fondest memories of Agnes Scott include talking and “being silly” in the dining hall with friends, attending formal ceremonies, like the ring ceremony during sophomore year, and having everyday experiences that helped her feel connected to the college and her classmates. She remembers professors and mentors who cared and the strong academic foundation

the college gave her. Johnson also carries with her a critical skill she cultivated at Agnes Scott that she employs as the district’s top educator: the ability to look at a problem through a wide lens.

“In my role as superintendent, it is really important for me to remember there are many different ways of learning and looking at an issue or topic. There is no one way to learn or to arrive at decisions,” she notes. “As I interact with teachers, staff and community members, I find this approach serves me well in pursuing our strategic priorities and leading change.”

Described as a dynamic, visionary leader with a track record of advocacy for educators and students, Johnson has already

developed and executed six strategic priorities for Indianapolis Public Schools that will anchor a larger 2025 strategic plan. Part of her strategy includes leading the considerably significant initiative of cultivating a racial equity mindset in all facets of the organization.

Johnson believes the groundwork for what she is doing today was laid when her grandfather told her service should be a person’s driving force and also when she saw her mother’s impact on her own students.

“I want to honor the work and sacrifices my ancestors made so I could have this wonderful opportunity. I can best do that by being a voice for justice, equity and the students I serve,” says Johnson.

“I love children, and, like my mother and grandparents, I have a **deep passion for education and service** to the community. My work is about building on their legacy.” — Aleesia Tolliver Johnson '99



Aleesia Tolliver Johnson '99, superintendent of the Indianapolis Public Schools, reads to a group of elementary students.



Journey Through a Crisis:

Inside Agnes Scott's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

By Nicholyn Hutchinson

In late December 2019, the media began reporting on a small cluster of pneumonia cases with an unknown cause in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province. As people prepared to ring in the new year and new decade, at first what was happening with this mysterious illness may have seemed as if it was safely a world away—until it wasn't.

Unprecedented Times Call for Unprecedented Measures

At the beginning of every spring semester, there is typically an air of excitement within the Agnes Scott College community, particularly among first-years eagerly anticipating their Global Journeys, seniors happily looking forward to Commencement and alumnae making plans to return to their beloved alma mater for Alumnae Weekend. When classes began on Jan. 14 after the winter break, there was no reason to believe that this spring would be different. No one could imagine how significantly life at Agnes Scott was about to change. By then, a severe acute respiratory illness, identified as being caused by a novel coronavirus, had begun its rapid spread beyond China.

A week after the college's spring semester started, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced the first confirmed case in the U.S. in Washington state, and closer to home, the first two cases were confirmed in Atlanta by the Georgia Department of Public Health in early March. In an attempt to slow the spread of the

illness, which was named COVID-19, restrictions were placed on international and domestic travel, stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders were issued, physical distancing practices were urged, and people were asked to self-quarantine and self-isolate. Infections and deaths, however, continued to rise globally, and on March 11, the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Three days later, President Donald Trump proclaimed a national emergency, which was followed by Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp announcing a public health state of emergency.

Agnes Scott, like many other higher education institutions around the country, was paying close attention to the unfolding events. The air of excitement with which the new semester began was now replaced with one of uncertainty. A crisis was brewing on the horizon, and foremost in President Leocadia I. Zak's and her leadership team's minds was the safety of the campus community and determining the college's response to COVID-19, of which the surrounding circumstances continually evolved.

Gundolf Graml, professor of German and then-assistant dean for global learning, was the driver behind one of the earliest decisions made by the college. Graml initiated conversations in mid-February with President Zak and her cabinet about how the coronavirus outbreaks overseas might affect Agnes Scott's various study-abroad opportunities, including Global Journeys, the weeklong, faculty-led immersive travel experiences for first-years.

In what represented the first formal discussions about COVID-19's potential impact on the college, Graml provided recommendations that led to President Zak's



Beginning as a small cluster, the COVID-19 outbreak spread rapidly throughout countries before being declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11. At the time of this issue's publication, WHO reports that close to nearly 12 million cases globally have been confirmed.

decision on February 27 to cancel a study tour to Japan and postpone Global Journeys trips to two countries—Italy and Croatia. Shortly afterward, with reports by public health experts forecasting the severity of the spread of the coronavirus, President Zak postponed the remainder of the Global Journeys trips that were scheduled to take place the week of March 9. This postponement would prove to be prescient when several Global Journeys destinations, such as New York and Spain, would become coronavirus hot spots in the ensuing weeks.

“The decision that we were going to have to postpone Global Journeys, one of our signature SUMMIT experiences, was a difficult one to make. This was not because we didn’t have information to make the decision—we knew where we were headed—but because we knew that our students would be disappointed,” recalls President Zak. “Our students are the heart of the college and why we are here, so it was important that I prioritized what was best for them. This was a tough, but necessary, decision.”

As each day passed, every news cycle brought more information about COVID-19, and in turn, brought more

concern at Agnes Scott. Everything was moving fast, and it was clear that more difficult decisions were to come.

With this in mind, President Zak appointed The President’s COVID-19 Task Force co-chaired by Karen Goff, vice president for student affairs and dean of students, and Ken England, vice president for business and finance, with participating members Mary Cain, Charles Loidans Associate Professor of History; LaNeta Counts, associate vice president for technology; Graml, now-associate vice president and dean of curriculum and strategic initiatives; and Danita Knight, vice president for communications and marketing.

“The task force’s primary purpose is to closely monitor the ongoing developments of COVID-19, assess the evolving situation and plan for possible impacts to the campus community, and make recommendations to the president’s cabinet on issues that impact the college,” explains Goff.

While the task force represents a diversity of knowledge and experience, external subject matter experts are routinely brought in for consultation. This includes conferring with public health authorities and higher education organizations such as the Georgia Independent College Association. In conjunction with the task force’s establishment, a website was developed to serve as a coronavirus resource and information center for the Agnes Scott community. A task force email address was also made available so that students, faculty and staff could contact the task force directly with questions, concerns and ideas about the college’s COVID-19 response.

With the postponement of Global Journeys and spring break ending on March 21, the task force began to evaluate the different options the college was faced with, given physical distancing guidelines and a statewide shelter-in-place order. The task force tried to find a way that Agnes Scott could remain open, but in the end, as a residential campus with a dense population, there was only one choice.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, was among the public health experts whose COVID-19 guidelines Agnes Scott followed. Photo: James Gathany, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

“We were looking at the data behind the virus, we knew how it spread and we knew this was a growing pandemic. We knew for the health and safety of our students and our faculty that remote learning was going to be the best option,” says England.

Goff notes that considerable thought was given to the impact of the campus closing on Agnes Scott’s students, in particular on the most vulnerable students who might have challenges finishing the academic semester remotely.

“When we thought about what it would require to have students remain, however, we recognized that it would not be safe for them or the whole community. And so the decision was made with considerable deliberation, and we concluded it was one we had to make,” she says.

When President Zak announced on March 13 that all classes would be moved online after spring break, the entire college community had to pivot and adjust. Faculty and students needed to quickly adapt to remote teaching and learning, and employees across the college had to figure out how to fulfill their job responsibilities through telework.

Initially, President Zak planned for the college to be physically closed for two weeks, but the severity of the pandemic grew, and the two weeks turned into the remainder of spring semester. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis was causing unprecedented change for the college—change that Agnes Scott would meet head-on.

Leaving Home Away From Home

Post-closure, the first monumental task to be undertaken was moving hundreds of students out of the college’s residence halls, which needed to be done within a short period of time. Goff and England commended the Office of Residence Life for demonstrating exceptional leadership in successfully completing a process that was complicated by following the necessary COVID-19 safety guidelines.

“Once it was decided that students would need to move out, the Office of Residence Life communicated clear instructions for students to remove their belongings while still maintaining physical distancing,” says England. “They were under tremendous pressure, and



The college’s coronavirus website serves as the information and resource hub for the Agnes Scott community. The website has had more than 24,000 page views since its launch on March 5.

I’m sure bore the brunt of a lot of frustrations of students and parents who were realizing that this college year was basically over. Never once did they flinch. They maintained their composure and did a job that made us all proud,” says England.

“The Office of Residence Life team was impressive. They quickly assembled and started to parse out responsibilities. Using the SignUpGenius app, students selected specific times to come to campus to retrieve their belongings. We also granted the option of shipping and storing students’ belongings, especially those living out of state,” says Goff. “The team worked to move students out under pressure and with little advance notice. They had to think about how to do everything expeditiously, safely and respectfully, and they accomplished it.”

The move out of the residence halls was deeply emotional for everyone involved, and students struggled with having to leave campus and how suddenly everything happened.

“There were some students who felt a deep sense of loss, which is understandable. The closing was so abrupt, and none of us could have anticipated the situation that we would find ourselves in,” Goff notes. “For students, Agnes Scott is their home, and we have created that environment for them. And so you can imagine feeling like you’ve been uprooted from your home, and for some of them, placed back in situations that are not always ideal.”

For students who could not leave Agnes Scott due to extenuating circumstances, the college’s Avery Glen apartments served as a temporary residence, with meals provided by Dining Services. Through a sign-up form, alumnae were also able to offer students housing and storage. Additionally, the college’s Division of College Advancement launched a campaign, calling for gifts to the Student Emergency Fund and The Fund for Agnes Scott to assist students with travel, technology and other pandemic-related needs. So far this year, nearly \$65,000 has been given to the Student Emergency Fund, which is a record amount raised for the fund.

“I’m incredibly grateful for the support that the Student Emergency Fund has received from Georgia Power, the United Way of Greater Atlanta, the Community Foundation of Atlanta and our alumnae, students, faculty and staff. There really was a rallying cry for those who might have been in need, and it was clearly responded to by members of every part of the community,” says President Zak.

People also galvanized on social media, with alumnae, faculty, staff and friends of the college sharing and requesting resources for students. One student-led initiative on Facebook gained traction, with the Office of Alumnae Relations partnering on the effort, and became Scotties Helping Scotties. (See story on page 26.)

Learning Goes From the Classroom to Zoom

Although the time frame was tight, the college was more than prepared for the transition to virtual classrooms. England credits the Division of Academic Affairs for taking the lead on laying the foundation for Agnes Scott’s move to online teaching and learning.



Agnes Scott faculty quickly adapted to teaching remotely using Zoom. From left to right: Professor of Education Toby Emert meets with Maddie Harris '23, a student in his EDU/ENG 225 Digital Literacies course; Associate Professor of English Nicole Stamant teaches her ENG 214: Survey of American Literature, 1900-Present class; and Kathy '68 and Lawrence Ashe Associate Professor of Sociology Regine O. Jackson delivers a lecture for her Urban Lives class.

“Even before we decided to go to remote teaching and learning, they were developing plans and processes to allow faculty to deliver their course content remotely,” he says. “They did an amazing job in preparing us for what we hoped would not happen but in reality did.”

Christine Cozzens, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college, recalls sending an email early on that spurred people into action. In addition to Information Technology Services, other college offices and departments, including the Center for Digital and Visual Literacy, Center for Teaching and Learning, McCain Library and SUMMIT programs, lent their time and skills.

“We really had to figure out how we were going to conduct the academic program under shelter-in-place conditions. In one of the last ‘real’ meetings, we said, ‘What do we have to do to make this happen?’ We realized that we had a lot to learn,” she says. “It was a very collaborative effort and involved the bringing together of a lot of pieces of what was a fairly complex picture.”

Cozzens adds that what would be best for the students was at the center of every recommendation, which was echoed by Goff and England regarding The President’s COVID-19 Task Force’s process.

Since classes were not in session for two weeks because of SUMMIT-related experiences and spring break, they took advantage of this period to prepare for remote classes, selecting the videoconferencing software Zoom as the platform. Information Technology Services and the Center for Digital and Visual Literacy then began the critical step of training.

“They started holding workshops almost immediately for faculty so that we could start seeing what it was we needed to do, hear from people who were already doing it and then practice and deepen our knowledge,” says Cozzens. “The Center for Digital and Visual Literacy also established a resources page for faculty so that they could find out about best practices.”

There were still key issues to tackle before going online: the adjustment of the college’s academic policies such as offering pass/fail options for classes, receiving permission from regulatory bodies to move to remote teaching, learning what the technological needs of

students and faculty were, and finding ways to help those who did not have computers or Wi-Fi at home.

When spring semester classes resumed remotely on March 23, while many of the technological and administrative challenges were resolved, the human ones soon became apparent. Cozzens said that they found some students were having a harder time participating because of different factors in their home environments.

“We realized that they were anxious because of their situations, because of the newness of online learning and what it would involve and because of the pandemic. They really had a multiple dose of all the worries that came with this crisis,” she says, noting that faculty and staff, in particular those in the Office of the Dean of Students and Office of Academic Advising and Accessible Education, continued to reach out to students experiencing difficulties to offer assistance.

As another way to provide support, students themselves suggested that a resources webpage would be helpful, and the college created one within days and added it to its coronavirus website. Serving as a one-stop shop, this student-focused webpage provides information and links for academic, wellness and general resources, including health, counseling and career services.

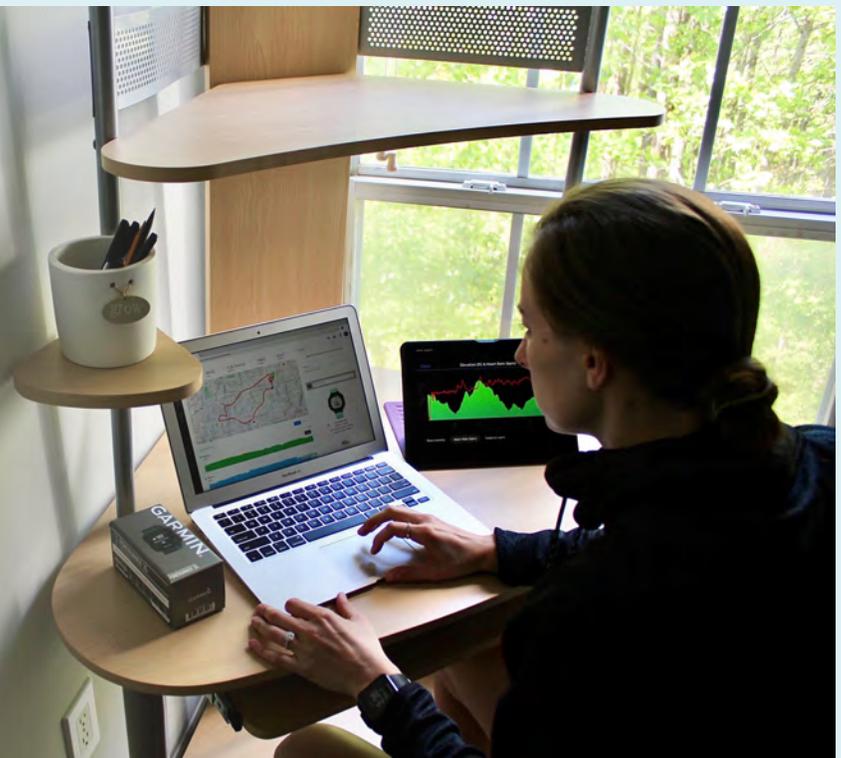
Despite the hurdles, the shift to remote learning was transformative for faculty and students, who made discoveries and experienced growth from being stretched outside of their comfort zones.

“Faculty realized that much of what they’re learning from teaching online is relevant to in-person teaching, and some of the things you can do are interesting,” observes Cozzens. “For example, for those who had never done an online group blog before, discovering it as a teaching technique was really an eye-opener. It’s expanding their repertoire of teaching tools by this embracing of more digital approaches.”

For the students, she says, “Many of them have a sense of mastery of a new way of approaching learning, something that they may find very relevant when they get jobs because in the workplace there are lot of digital tools being used. It’s part of being fluid and fluent in moving from one realm to another, and many students



GPS running smartwatches by Garmin allowed cross-country head coach Molly Carl to continue to train the team by tracking their activities and performance via an app. Inset: Cross-country team member Andrea Barron '23 out on a run with her smartwatch.



have developed a sense that they can switch gears. Maybe it was bumpy at first, but they figured it out. And that's good—we want our students to always be learning new things.”

Recreating Campus Life Online

Beyond academics, Agnes Scott also worked to bring other aspects of the students' college experience to life online. Activities from yoga to service projects to treasured traditions such as Pancake Jam were held through Zoom or on social media. Purple Fridays encouraged everyone to wear purple every Friday and galvanized the community as members shared uplifting messages and Zoom screenshots of themselves on social media using the hashtag #ScottieStrong. Student-athletes, such as the members of the cross-country team, used technology to train and stay in contact with their teammates and coaches. The college also brought guest speakers to campus virtually, including a series of discussions hosted by the Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion that featured faculty and alumnae addressing the social and cultural implications of COVID-19.

With Commencement postponed, there was instead a weeklong celebration for students. Seniors were also mailed congratulations gift packages, spotlighted on the Center for Student Involvement's Instagram and honored with a graduation ceremony video for the class of 2020 shown live on the college's Facebook page. (See the inside cover for a list of graduates.) Additionally, for future Scotties, the class of 2024, the Office of Admission held virtual campus tours, information sessions and recruitment events.

Like the campus community, alumnae had to adapt to engaging in new ways amid the pandemic, and they have maintained close ties with each other and Agnes Scott. They donated generously to the college's Student Emergency Fund and The Fund for Agnes Scott, and some opened the doors of their homes to students in need of temporary housing when the residence halls closed. On the Agnes Scott Alumnae Association's Facebook page, they hosted a virtual toast to welcome graduates to the alumnae family. They also held mini-reunions with their class years via Zoom and, through the Office of Alumnae Relations' Stay Connected Scotties campaign, shared photos on social media and made check-in calls with other alumnae. A virtual Alumnae Convocation, which sought to capture the spirit of Alumnae Weekend, also allowed alumnae all over the world to reunite and reconnect online.

Navigating Uncharted Territory Together

While Agnes Scott demonstrated resilience in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the crisis on the college is evident and anticipated to be long-lasting.

“I think it's changed how we operate, how we teach and how students learn. We now have a greater awareness of our resourcefulness and resilience, and we have learned that we truly are innovative. There is no going back to what we were before,” says Goff. “We have discovered there are some things, like the great use of technology, that we were underutilizing and can really help us to do things more effectively and efficiently in the future.”

England agrees, adding, “What I have told people is that the Agnes Scott when we return will look very





Assistant Director for Student Involvement Jennifer Duncan and other staff volunteers packed gift boxes that were mailed to graduates. Items in the box included a letter from President Zak, class of 2020 tumbler, mint box and congratulatory sign to display indoors or outdoors.

different from the Agnes Scott we left. By pushing ourselves to go to the next level in how we do things remotely, there is muscle memory there. We will be a stronger and more nimble institution when we come back this fall semester whatever that may look like.”

“We are seeing the expansion of the college into the digital age. We are doing things virtually that we weren’t inspired to do before,” says President Zak. “We have the ability for some people to work remotely, and for the coming fall, we want to ensure students can receive instruction in the classroom and also virtually. These are big and exciting changes for the college. Becoming more digital, more technologically savvy and innovative with respect to that technology are some of the greatest impacts on Agnes Scott that are here to stay.” Another lasting legacy, she says, will be the memory of the class of 2020, who persevered through the upheaval of their final semester.

As the pandemic continues, the college has been proactively preparing for the unknown way forward. The President’s COVID-19 Task Force will continue to play an instrumental role, and President Zak notes that it has become a model for leaders at other institutions after she shared with her peers the work the task force has done at Agnes Scott.

“They were very impressed by how the task force was organized so quickly and then jumped into action, gathering and disseminating information at a very rapid rate,” she says. “They were also struck by the level of communication that was being prepared and distributed among the campus community and how the task force itself incorporated others into the plan, including students, faculty and staff members based upon their

expertise. They thought the structure of the task force was excellent,” she says.

In April, President Zak appointed three additional task forces — Instructional Planning, Campus Operations, and Student Retention and Persistence — and more recently announced a health advisory group. Students also formed a student advisory group for information gathering and recommendations. In May, the Board of Trustees met and discussed strategies to strengthen and sustain the college long term. There remain a lot of hard work and choices ahead for Agnes Scott, but there is no shortage of students, faculty, staff and alumnae rising to the occasion.

“People have come together in true Agnes Scott spirit; it has been all hands on deck. Everyone realizes that we are going to have to navigate this uncharted territory together,” says Goff.

“Students reached out and gave support to each other, and they worked diligently to stay on track with their studies. Faculty did an extraordinary job of pivoting during the critical two-week period. When many other colleges and universities had to shut down to make the transition to online happen, our faculty never missed a beat. Staff seamlessly continued their work remotely, and Information Technology Services was phenomenal in the part they played. Alumnae and friends of the college contributed greatly in supporting our efforts,” says President Zak. “Everyone has been truly remarkable, particularly in the ways they have joined together to accomplish whatever was needed. Seeing the power of our community as we move forward through the COVID-19 crisis has been heartening.”

This power of community is why, in one of the most challenging times in Agnes Scott’s 131-year history, the college continues to remain #ScottieStrong.

To stay updated on Agnes Scott’s ongoing response to COVID-19, visit agnesscott.edu/coronavirus. To make a gift, visit agnesscott.edu/giving. You can also view the video graduation ceremony celebrating the class of 2020 on the college’s YouTube channel.



The college placed Thank You signs on its campus to show appreciation for essential workers and teachers and parents.



TAKING ACTION: Students Make a Difference at Agnes Scott During the Pandemic

—By Nicholyn Hutchinson

A defining characteristic of Agnes Scott College students is their ability to lead, and the COVID-19 pandemic crisis shone a light on how they do so with passion and purpose. Leveraging technology and social media tools, they took on active roles in serving the campus community.

The Scotties of Color Healing Circle, headed by Tiyamika Williams '22, held virtual support groups weekly for students to check in regarding their mental health and sound baths to help them cope. Danie Weinstein '22, president of Hillel, and Teresa Enriquez Taxis '21, president of the Catholic Student Association, spearheaded initiatives that ensured students had virtual spaces for prayer during the Holy Week, daily readings/reflections and other activities. Cydney Owens '21 held weekly virtual Zumba classes for students to assist with stress relief. And the list of the inspiring students who contributed in their own impactful ways to the college's response to COVID-19 continues.



Chan Spaulding '22, chair of COSMO, the Coalition of Student Multicultural Organizations, moderated “A Conversation on the Social and Culture Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic,” which was a webinar featuring artist, activist and alumna Yehimi Cambrón '14 and Kathy '68 and Lawrence Ashe Associate Professor of Sociology Regine O. Jackson. The webinar was part of a series

conceived and hosted by the Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion to discuss the cultural, racial and social implications of the pandemic.

“These issues are ongoing and during the pandemic they have progressed. We really had to have these conversations to raise awareness and educate people because the issues are not really as publicized as they should be,” says Spaulding. “We were just exercising what we do at Agnes Scott. If any school was going to do this, it was going to be Agnes Scott that really got the information out there to represent these people who need their stories to be heard.”

Spaulding notes that attendees, many of whom were not affiliated with Agnes Scott and learned of it from social media and word-of-mouth, shared positive feedback.

“I heard from a lot of people who didn't want it to end because it was informative, and there were comments like ‘I didn't know or think about that,’” she says. “And that's the reaction we wanted. We wanted people to learn what they didn't know before and look at things differently.”

Tsering Shola '23 took action by establishing a Facebook group connecting students to resources including housing, storage and transportation. Also serving as a platform for people to stay informed and share positive messages, the group has 350-plus members made up of students, faculty, alumnae and individuals from the surrounding Decatur community. The college's Division of College Advancement and Office of Alumnae Relations partnered with Shola on the initiative under the name Scotties Helping Scotties.

The spark for Shola's idea came after hearing a fellow student's worries amid the news that local colleges were beginning to send

students home for the remainder of the spring semester.

“I became aware of COVID-19's differing impacts when my friend, an international student, expressed her concerns about traveling home where she would be susceptible to contracting the virus,” she says. “At the time, Agnes Scott had not yet implemented a policy regarding remote learning, but I realized many students, especially low-income, international and those who do not have a home or a safe home environment, would be disproportionately affected.”



For Shola, starting the Facebook group was an especially meaningful way to pay it forward.

“Throughout my first year at Agnes Scott, there have been a plethora of incidents where a friend, faculty member, staff or someone I didn't personally know supported me unconditionally and in moments of need,” she says. “In times of great uncertainty, it was a natural instinct and response to help my peers by creating a Facebook group that would facilitate accommodations for students in need.”

Ximena Guillen '22, president of PathMakers, an interdepartmental program supporting first-generation college students at Agnes Scott, organized a virtual scholarship panel, encouraged mentor check-ins and connected students to resources.

Guillen notes that the transition to college for first-generation students can be difficult, and many of them on campus have developed

practices that help them not only stay motivated but also excel in their academic courses. With the shift to remote learning, she says she and others found it challenging.



“Many of us first-generation students wear many hats, including holding an important role in the household, and in this sense, schooling may not be the first thing that comes to mind. In a similar manner, it is difficult to hold an open dialogue with someone in [our] immediate household because there is not someone who understands the particular struggles that come along with being a college student,” she notes. “These several responsibilities combined with the financial burden of coming from low-income households are taking a toll on first-generation students and have brought heavy emotions for [us] to deal with.”

Guillen worked to keep first-generation students engaged with the college and to make them aware support was available. The scholarship panel provided tactics for seeking financial assistance for college, and the PathMakers Mentorship Program, which launched this semester, paired members with Agnes Scott faculty or staff mentors who are first-generation college graduates. PathMakers also promoted the Scottie Emergency Fund to its members and held a Spotlight Banquet ceremony online to recognize Agnes Scott’s outstanding first-generation students. These targeted activities for the specific needs of first-generation students were greatly welcomed.

“To my knowledge, both PathMakers members and first-generation allies on campus have

appreciated our efforts to help first-generation college students in a virtual setting,” she says. “We have received messages of encouragement and gratitude for continuing to remind our PathMakers that we are here to help.”

Through the pandemic and their projects, Spaulding, Shola and Guillen have learned lessons about leadership in times of crisis.

“One thing I’ve definitely learned is that leadership does not stop. It’s not something that you can pick and choose when you want to do something. You have to lead at all times,” says Spaulding. “It’s not just something that you write down on a resume. It’s a lot deeper than that, and it takes a lot [to lead]. All of our student leaders, we’re students too, and we’re going through this situation like everyone else. But we had to step up and be there for everyone and make sure that we’re upholding everything we did on campus at home.”

“I’ve learned that leadership doesn’t have to be perfect ... Mistakes were inevitable while acting in an urgent fashion and creating the Facebook group, but I knew if I delayed taking action, then I would personally become even more anxious about the what ifs,” says Shola, who was recently honored with the Emerging Leader Award, a student leadership recognition from the Student Government Association.

“Additionally, leadership, especially in times of crisis, demands teamwork more than ever. I would not have been able to run the Facebook group without alumna Taina Brown ’15 and classmate Courtney Pollard ’23, who help manage the page. Moreover, all the members of the group have been integral in accommodating needs and offering their support.”

“From both a local and national perspective, I believe my biggest takeaway about leadership is that decisions should not be made abruptly. The different factors leading to their respective outcomes need to be considered before a choice is finalized because the effects, whether positive or negative, can continue to ripple to the larger population for an indefinite amount of time,” observes Guillen. “In a similar way, I have realized just how vital it is to reach out to people individually to check in with them because sometimes we get so consumed in trying to reach the whole audience, we forget to consider the unique circumstances each person is facing and may not have spoken up about.”

College students are often described as being tomorrow’s global leaders and change agents, but at Agnes Scott, they are proving that they are leading and making a difference today.



PathMakers president Ximena Guillen '22 (center) with executive board members Isabel Gaspar '22 (left) and Kimberly Madrid Quiles '20 (right) at the third annual First-Generation Celebration Day.

Supporting Success

SUMMIT Peer Advisors Program Vital to the First-Year Student Experience – By Jennifer Jiles

Four years ago, when first-year students arrived to begin their education at Agnes Scott College, they were welcomed warmly into a supportive campus environment, but like most new students, they still had challenges with adjusting to college life. This changed in fall semester 2015 with the launch of SUMMIT, which includes an advising model that provides every student with a personalized Board of Advisors. Recognizing that many first-year students could have greater academic success with a peer-to-peer support system, a SUMMIT peer advisor is on this board, which also has a SUMMIT advisor, a faculty member and access to career mentoring.

Managed by Agnes Scott's Office of Academic Advising and Accessible Education, the peer advising program has 21 SUMMIT peer advisors who are selected through a competitive process from an applicant pool of upperclass students across majors. SUMMIT peer advisors are high-achieving and emerging leaders who represent the diversity of the college's student population, and they play an

influential part in fostering a positive first-year experience.

"We found that providing foundational support in the first four to six weeks of a new student's arrival at Agnes Scott is key to helping them be more successful in the first year," says Jessamyn Doan Ewing, a SUMMIT advisor. "SUMMIT peer advisors are key in helping first-year students acclimate into the Agnes Scott community and culture, navigate campus life and form their own academic success strategies."

"SUMMIT peer advisors provide crucial information on accessing campus resources, establishing rapport with professors, understanding expectations of them by the college and building relationships within the academic community," adds Machamma Quinichett, director of the SUMMIT advisors and associate director of academic advising and accessible education.

"I see our roles as being familiar faces and a safe space to ask questions and to be a sounding board with real human experience," says SUMMIT peer advisor Alaina Bandanza '20, who is a biology

major and whose advising area is science, technology, engineering and math. "Success looks different to everyone; it is mostly about finding what works for new students and making use of all their resources."

In the Office of Academic Advising and Accessible Education, seven SUMMIT advisors each provide oversight to three peer advisors. According to Jennifer Cannady, assistant dean of the college and director of academic advising and accessible education, SUMMIT peer advisors play a significant role in providing support to SUMMIT advisors.

"As students themselves, SUMMIT peer advisors are particularly helpful at answering process and logistics-type questions for new students. This helps our SUMMIT advisors to have more time for the kind of substantive advising conversations that are the hallmark of our Board of Advisors model," Cannady says.

Training is essential to SUMMIT peer advisors' preparation and ability to model best strategies for success to new students. Following the SUMMIT peer advisor selection process in March, mandatory training sessions are held in April and again in August, shortly before the academic year starts.

"During their training, peer advisors learn that we expect them to relate to students and be open and very reflective in their communications with those advisees," says Kaitlin Jacobson, a SUMMIT advisor who co-directs the peer program with Doan Ewing. "SUMMIT peer advisors should be able to connect to their own purpose, reflect on it and articulate what they have accomplished so far, including how they reframed failures into opportunities to learn and grow."



SUMMIT Advisors Kaitlin Jacobson (left) and Jessamyn Doan Ewing, co-directors of the SUMMIT Peer Advising Program.

“SUMMIT peer advisors are key in helping first-year students acclimate into the Agnes Scott community and culture, navigate campus life and form their own academic success strategies.” — Jessamyn Doan Ewing, SUMMIT advisor

Relationship building between incoming students and their respective SUMMIT peer advisor begins via email during the summer prior to fall semester in order to help with the transition before their arrival.

“We want new students to begin building a network before their first year with us begins,” says Quinichett.

In August, when the academic year begins, peer advisors immerse themselves in getting to know their advisees and provide them with insight on everything from forming good study habits to seeking tutoring early to class attendance.

In September, with the support of SUMMIT advisors, peer advisors use their training to lead Sum It Up, a three-week workshop launched in 2018 for first-years in which participation is voluntary. Students and SUMMIT peer advisors are grouped based on academic skills and interests they display in creative/qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis or lab and health sciences.

“The first Sum It Up workshop we held involved grouping students by skills, and it was a breakthrough,” observes Cannady. “It contextualized the study skills first-year students

need and showed them the relevance of knowledge in subjects within and outside their major.”

According to Cannady and Quinichett, as faculty learn more about the program, their support and appreciation for the role of peer advisors continues to grow and many also encourage their students participate in the workshop.

At the end of the fall semester, the SUMMIT peer advisors’ roles end, and they plan a final event, Chill Out, for the last Friday of the semester.

“Chill Out is designed for them to wish their advisees well, help them relax before exams, allow them to ask final questions and reassure the first-years they are prepared to launch,” says Quinichett. “It is a great way to create closure and celebrate the end of their first semester.”

Since its establishment, Agnes Scott’s innovative team-based advising model has been transformative for the college, which is currently ranked number one for first-year experiences in the country by U.S. News & World Report, in part because of this model. But what is most meaningful is seeing how peer advising has made a difference for new students who are



Move-In Day marks the official start of college life for new Scotties, and their SUMMIT peer advisors help them with the transition.

stepping into the unknown when they begin their college journey.

As Sigal Kahn ’20, an English literature major and a SUMMIT peer advisor whose academic advising area is arts and humanities, says, “It is a big shift to figure out who is who on campus and how their roles fit into your needs. Sometimes first-year students just need someone to see them and hear them, to understand that at any given moment, someone has their back. I know that having a SUMMIT peer advisor is a comfort to them.”



SUMMIT peer advisor Jackie Hernandez ’22 (right) colors with Sonai Wyche ’23 (center) and Briana Fleming ’23 during Chill Out, an end-of-semester celebration where advisors and advisees relax and spend time together.



SUMMIT peer advisor Claire Romine ’21 speaks at a Meet Your Advisor orientation session in August 2019 with the class of 2023.



Guiding the Way

A path is created by the footsteps of those who have gone before, and at Agnes Scott College, first-years have SUMMIT peer advisors as guides who have been in their shoes and can help them find their way. Here, five SUMMIT peer advisors from the fall 2019 cohort discuss their important roles and why they find it rewarding to assist in supporting new Scotties.

Camryn Smith '21

Hometown: Stone Mountain, Georgia
Major: Neuroscience and Creative Writing
Advising Area: Lab and Health Sciences



Why I Became a SUMMIT Peer Advisor

I wanted to become more a part of and supportive of the Agnes Scott community by participating in on-campus organizations. When I was a first-year, I found my SUMMIT peer advisor to be rather helpful and very welcoming during the summer before school even

started. I participated in almost all of the activities that the peer advisors had. Because I found them beneficial, and I happened to have a relatively good semester with a smooth transition into college, I wanted to pay it forward and help other first-years transition to college life by passing down the things that I have learned and am still learning.

What I Have Enjoyed the Most

What I've enjoyed most about being a SUMMIT peer advisor is meeting new first-years and new students. It is a great reminder of where one used to be and where one is now, especially now that I am a junior. You get to see how much Agnes Scott affects you and how much it has helped you to grow even within a single semester. I like it most because of how I get to help the first-years, but it is also a reminder of why I chose to come to Agnes Scott to begin with. Such a reminder makes for an even richer experience as a student.

The Importance of the Program

The SUMMIT peer advising program is important to Agnes Scott because it allows first-year students and even parents, in the beginning, to see what Agnes Scott does and can do for students. It gives them a chance to see and hear from students from all different types of backgrounds. We as a group may not represent all who exist at Agnes Scott, but we are quite diverse and offer the endless possibilities that a person can make with their education. Because of such diversity in people, it allows everyone to know that there is a place for them here and a place for them in leadership, no matter who they are. It also allows people to see the highs and lows of being a college student. The program isn't made up of perfect people, but people who have experienced life and the highs and lows in academics, which is important to talk about because the journey through college isn't perfect or easy. But that doesn't mean a person can't get through it because of XYZ. It is because of those variables that it may be difficult, but it isn't impossible. This program is important because it shows people the possibilities and gives them the tools to help guide them through their individual journey so they may reach their unique goals.

Learning About Leadership

Being a SUMMIT peer advisor has taught me that anyone can be a leader. It is something I knew, but not something that I always saw. Being around different types of people has shown me that it is truly anyone that could be a leader. It has also taught me about the collaboration it takes for good leadership to be observed. Without the other students who are a part of the SUMMIT peer advising program and the SUMMIT advisors who are themselves great leaders, the program wouldn't be what it is — nor would it have such collaboration, cooperation and respect.

Lizzy Engsberg '20

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia
Major: Psychology
Advising Area: Quantitative



Why I Became a SUMMIT Peer Advisor

One of the main reasons I applied to become a SUMMIT peer advisor was to give back to the Agnes Scott community, and helping brand-new Scotties in their transition to Agnes Scott seemed like the perfect way to apply my own skills and experiences in a meaningful way.

What I Have Enjoyed the Most

I most enjoy seeing my advisees grow as students and people, even after I am not officially part of their support system. This is my second year serving as a SUMMIT peer advisor, and it has been so fulfilling to see my advisees from last year hanging out with their friends around campus, getting leadership positions in organizations and generally thriving!

The Importance of the Program

Agnes Scott has an incredible network of support for its students, but we as current students can provide a different perspective to new Scotties to help them even more. Coming to college is a time of big changes, and it can be difficult or even scary. SUMMIT peer advisors are there to help first-years navigate this new terrain and hopefully make their transition as smooth as possible.

Learning About Leadership

Being a SUMMIT peer advisor has taught me many things about leadership and my own leadership style, but one that especially sticks with me is that authenticity is better than perfectionism. Even though admitting that I am not always perfect takes a lot of vulnerability, no one else is perfect either and that is more than OK. While talking about time management and study skills can be helpful, some of the most impactful moments happened because I shared my experiences about needing tutoring, choosing to hang out with friends instead of studying for a test or forgetting to turn in an assignment on time.

Olivia Ancrum '20

Hometown: Savannah, Georgia
Major: Public Health, Minor in Women,
Gender & Sexuality Studies
Advising Area: Social Sciences



Why I Became a SUMMIT Peer Advisor

I applied to be a SUMMIT peer advisor because I'm a first-generation college student and moving to Atlanta to start college was different from anything I had ever anticipated. My first semester on campus was life-changing because of the SUMMIT peer advisors and how they modeled academic and personal success. They confirmed all the feelings I was experiencing and introduced me to the resources that I would need to be more confident about my future. When applications launched for the following year, I thought it

would be the best way to pay it forward and ensure that any student, especially those from disadvantaged communities, received the same support. You do not have to be alone at Agnes Scott.

What I Have Enjoyed the Most

With each school year, the incoming class is so different. I really enjoy learning about their interests, backgrounds and how they might use these factors to inform their goals. It's a testament to Agnes Scott's efforts to create a space that defends the benefits of an interdisciplinary education. My advisees are aspiring artists, scientists, dancers and health care professionals. I have the privilege of talking to them about their academic purpose and introducing them to resources and faculty that are available throughout this journey. By the end of the first semester, my advisees are considering the ways they can use their majors to fit into a bigger aspiration. Art becomes a tool for education, and science becomes a vessel for communication. I simply love helping Scotties discover their unique academic pathway.

The Importance of the Program

What stands out to me specifically is the SUMMIT peer advisor's ability to introduce incoming Scotties to the campus culture. Your SUMMIT advisor can show you which classes to take and which resources may help you maximize your potential, but they aren't current students. They don't have to worry about living away from home for the first time and getting a job. SUMMIT peer advisors are experiencing SUMMIT in real time, so we can speak to students on a personal level. While we are in an academic support role, we know that your academic success depends on your personal success, so we speak to that balance. These interpersonal communications are what bonds the students to their environment and then college isn't as lonely or overwhelming as they thought.

Learning About Leadership

Being a SUMMIT peer advisor taught me that leadership is adaptive and personal. Every leader is working from their personal experience and perspective. How I interact with my advisees is different from other SUMMIT peer advisors, but we all have the same goal of promoting academic success. My identity as a black woman and a first-generation college student strongly informs my leadership because it helps me to connect and share with students. SUMMIT peer advising encourages you to tap into these experiences and collaborate with others, including the SUMMIT advisors. We find ways to execute our goals together by valuing authenticity, vulnerability and connectedness. I wouldn't be the leader I am today without being a SUMMIT peer advisor.

Quynh Nguyen '20

Hometown: Bien Hoa, Vietnam

Major: Chemistry

Advising Area: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math



Why I Became a SUMMIT Peer Advisor

Transitioning from high school to college is a challenging and exciting process. Reflecting on my academic journey at Agnes Scott, I've realized how important mentorship, leadership and guidance are during this critical time of transition and adjustment. During my first semester at

Agnes Scott, I remember being so confused with all my major, minor and SUMMIT requirements. After meeting and receiving advice from my SUMMIT advisor and my SUMMIT peer advisor, I was able to set up an academic plan and felt much more at ease because of their energy, excitement and warmth. They were incredibly influential in helping me get through my first year of college. Inspired by them, I wanted to become a SUMMIT peer advisor to help students have a smoother transition and feel more comfortable and confident in facing the situations that arise throughout their first year. I believe this is also a meaningful and interesting way to participate in the campus community and get a new perspective on college life.

What I Have Enjoyed the Most

The most rewarding part about being a SUMMIT peer advisor was seeing my advisees' smiles when they told me that they listened to my advice and realized that everything would be fine, no matter how overwhelming classes and adjusting to college seemed at the beginning of their first year. Being able to help my advisees solve problems and grow as individuals is a rewarding feeling. I am proud to see them doing well in their classes and involved on campus.

The Importance of the Program

In my opinion, peer mentoring is an essential part of each first-year student's academic plan. SUMMIT peer advisors can relate to their advisees in a way that faculty and staff may not be able to since they have also been in a similar situation and experienced most of the struggles that their advisees are going through. The SUMMIT peer advisor program at Agnes Scott is important because it helps first-year students adapt to the new academic environment, know about the resources available on campus and gain a sense of connection to the campus community.

Learning About Leadership

Through this position, I became more confident in myself and in my ability to lead. I improved my ability to approach situations in a manner that was best for each student and tailor my responses to their needs. This will help me in my academics and career in the future by taking different perspectives and trying to see things from another person's point of view. I also improved my interpersonal communication and collaboration skills by working with different advisees. I will continue to use and enhance these essential leadership and teamwork skills in my classes and future teamwork.

Sigal Kahn '20

Hometown: Carlsbad, California

Major: English Literature-Creative Writing and Sociology and Anthropology

Advising Area: Qualitative



Why I Became a SUMMIT Peer Advisor

I wanted to be there for my first-year students in a way that my SUMMIT peer advisor wasn't. I wanted to be a support system for people who didn't know where to go with their questions. I wanted to be an approachable resource, to be a friendly face and a comfort in a place where first-years are still learning

the ins and outs of their everyday life, both academic and nonacademic.

What I Have Enjoyed the Most

I love my advisees! With my whole heart! They are the reason I continue to do this. I love connecting with them and listening to their experiences. It is so much fun seeing them in the hallways and waving and smiling and the overall excitement when we run into each other. It is incredibly validating that I am fulfilling my role as a resource and a friendly face. I want to inspire them to do their best work here and to also know when it is time to ask for help as well as when it is time to take care of themselves.

The Importance of the Program

The SUMMIT peer advisor program is important because it is centered on students and student experiences. Most of the other resources in the Office of Academic Advising and Accessible Education are more formal and run by full-time adult employees. We provide the insight of students, from using incognito for AscAgnes and knowing registration opens at 6:58 a.m. and not 7 a.m. to relating to the chaos of Black Cat Week. There is less at stake to chat with us, and we are a great way to introduce what it is like

to have meetings at Agnes Scott. We offer the tips and tricks from time management to email structure to finding the toaster in Evans Dining Hall.

Learning About Leadership

Being a SUMMIT peer advisor has taught me that leadership is personal. It's about making connections among other leaders as well as students. It is creating meaningful relationships with the people you interact with. Leaders are people who are trusted even without having the answers. It's about connecting people with others and connecting with yourself. Leading comes from a place of authenticity, and the rawness and genuineness of self is what makes a leader trustworthy.

“When I first accepted the generous offer to attend Agnes Scott College, I was scared. I didn't know very many people who had attended the school, and I had recently come to realize that for the first time I would be all on my own. Suddenly, I became stressed about my academic performance or how to schedule classes or talk to professors on my own. My experience with my peer leader during our SUMMIT meetings really helped me feel comfortable facing those challenges at Agnes Scott. Now, as a sophomore, I can see how the valuable tools from my SUMMIT peer advisor laid a strong foundation for my academic and social success at Agnes Scott.”

— A former first-year advisee





Kathryn "Kajie" Johnson '47 at her desk in the Atlanta bureau of The Associated Press. Photo: AP

When Kathryn "Kajie" Johnson '47 passed away on Oct. 23, 2019, the 93-year-old left behind a storied legacy uniquely her own. A trailblazing reporter for The Associated Press — and later in life, book author — her innate fearlessness, drive and compassion opened doors and led her to capture stories no one else could over her half-century as a writer.

A female AP reporter was unheard of in the late 1940s, and Johnson fought hard for the position. After graduating from Agnes Scott College with a degree in English, the Columbus, Georgia, native worked as a secretary at the AP before landing her first writing assignment 12 years later.

"She was really driven to report on the injustices that she saw happening, like horrific lynchings. She just bothered the hell out of her

Her Legacy Lives On

A tribute to civil rights reporter Kathryn Johnson '47

By Karina Antenucci

bosses until they finally let her report on the stories the male reporters didn't want," says Johnson's niece, Rebecca Winters, who maintained a close relationship with her aunt throughout her life.

One such story at the time was about a young, little-known preacher named Martin Luther King Jr., who had begun making waves in the local Atlanta community. Many years later, having gained the respect and friendship of the King family from more than a decade of her legendary civil rights coverage, Johnson was the only journalist Coretta Scott King allowed inside the family home the day her husband was assassinated in 1968. From there, Johnson reported on the funeral arrangements and Jacqueline Kennedy's visit to the grieving widow prior to competitor newspapers' coverage of the events.

"My aunt was full of integrity and honesty, and she wanted the true stories to come out," says Winters. "She adored the Kings, and they adored her."

Another groundbreaking event that Johnson was on the forefront of reporting was the integration of the University of Georgia in January 1961. Looking younger than her years, she dressed up as a college student and scored an exclusive interview with Charlayne Hunter-Gault, the first African American woman to attend the university.

During the Vietnam War, Johnson spent significant time at a naval base in Virginia Beach with the families of men who had gone missing in the war. Washington did not let the wives know where their husbands were or whether they were alive or

dead. Johnson's reporting of this neglect was the catalyst for Washington relenting and furnishing the soldiers' whereabouts. The close relationship she developed with Jane Denton, mother to seven children and wife of Captain Jeremiah Denton, during that period would be pivotal in winning interviews with the captain upon his return to the U.S. after being held as a prisoner of war for almost eight years. Within a grueling eight days, Johnson wrote eight exclusive articles about his experience.

Over the course of her career, there are many more instances of the impact of Johnson's reporting, some of which are detailed in her book, "My Time With the Kings." Additionally, sundry untold stories live in the pages, notes and photographs of her files and unpublished book, which Winters hopes to piece together in the future.

Outside writing, later in life, Johnson became very involved in her alma mater, including speaking at classes and attending luncheons.

"She was fond of Agnes Scott and grateful for her time there," notes Winters.

While Johnson loved nature, animals and entertaining neighbors at her house near Emory University, her favorite hobby continued to be watching, reading and listening to the news after her retirement.

"She really was a newshound," says Winters. "She ate and drank the news."

As a journalist, Johnson not only captured history but also became a part of it. Serving as an inspiring model of tenacity and courage for future generations of alumnae, her influential legacy will live on.

A Time to Remember

101-Year-Old Helen Moses Regenstein '39 has fond memories of the college —By Sara Baxter

In 1939, Franklin Roosevelt was president and World War II was just getting underway. People went to the movies to see “Wuthering Heights” and “The Wizard of Oz,” which premiered that year. Bandleader Glenn Miller released “Moonlight Serenade” and “In the Mood,” two of his biggest hits. And also that year, Helen Moses Regenstein '39 graduated from Agnes Scott College.

Regenstein celebrated her 101st birthday in October 2019 and is certainly one of the oldest living Scotties.

She came to Agnes Scott from Sumter, South Carolina, mostly because her parents wanted her to experience a city like Atlanta. She majored in history, but she says she probably could have worked a little harder while she was a student.

“I was too busy enjoying myself and having fun,” she says. “Dance and theater were really what I loved.”

Regenstein took as many of those classes as she could and also starred in dance performances and theater productions on campus. In fact, she considers these the highlight of her time at the college. While a student, she met her husband, Louis Regenstein Jr., a young attorney. She married him right after graduation, and they enjoyed 55 years together until his death in 1994. They had two sons, Lewis “Reg” and Kent, and she is the doting grandmother of four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Today, she still lives in Atlanta, drives and regularly attends yoga and Pilates classes as well as a monthly Agnes Scott book group for alumnae.

She still remembers the faculty at Agnes Scott who had an impact on her: Elizabeth Fuller Jackson, her history professor; Ellen Douglass Leyburn, her English professor; and Carrie Scandrett, the then-dean of students, who “watched over every student.” Many Agnes Scott alumnae share this sentiment about faculty making a difference for them, and Regenstein says she is grateful for her time at the college.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Agnes Scott,” she says. “It was a wonderful experience.”



Helen Moses Regenstein '39, second from left in photo, first-year hockey team, Silhouette 1936.



Helen Moses Regenstein '39, senior year class photo, Silhouette 1939; (inset) photographed at celebration of 75th year in Daughters of the American Revolution, October 2014, photo courtesy of Lewis “Reg” Regenstein.



On the left in photo, Helen Moses Regenstein '39 playing the role of Eurydice in a Blackfriars production, Silhouette 1939.





LEADING IN SCIENCE

By Sara Baxter

Sue Jinks-Robertson '77 shines in the science field and receives its top honor

During her time at Agnes Scott College, Sue Jinks-Robertson '77 spent most afternoons in the lab that went along with her science classes. As a result, she missed out on being involved in many extracurricular activities. But the lab was exactly where she wanted to be.

"I was always good at science," she says. "I enjoyed the problem-solving aspect of it, and I loved being in the lab."

This talent for science and love of being in a lab has been a constant in Jinks-Robertson's career. She has spent more than 30 years in the academic world, teaching, publishing and conducting research in the area of human genetics. Today, she is a

professor and co-vice chair in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology in the Duke University School of Medicine, as well as director of Duke's cell and molecular biology graduate training program. She is also a fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and was recently named Mary Bernheim Distinguished Professor by Duke University School of Medicine. And in April 2019, she received what those in the science field consider the highest honor: election into the National Academy of Sciences.

As a biology major at Agnes Scott, Jinks-Robertson's interest in genetics was sparked when she took

her first genetics class taught by Harry Wistrand, who is now professor emeritus of biology.

"That was it," she says. "I fell in love with genetics, and I knew that was the field for me."

Jinks-Robertson came to Agnes Scott from her hometown of Panama City, Florida. When she was considering colleges, her mother compiled a list of only women's colleges. Among the factors that led her to choose Agnes Scott were the beauty of its campus and the fact that four other girls from her high school were also attending the college. Being educated at a women's college helped build the foundation for success in her career.



“For me, coming to a women’s college was a good thing,” she says. “I gained a lot of confidence, and I felt I could hold my own in a male-dominated field. I don’t know if that would’ve been the case had I gone to a coed college.”

Jinks-Robertson may have not had a lot of time for activities outside her classes — though she was a member of the Dolphins synchronized swimming club — but she did establish lifelong friendships during her four years at Agnes Scott. She is part of a group of about 10 former Scotties that still gets together several times a year. She also maintains a fondness for some of her professors who played a role in her education.

Since leaving Agnes Scott, Jinks-Robertson has long stayed in touch with Wistrand, who mentored her as a budding geneticist. The other professor who had an impact on her was the late Professor Emerita of English Margaret Pepperdene, who taught two Chaucer classes when Jinks-Robertson was a student.

“It was taught in Old English,” she remembers, “so I spent hours in the library going through the Old English dictionary to translate what I was reading.” She says those classes and the other English classes she was required to take helped her become a strong writer.

“They taught me to be precise, which is very valuable,” she says. “And that’s something I continue to encourage my students to do today.”

After graduating from Agnes Scott, Jinks-Robertson earned a doctorate in genetics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1983. She also married her late husband, John, and they had three children. She went on to complete postdoctoral research at the University of Chicago, and then accepted a position at Emory University in 1987. She worked in the Department of Biology there for almost 20 years, teaching Introduction to Genetics as well as several upper-level graduate classes.

“I enjoyed teaching, but it didn’t leave a lot of time for research,” she says.

So when her postdoctoral mentor, Thomas Petes, who was then-chair of molecular genetics and microbiology at Duke, called to encourage her to apply for an open faculty position, she jumped at the chance to focus more on research. She and her family moved to North Carolina in 2006.

Now Jinks-Robertson oversees a lab where the majority of the research is studying genome stability. She uses budding yeast (the yeast used in making beer) as a model genetic system.

“The mechanisms uncovered both in bacteria and yeast are similar to what goes on in human cells,” she says. “What we learn in yeast is directly applicable.”

She is studying the processes that lead to destabilization of genetic material, which can cause problems in the human body. This research has direct implications in cancer research, as the disease is characterized by rampant genome instability.

“You see the same thing in cancer/tumor cells,” she explains. “There are distinctive mutation signatures that show up in cancer cells, but what is causing them is not often known. That’s where the link comes in.”

She runs a lab of all women, which she admits is unusual, and is happy it is also a small lab.

“I’d rather run a lab where I can effectively mentor people,” she says, adding that she believes she encourages women in science by being a role model.

Jinks-Robertson became even more of a role model last May, when she received the news she always dreamed of but never expected. Petes called from the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences to tell her that she was elected into the prestigious organization whose members are nominated for their outstanding contributions to research.

“I was stunned,” she says. “I had no idea, and that was the best part. Some people expect it, but I didn’t.”

The first person Jinks-Robertson says she would have called was her

husband, but sadly he passed away in 2016.

“John was my biggest cheerleader,” she remembers. “He would have been thrilled.”

Instead, she called her oldest son, who is also a scientist, knowing he would understand the significance. As word got out, she was inundated with calls and emails.

“It was so nice hearing from so many colleagues and friends,” she says. “Becoming a member of the National Academy of Sciences is a significant recognition and achievement of a career.”

And this long and remarkable career of a woman leading in science had its beginning at Agnes Scott.



Sue Jinks-Robertson '77 celebrated her election to the National Academy of Sciences for her outstanding contributions to research with Duke University students in her lab. Front row: Wei Zhu (left) and Eva Mei Shouse. Back row, from left to right: Dionna Gamble, Nicole Stantial, Samantha Shultz, Robertson, Asiya Gusa and Demi Zhu.

Outstanding Alumnae

by Monica Gayles Dorsey

Agnes Scott College is proud to celebrate the 2020 Outstanding Alumnae Award winners. Nominated by their fellow alumnae, the distinguished recipients were recognized for their remarkable accomplishments that demonstrate how Scotties are truly leading everywhere.

DISTINGUISHED CAREER

Beth Davis '85



At a time when environmental health care has become a global concern, alumna and attorney Beth Davis '85 has taken the lead to address this issue with extensive litigation of federal and state laws. As a partner in the environmental health

care practices of the law firm Burr & Forman, she focuses on litigation that includes regulatory compliance, enforcement defense, environmental aspects of corporate and real estate transactions, occupational safety and other aspects of legal matters.

When Davis learned that Agnes Scott was honoring her with the Distinguished Career award, she was grateful but stunned.

"I appreciate that others consider my career distinguished," Davis says. "For my part, I'm doing my best to represent my clients and be a good advocate. That's just doing my job."

After graduating from Agnes Scott with a political science degree, Davis earned a law degree from the

University of Georgia in 1989. She went on to work as the assistant regional counsel with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and later served as partner at Barnes & Thornburg LLP before joining Burr & Forman.

Davis' distinguished career includes taking the lead in diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. A member of her firm's diversity committee, she helped establish its first-ever affinity groups that provide a support system for members of Burr & Forman. She also led the firm's participation in the LGBT Bar's Lavender Law Conference and Career Fair and, in 2018, created "The Business Case for Diversity," an event that brought leaders of the business community in Atlanta together for an open discussion and panel on diversity and inclusion.

Davis' distinguished career also reaches into the arts. As legal counsel and board member of the Suzi Bass Awards, Atlanta's version of the Tony Awards, Davis drafted legal documents and provided years of financial support that helped keep the Suzi Bass Awards alive. Additionally, she is a member of several organizations, including the State Bar of Georgia's Environmental Law Section and the National LGBT Bar Association. She is a published writer with articles in *Renewable Energy World* and *Product Liability Update*.

Davis' career captures excellence in a range of categories. She has been described by her classmates as a role model and an inspiration. For Davis, however, it was Agnes Scott that helped her "find my voice, my wife and some of the best friends anyone could want."



SERVICE TO THE COLLEGE

Adele Dieckmann McKee '48



As the daughter of Emma Pope '13 and Agnes Scott College music professor C.W. Dieckmann, Adele Dieckmann McKee '48 was committed to Agnes Scott long before she began her studies in 1944. She grew up on campus and recalls one memory

that inspired her to become the outstanding organist that Agnes Scott celebrates. It was the opening recital of the four manual instruments in Presser Hall played by Virgil Fox of Riverside Church in New York.

McKee remembers, "The experience was glorious to anybody, especially a 12-year-old who made organ playing a part of her life's work."

For more than 70 years, McKee has been committed to Agnes Scott. She served on the student government for four years; filled in as the college organist when needed, even after she graduated; and has donated to the college faithfully. McKee also served as class secretary in 1948 and again in 2013. It is no surprise that she has been named the Outstanding Alumna for Service to the College, a recognition for which McKee is deeply honored.

She says, "It is the highest compliment to think that what one has done supposedly for the college has been deemed outstanding."

A double major in Latin and music, McKee graduated from Agnes Scott with high honors. She continued her studies at Wellesley College, receiving a master's degree in Latin. Later, at Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music, she received a master's degree magna cum laude in sacred music. She was judged first in a class of 40 master's candidates for foundation and music theory and was responsible for getting the American Guild of Organists to host its national convention in Atlanta in 1966. In addition to teaching Latin at Westminster Schools in Atlanta, she has served as director of music at Trinity Presbyterian Church in the city and as the first national president of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians.

Through the years, she has hosted annual reunion gatherings at her home. Most recently, McKee served on the Alumnae Board and spearheaded the Heritage Ring Program, a plan for older alumnae to donate their rings to sophomores in need as a living gift or a bequest.

As a Scottie, she says, "I believe the significant continuous support is the calling of all alumnae for the coming generations."

As for her classmate, Jane Alsobrook Miller '48, she sees McKee as "literally the tie that binds us together."

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Shula Edelkind-Noesges '98



Thanks to alumna Shula Edelkind-Noesges '98, the Food and Drug Administration is examining the impact that synthetic food dye has on the health and behavior of children diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD.

Her research is both life-changing and lifesaving. In spite of the recognition for her research, Noesges says she is "quite overwhelmed" that she was chosen to receive the Outstanding Alumna Award for Service to the Community.

Before she began her studies at Agnes Scott, Edelkind-Noesges had already spent many years studying the effects of food additives and other chemicals on the behavior and health of children. Her research led her to the Feingold diet, which eliminates foods that contain additives such as artificial food coloring and benzoate preservatives and other chemicals that impact the behavior of some children. She joined the Feingold Association in the 1990s, and through the years, she has promoted this diet in various ways, including serving as a volunteer and as a research specialist to the advisory board. She also developed an internet presence with Feingold.org and later authored the "Feingold Bluebook: Behavior, Learning and Health."

According to Lyn Murphy, a Feingold Association trustee, Edelkind-Noesges' determination to help parents who struggled with their children's behavioral challenges led her to ask the right questions, which "helped to cement her resolve to change the world."

At Agnes Scott, Edelkind-Noesges continued her research in the science that connected diet to behavior. She earned a bachelor's degree in biopsychology in 1998, graduating magna cum laude. She then went on to work without compensation in assisting attorney Richard Turner in his defense of Dr. Robert Sinaiko, who used alternative methods to address children with ADHD. She later presented in 2011 at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's hearings on food dyes and was asked to serve on the expert advisory committee of food dyes for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. She has since presented to the California Office of Environment Health Hazard Assessment and developed talkingaboutthescience.com, a website that contains her studies. She completed a master's degree in psychology from Walden University in 2020.



Edelkind-Noesges will not settle on the side of the majority. Instead, she believes that “the most important and the most difficult thing you will ever do is to think for yourself, and not flinch when your conclusions are not the same as whatever authority you are facing.”

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNA

Kaela S. Singleton '14



She describes herself as a “simple woman who just really liked thinking about the brain,” but there is nothing simple about Kaela S. Singleton '14, who recently received her doctorate in neuroscience from Georgetown University. Singleton

graduated from Agnes Scott as a double major in neuroscience and classical history and culture.

After receiving the news that she had been named the Outstanding Young Alumna, Singleton says, “I was truly shocked and happy. I was incredibly proud of myself and thankful that my hard work and dedication have paid off.”

Singleton earned several fellowships during her studies at Agnes Scott, including the Brains & Behavior Fellowship at Georgia State University’s Neuroscience Institute, which involved behavior research advancements in neuroscience. She also received the prestigious National Institutes of Health Blueprint Program for Enhancing Neuroscience Diversity Through Undergraduate Research Education and

Experiences fellowship. This funding provided a two-year paid research assistantship at Emory University, where she conducted research in the department of cell and molecular biology. She also received a fellowship from the Vanderbilt University Summer Science Academy, where she conducted research in physiology and biophysics.

In 2014, Singleton continued to excel when she received the NIH’s National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke fellowship at Georgetown University. This funding gave her the opportunity to work with researchers in neurology, pathology and degenerative disorders, all of which broadened the scope of her research.

Singleton is published in several scientific manuscripts, and over a five-year period, she has presented at 12 national conferences. Along with her extensive research, she has taught numerous courses, mentored nine undergraduates and won first place in a molecular biology poster presentation. This year, she was also named to Cell Press’ “100 More Inspiring Black Scientists in America” list in CrossTalk. She believes the formation of a successful scientist is similar to the formation of a brain cell, where both processes are driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors that interact to create a mature and unique individual.

When Singleton thinks of her time at Agnes Scott, the overwhelming support she received when her mother died in her junior year is a memory that she will never forget. Without the support she received during her time of loss, she says, “There’s no way I’d be where I am now.”

For her part, Singleton encourages students to believe that they can achieve whatever their dreams are. She says, “It’s not easy, and it’s not always fun, but it’s incredibly rewarding to love your job and to be recognized for excelling in it.”

Singleton will be returning to Agnes Scott as an adjunct biology professor this fall.

About the Outstanding Alumnae Awards

Each year, the Agnes Scott Alumnae Association recognizes outstanding alumnae in four categories: Distinguished Career, Service to the College, Service to the Community and Outstanding Young Alumna.

Visit agnesscott.edu/alumnae/outstanding-alumnae to learn more and find out how to nominate an alumna for the 2021 Outstanding Alumnae Awards. Any alumna may be nominated for an award, regardless of class year (i.e., the alumna does not have to be in a reunion year to be nominated or to win). Contact alumnae@agnesscott.edu with questions.



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giving highlights

A Bright Future Requires a Bold Challenge Today

The renovation of Agnes Scott “Main” Hall and the growth of The Fund for Agnes Scott are vital to the college’s ability to provide a premier educational experience. Recognizing these needs, Board of Trustees Chair Elizabeth “Beth” Daniel Holder ’82 has issued a \$1 million fundraising challenge to alumnae, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends.

How it works:

Alumnae, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends are challenged to give to both the Campaign for Main and The Fund for Agnes Scott through the Holder Challenge (i.e., \$1,000 total gift with \$500 for Main Hall and \$500 for The Fund for Agnes Scott) by June 2021. If \$1 million is raised for Main Hall through the Holder Challenge by June 2021, Holder will give an additional \$1 million to the renovation.

In order for Agnes Scott to continue to attract the best and brightest students, the college must be able to provide a living and learning environment that allows them to grow, thrive and reach their full potential. The restoration of Main Hall gives us that opportunity. Additionally, your gift is needed for The Fund for Agnes Scott, which provides scholarships for our students and supports day-to-day operations. Agnes Scott must sustain a strong annual fund, and only your gifts make that possible.

The renovation of Main Hall serves as a symbol of the future and the infinite possibility of what is next. But we must not forget the needs of today supported by The Fund for Agnes Scott. Help us rise to the occasion and answer both calls.

To learn more and make a gift, visit agnesscott.edu/givetomain/holderchallenge.



Watch the Holder Challenge video and view frequently asked questions at agnesscott.edu/givetomain/holderchallenge. Also, make an online gift or pledge!

“*Agnes Scott needs us, and everyone can participate in a meaningful way. I have never met a Scottie who would back away from a challenge, and I know from experience that there is nothing that we cannot achieve together.*”

— Elizabeth “Beth” Daniel Holder ’82
Chair, Board of Trustees





Stay at Agnes Scott's Alumnae House



We've missed you! Please visit the Alumnae House's webpage for updates on its reopening and availability.

The Anna I. Young Alumnae House offers contemporary guest rooms and attractive event spaces for rental to alumnae, friends and the greater community. The Alumnae House's five cozy, modern rooms sleep 10 guests comfortably. The elegant parlor, tearoom and dining room event space, filled with museum-quality art by alumnae, holds 75 guests for a reception or 32 for a seated dinner.



Built in 1921 and named for an alumna and professor of the college, the Anna I. Young Alumnae House was the first alumnae house in the Southeast and the second in the United States. Supporting the college's commitment to sustainability, the building is LEED-certified.

Guests can walk to the thriving Decatur Square to enjoy award-winning restaurants and shops or catch MARTA (metro Atlanta's public transportation system) to visit the many popular attractions in the greater Atlanta area.

agnesscott.edu/alumnae/alumnaehouse



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agnesscott.edu/agnesengage



BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG DREAMS

Saycon Sengbloh '00x shines on the stage and screen.

STANDING AT THE VANGUARD

Agnes Scott leads the way forward in driving social change.

FACING THE CHALLENGES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Four Scotties address some of the critical issues surrounding the pandemic.

AGNES SCOTT

FALL/WINTER '20

THE MAGAZINE



Agnes Scott's permanent collection and The Dalton Gallery inspire and educate

fall/winter '20

volume 96, number 1

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Mission: Agnes Scott College educates
women to think deeply, live honorably
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The mural "Freedom Quilt" by alumna artist-activist Charmaine Minnifield '95 is located on the Charles A. Dana Fine Arts Building's east wall. Art and art history majors Georgia Adcock '19, Barb Branson '19, Logan Douglas '19, Daney Flanagan '20, Fari Holloway '19, Kennedy Smith '19, Laura Sato '19 and Valeria Soto Trendulo '21 helped Minnifield create the public art project in spring 2019. Every three years, an artist paints a different mural on the wall, allowing students to experience art in the making.



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A Campaign for a
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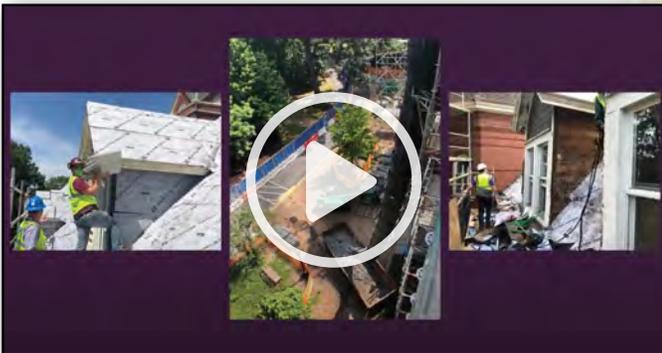
THIS CAMPAIGN IS A LOVE LETTER TO MAIN.

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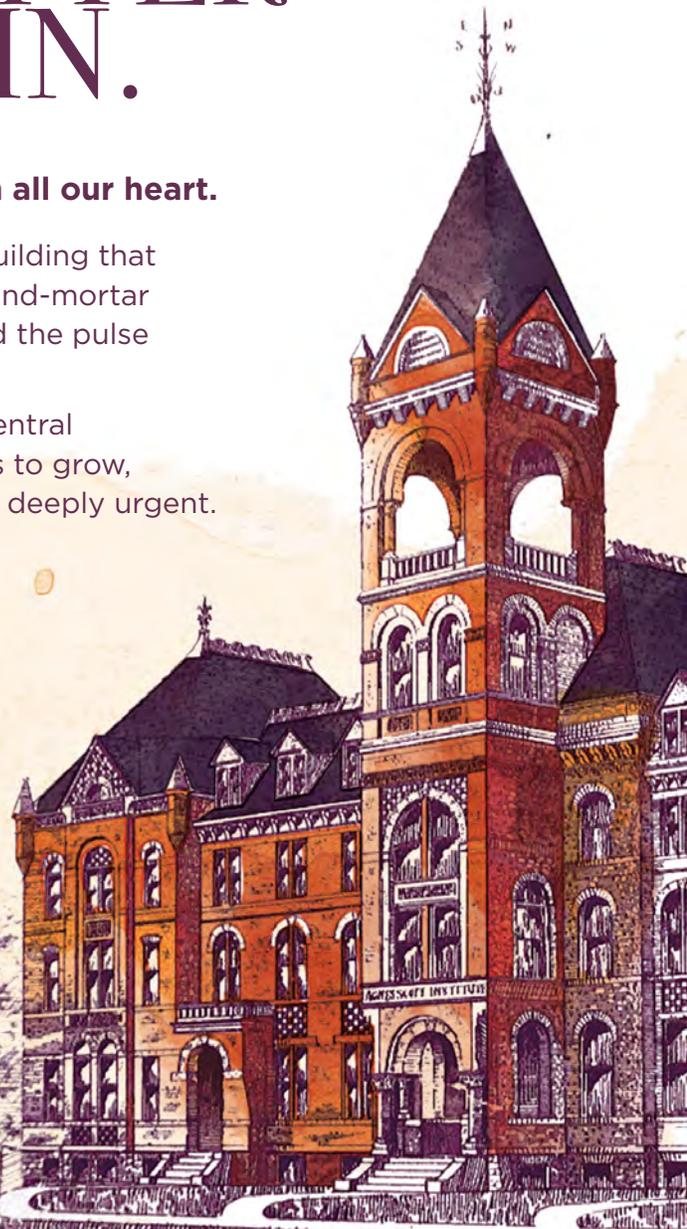
Long known as the heart of the college, Main Hall is the building that Scotties recognize as a marker of home. She is the brick-and-mortar symbol of our alma mater, the soul of the Scottiehood and the pulse of our future.

Main Hall is the most historic building on campus and is central to Agnes Scott's identity. As student enrollment continues to grow, Main's restoration has become increasingly necessary and deeply urgent.

View an update on the renovation!



For more information on helping us reach our \$31 million goal and to see an update on the renovation, please visit agnesscott.edu/givetomain.





5

4
Signature

Leah Owenby '01 presents a thoughtful portrait on art at Agnes Scott College's campus.

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Main News

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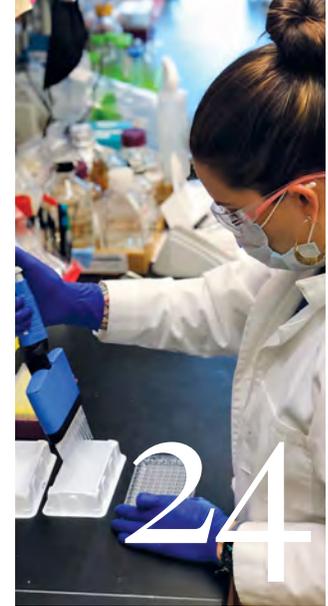
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Cover: Alumna Nicolette Morgan '03 designed this issue's cover, creating the framed headline abstract painting and "installing" selections from Agnes Scott College's permanent collection on The Dalton Gallery walls. The featured artists and works in alphabetical order are Anne Beidler, "Obsessing Series"; Robin Dana, "Blue, From the White Clay Series"; Alfred Augustus Glendenning, "Untitled: Girls, Roses, and Pigeons"; André Kertész, "Satiric Dancer"; Jennifer Mack, "No Pattern Necessary"; Sally Mann, "Untitled"; and Larry Thomas, "Lady's Dilemma: To Shave or Not To Shave."

Treasuring Our Art



On the morning of Oct. 13, 1965, the Charles A. Dana Fine Arts Building was dedicated by Agnes Scott College's then-President Wallace Alston "as an instrument of good teaching, creative achievement, and cultural enrichment for students and our friends in the larger community."

A blend of old and new, the building was designed by notable Southeastern architect John Portman, who included design elements such as the concrete folded plate roof and red bricks for the distinctive outer screen to convey the spirit of more traditional buildings on campus while working in conversation with modern elements to create what he intended to be "a cathedral to the arts." The new building was named for philanthropist Charles A. Dana, and its galleries within honored Harry L. and Mary Keesler Dalton '25, who made donations to support the growth of the college's permanent collection of art.

As a first-year prospective theatre major and a graduated studio art major, I practically lived in Dana all four years of my time at Agnes Scott. It always surprises me that a building I know so well could be unknown to so many. Countless times I've greeted newcomers to the gallery and heard various iterations of the following exclamation: "I've walked/driven past this building so many times and had no idea there was a gallery here!" This always dismays and delights me, as Dana and The Dalton Gallery often remain hidden in plain sight to many, but they still uphold Alston's dedication to students and community members who have spent time there. And, at one time, The Dalton Gallery was a hidden gem of Atlanta's art scene, with many now well-known artists having enjoyed early career recognition through exhibitions there. (Check out the long history of acclaimed exhibitions at daltongallery.agnesscott.org).

Although the original intent of the gallery was a bit more formal, it has evolved into an extension of the Department of Art and Art History as a teaching space, allowing students to work under gallery leadership, assisting in all aspects of producing its exhibitions — from curating to giving public talks to repairing the walls to adjusting the lights between shows. These unique learning and leadership opportunities give students hands-on experience and prepare them for a variety of work in the professional art world. Being involved with the gallery also allows them to become well-versed on the art and artists in the college's permanent collection.

Beyond the walls of Dana, the campus itself serves as a gallery for the permanent collection, and students are immersed in art during their everyday lives at Agnes Scott. Near the coffee bar in the Alston Campus Center, the work of well-known contemporary feminist artist Barbara Kruger looms large, enlivening the space with vivid renderings of green and growing plants and her signature bold white text on red blocks of color. A quiet, more contemplative collection of Japanese woodblock prints can be observed in the McCain Library, while works with a scientific or biological theme are most often found in the Mary Brown Bullock Science Center. Many buildings have a theme of sorts, and I could go on for pages and pages detailing in excess of 1,000 pieces in the permanent collection's database. I don't have any favorites to speak of, as they are all too varied in theme and importance to choose only one. A collection should be a living thing, and often these works are moved around the campus, creating new opportunities for reflection and conversation. When we are able to return safely to our campus, take the time to notice the art around you. It has been placed with the intention of providing education and enrichment.

Perhaps I am biased, but I believe there is nothing more important than the art a culture produces. The art and art spaces of our campus are a gift left by those who came before us and a gift we are duty-bound to provide proper care and stewardship of, as they are an important part of our legacy. We must treasure our college's collected art and artifacts that offer us an interdisciplinary history, rich with community, identity and thoughtful engagement with the social and intellectual challenges of our times.

— LEAH OWENBY '01

Leah Owenby '01 has worked in faculty services at Agnes Scott College since 2012, and she is currently the faculty events coordinator and administrative assistant to the Department of Music. Owenby earned a bachelor's degree in studio art at Agnes Scott and is the former manager of The Dalton Gallery and permanent collection. She serves on the board of the Decatur Arts Alliance, is an actively working and sometimes exhibiting artist and lives with her wife, Katie Rubesch Owenby '05, and their well-intentioned but often ill-behaved dogs in Decatur, Georgia.

main news

Agnes Scott Ranks No. 1 Most Innovative School for Third Year in a Row



In its 2021 edition of “Best Colleges,” U.S. News & World Report ranked Agnes Scott College as the No. 1 Most Innovative School in the country among national liberal arts colleges. The college also placed No. 1 in the nation for First-Year Experiences among all colleges and universities for the second consecutive year and ranked No. 2 for Best Undergraduate Teaching. Additionally, Agnes Scott was ranked No. 6 as a Social Mobility Top Performer. The college has been recognized for social mobility in prior years as well, a result of its focus on ensuring the academic success of all students — including

the large number of first-generation and Pell-eligible students who attend. Agnes Scott was also recognized as a Best Value School among national liberal arts colleges.

The leadership at Agnes Scott attributes these repeat recognitions to SUMMIT, the college’s signature approach to a liberal arts education that provides each student with a course of study, beginning in the first year, that builds leadership capabilities and global competence while preparing students for a lifetime of professional success.

“I am pleased that we have been recognized yet again for our innovation, first-year experiences and top-notch teaching. At Agnes Scott, we are completely focused on our students and their postgraduate professional success. Our students are why we are here, and no one understands this more than Agnes Scott’s faculty, who are models of teaching excellence,” says President Leocadia I. Zak. “Our faculty care deeply about teaching and are invested in their role of shaping tomorrow’s leaders, thinkers and game changers. Their passion, creativity and dedication foster the inspired and effective teaching happening in our classrooms. I also want to recognize our amazing staff, who work in partnership with the faculty to deliver our unique SUMMIT experience and ensure our students’ overall academic success.”

Visit agnesscott.edu to see a list of all the 2021 “Best Colleges” rankings.

Agnes Scott’s Redesigned Website Brings New Look and Experience

Agnes Scott College will be entering 2021 with a new look. This fall, the college rolled out phase one of its website redesign and unveiled a refreshed wordmark and color palette that included the return to a more vibrant purple.

“We were thrilled to launch phase one of the college’s new website and to introduce the refreshed college logo and color palette as part of our branding best practices for Agnes Scott,” says Danita Knight, vice president for communications and marketing. “We appreciate the work of our website and design teams, who worked diligently to ensure that these improvements will

effectively elevate Agnes Scott to undergraduate and graduate prospects and other important constituencies.”

The redesigned website is mobile-friendly with improved navigation and prioritizes website accessibility, ensuring that all visitors to Agnes Scott’s website have a positive experience, while the updated visual identity unifies the college’s brand across departments, divisions and initiatives. Throughout the processes for both projects, the college received input from students, faculty and staff through focus and review groups.

The second phase of the website will launch in early spring semester. Visit agnesscott.edu to see the new website and agnesscott.edu/mpr to learn more about the college’s refreshed wordmark and color palette.



Special Collections and Archives Receives Grant to Preserve Robert Frost Film



Renowned poet Robert Frost delivering a lecture in Agnes Scott College's Gaines Chapel. Photo courtesy of McCain Library's Special Collections and Archives.

The National Film Preservation Foundation has awarded a Basic Preservation Grant to McCain Library's Special Collections and Archives.

The grant will allow Special Collections and Archives to preserve a short film of American poet and Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Frost delivering a public lecture at Agnes

Scott College in 1960. Although Frost was a regular visitor to Agnes Scott, this film is the only known motion picture footage of his presence on the campus. The only existing copies of the film in the library's archives are in urgent need of preservation and cannot be viewed in their current condition. College archivist and librarian Casey Westerman is the project coordinator for the grant.

"McCain Library is pleased to have the opportunity to preserve an important film so that it may be available to future researchers and to the alumnae who recall Robert Frost's visits to campus. Much like the 1966 College Bowl victory, our ties to Frost are a highlight from that period in the college's history while also being perfect for further exploration. The library is indebted to Casey Westerman for pursuing and securing this grant, and we hope to be awarded future grants to safeguard such items in our archives," says Director of Library Services Elizabeth Bagley.

Special Collections and Archives holds an extensive collection of first editions, audio recordings, volumes of criticism, correspondence and photographs by, of and about Frost, with many of the archival items donated by the poet himself. Learn more about the Robert Frost Collection at libguides.agnesscott.edu/speccoll/frost.

Atlanta Chapter Celebrates 35 Years of Winter Seminar

If being an alumna of Agnes Scott is all about the traditions, the tradition being celebrated this year by the Atlanta Chapter's of the Agnes Scott Alumnae Association is a big one. 2020 marks the 35th year of the chapter's Winter Seminar. Constituting a three-hour weekly session led by an Agnes Scott faculty member over eight weeks, the Buckhead-based seminar is famous in alumnae circles because it is an illustrious lecture series. For alumnae, the seminar is an annual opportunity to relive the intellectual rigor of their Agnes Scott days and the warm embrace of longtime friends.

In addition to the milestone anniversary, the Atlanta Chapter anticipates celebrating another accomplishment this year related to the Winter Seminar. The seminar raises funds for an endowed student scholarship, awarded annually. This year, the endowment will cross the \$100,000 mark, ensuring that the legacy of this wonderful tradition will live on.

"We're excited to celebrate 35 years. Agnes Scott alumnae are intellectually curious, lifelong learners. Through the Winter Seminar, alumnae get to know our incredible faculty better, and the proceeds fund a scholarship for a prospective student. It's ideal," says Betty Derrick '68, co-chair of the Winter Seminar.

For Agnes Scott faculty members who have presented over the seminar's decades, the invitation to present to a packed house of alumnae is a reminder of the role that they have in molding the minds of students for their entire lives. Insightful and incisive comments from the participants keep faculty on their toes while allowing faculty member's instincts for performance to be on full display for an audience that relishes the show.

The break that comes halfway through the academic presentation is another of the elements that makes Winter Seminar the institution it is among Atlanta-based alumnae. The

buzz of stimulating conversation among friends old and new, enjoyed over delicious and beautifully presented goodies in elegant settings, is a much-anticipated antidote to what can be winter's dreariest weeks. It is no wonder that this tradition is 35 years strong.



From left to right: Atlanta Chapter Steering Committee leaders Janet Joiner '73, Betty Derrick '68, Liz Snitzer '85 and Lib Boggs '65 with Ellen Douglass Leyburn Professor Emerita of English Peggy Thompson (second from left), who delivered a talk on novelist Jane Austen at the 2019 Winter Seminar. Photo courtesy of Betty Derrick '68.

Agnes Scott Named AASHE Finalist

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education named Agnes Scott College as a finalist for the 2020 AASHE Sustainability Awards in the Campus Sustainability Achievement category. The virtual award ceremony was held on Dec. 3.

This year is the college's first time applying for an AASHE Sustainability Award and being named a finalist is a distinguished honor. The Campus Sustainability Achievement Award category recognizes institutions for the successful implementation of projects that advance sustainability.

The AASHE Sustainability Awards provide global recognition to the individuals and organizations leading the higher education sustainability movement. The awards program raises the visibility of high-impact sustainability projects, pioneering research and student leadership, helping to disseminate innovations and inspire continued progress toward environmental, social and economic health. Applicants are required to submit a case study for consideration, which is later published on AASHE's website.

The Center for Sustainability submitted the case study "Building Trust and Community: The Transformative Experience of the Green Revolving Fund at Agnes Scott College," which detailed how the multiyear project is helping to meet the college's climate neutrality date of 2037, provide funding for energy and water efficiency projects, reduce utility consumption and costs, and create educational opportunities for the campus community.

"After more than 10 years the Agnes Scott community has many sustainability successes to be proud of, but the Green Revolving Fund is the most nationally significant. Students, faculty and staff have jointly led the effort to invest over \$2 million in energy and water efficiency projects. Long term the college will have significant energy savings, and we will reduce our carbon footprint," says Susan Kidd '78 MAT '07, executive director of the Center for Sustainability.

"The higher education sustainability community continues to stay focused on work that contributes toward a thriving, equitable and ecologically healthy world. This is most evident through the entries received for the AASHE Sustainability Awards," says Executive Director Meghan Fay Zahniser. "I am happy that we can recognize the innovation and leadership demonstrated by this year's finalists, including Agnes Scott College."



Susan Kidd '78, MAT '07, executive director of the Center for Sustainability (left) and Brittany Judson '20, climate resilience plan coordinator in the Center for Sustainability, at the Georgia Climate Conference Minimizing Georgia's Risks, Maximizing Georgia's Future in November 2019, where they presented. Photo courtesy of the Center for Sustainability.

Climate Resilience Plan Nears Completion

In August 2018, Agnes Scott College partnered with City of Decatur to develop a joint climate resilience plan, which was informed by a task force with representatives from the college, diverse agencies of City of Decatur and Columbia Theological Seminary.

Brittany Judson '20, climate resilience plan coordinator in Agnes Scott's Center for Sustainability, was charged with writing the climate resilience plan, and its scope includes preparedness for weather events and emergencies related to climate change; anticipating possible health effects, especially for vulnerable energy populations; potential joint energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives; and possible shared infrastructure for commuting, greenspace, stormwater management and local food production.

The project received support June when Agnes Scott was awarded grant funding to complete the climate resilience plan through Second Nature's Acceleration Fund. Second Nature is a Boston-based nonprofit that supports climate action efforts at higher education institutions.

"Completing our climate resilience plan with the City of Decatur is a priority, especially now while we are learning how to be resilient in our response to COVID-19. At Agnes Scott, we see climate change as one of the most challenging issues of our time, and we are preparing our students to have the tools to respond. This grant gave a significant boost to our efforts," says President Leocadia I. Zak.

Judson says that the climate resilience plan will be completed soon and officially unveiled by January 2021. She calls working on the plan "a wonderful experience," noting that she "enjoyed every bit of the process," which included compiling information, creating a narrative and making it visually engaging. Judson spent a significant amount of time in the past four months gathering specific input from the task force, which has been with the planning process from the beginning, but also from a wider audience of community members. She also coordinated a successful campus town hall meeting to get input on the plan just before the college shifted to remote learning in March 2020.

Some of the challenges she says included few examples nationwide of a joint climate resilience plan between a city and an academic institution and ensuring Agnes Scott and City of Decatur's plan is accountable and promising but not unattainable.



Sustainability Students Advance Initiatives

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Agnes Scott College has continued to advance its sustainability initiatives, and students working with the Center for Sustainability have been highly involved in supporting these efforts. Each semester, the center hires work-study students and interns, and for each academic year, it selects environmental residents from a pool of applicants. Student staff are assigned to do a number of different projects, while environmental residents act as sustainability ambassadors within their residence halls and the wider campus community.

In adapting quickly and efficiently to being in a remote environment, they are successfully staying on task and helping the college reach its sustainability goals. Some student staff projects include the following: physics major and environmental and sustainability studies minor Nimco Vuusu '22 is conducting a greenhouse gas inventory, collecting and analyzing data; environmental and sustainability studies major Shar Dallis '23 is working on green purchasing; mathematics and economics double major Brittany Judson '20 is assisting with the completion of the climate resilience plan; and sociology and anthropology major and environmental and sustainability studies minor Fayola Waithe '22 is exploring ways to incorporate environmental justice in the center's work.

And this year's environmental residents, Damaris Billups '23, Eliza Edwards '22, Mina Goldsman '23, Laura Kuehl '22, Zoie Moore '21, Grace Payne '23, Grace Phinney '22, Carol Thomas '21 and Jordyn Wood '23, are working on a number of projects ranging from coordinating a "Sustainability Fridays" social media

series with the Center for Student Involvement to developing an educational guide to environmental justice for beginners.

"It was and still is incredibly impressive to watch how our students pivoted to the remote learning and working environment," says Sustainability Fellow Emma Dufresne '19, "They have shown creativity and leadership in making the transition while continuing to successfully perform their responsibilities."

Dufresne says that the students have remained connected to the center through weekly individual and all-staff meetings that have helped them continue to grow and strengthen their

relationships with each other.

While they are committed to making a difference at Agnes Scott, the student staff and environmental residents feel that sustainability is vital not just for the college but also for them personally and the larger world.

"I grew up in coastal Virginia and would always go out to the beach or fish markets with my family. When I got older, I saw how the changing environment was impacting coastal life negatively, so sustainability is important to me because we all live on this planet and have the right to clean water, food and a place to live," says Waithe.

"I believe everyone should experience the best life possible, and sustainability can help ensure that," says Edwards.

Visit agnesscott.edu/sustainability to learn more. Follow and stay connected with the Center for Sustainability on Facebook (facebook.com/sustainableasc) or Instagram (@sustainableasc).



Using the Zoom platform, environmental residents and student staff members stay connected to each other and their work for Agnes Scott College's Center for Sustainability. Photo courtesy of Brittany Judson '20.



"Leading Everywhere: The Agnes Scott College Podcast" Launches

This fall, the college announced the launch of "Leading Everywhere: The Agnes Scott College Podcast." The podcast is an additional way to showcase stories featuring students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumnae and community leaders who are sharing relevant, informative and important perspectives on timely topics. The inaugural episode, which debuted on Nov. 10, was the first in a three-part special series highlighting first-year Scotties.

Joining the redesigned website in Agnes Scott's communications portfolio, the new podcast will aid the college's ongoing goal of broadening its reach globally. A designated working group including faculty, staff and students is overseeing the podcast, and ideas from the Agnes Scott community for episodes can be sent to podcast@agnesscott.edu. Subscribe and listen to "Leading Everywhere: The Agnes Scott College Podcast" on Spotify.



Every year, Agnes Scott students show us what it means to make a difference, to reach the SUMMIT of a liberal arts education and to be #LeadingEverywhere.

Imagine the power of every Scottie making a commitment, every year — to student scholarships, faculty research,

innovative programming and all that makes Agnes Scott a premier liberal arts college.

Every Scottie, Every Year is your opportunity to shape the future of Agnes Scott, no matter the size of your contribution.

Every Scottie, Every Year

MAKE YOUR GIFT
to The Fund for Agnes Scott today
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THE FUND FOR
AGNES SCOTT

faculty focus

Bringing Spanish Language and Culture to Life



Charles A. Dana Professor of Spanish and Chair Rafael Ocasio

Rafael Ocasio has a passion for Latin American literature and culture. He shares that with the world in two ways: through teaching and through his research.

Ocasio, who was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico, has been teaching at Agnes Scott College since 1989, where he is the Charles A. Dana Professor of Spanish. After receiving his undergraduate degree at the University of San Juan, Ocasio set out to further his education in the United States, earning his master's degree in English from Eastern New Mexico University and his Ph.D. in Latin American Literature from the University of Kentucky.

He chose the University of Kentucky because he wanted to work with scholar Daniel Reedy, who was well known for his work in Colonial Latin American literature.

Not only did he get to study under his mentor, but he also got

his first taste of teaching.

“As a teaching assistant, I was given the responsibility to teach both introductory and intermediate courses,” says Ocasio, who up until that point still was not sure what he wanted to do. “It was a new experience and a challenge that I soon came to understand that there is no one ‘right’ way to teach a class. You are to keep adapting your teaching style to your audience always strive to keep their attention in the subject matter.”

Ocasio has been teaching for over 30 years. Currently chair of the Spanish department at Agnes Scott, he teaches Spanish language courses as well as upper-level Latin American literature classes. He also conducts extensive research that incorporates his love of Latin American culture and literature, which has resulted in six books.

Ocasio's scholarship primarily focuses on 19th-century literature

written in Cuba, the late dissident and Cuban writer Reinaldo Arenas, as well as oral folklore compiled in Puerto Rico by Franz Boas in 1915. His books on Cuba explore different aspects of the island's history, such as slavery, homosexuality and exile. He has also written a book of folk stories about Puerto Rican peasants, or Jibaros.

“A Bristol, Rhode Island, and Matanzas, Cuba, Slavery Connection: The Diary of George Howe,” published last year, analyzes the literary quality of work diaries of a Rhode Island man who took a job managing a Cuban sugar cane plantation and oversaw a work crew of slaves. His newest book, “Franz Boas in Puerto Rico: Retention and Reinvention of Puerto Rican Folklore,” examines the folk stories that were gathered and published by Boas, who is considered the founding father of American anthropology and a notable folklorist. A second book will follow with sample folktales translated into English.

With his research, Ocasio hopes to bring broader stories into focus and shine a light on Latin American culture. He tries to do the same in the classroom, where he sees himself as a facilitator. Beyond just teaching students the language, he enhances his lessons by bringing in cultural examples, including films and books, to create a world they can explore and learn about.

“I truly enjoy sharing my native language and Puerto Rican culture with my students,” Ocasio says. “There is a little bit of a sense of a ‘mission’ in my teaching and that I am contributing to a conversation at the national level on the importance of the Spanish language and Latin-Puerto Rican cultures that historically contributed and continue to exert influence on the complex national character of the United States.”





Photo by Audra Melton

Professor of Dance and Chair Bridget Roosa

Dancing for Joy

Before class registration at Agnes Scott College went online, Bridget Roosa used to sit at a table outside of Rebekah Scott Hall and personally invite students to sign up for a dance class as they were walking inside the building to register for classes.

“I would strong-arm them a bit,” the dance professor admits. “But I would also promise them the best experience if they would take a class. At the very least, it would fill an elective or the physical education requirement.”

It was one of the creative ways in which she has built up the college’s dance program.

When Roosa came to Agnes Scott in 2002, shortly after completing graduate school, there was not a dance major, only a minor. She was hired part time to teach jazz and ballet. She jokes that since then, she’s held every title at Agnes Scott — adjunct, part time, half time, three-quarters time, all while working her way up to a tenure-track position in 2011 and then becoming a full professor in 2020.

All along, her mission has been to create an excitement for dance, whether students are taking a class for fun or pursuing a dance major that she helped create.

“I want them to understand that dance is more than movement,” she says. “They are agents of change who communicate through their art.”

Roosa discovered her love for dance while in high school.

“As an introvert, I was most comfortable on stage,” she says. “I found my passion and discovered I had the drive and discipline necessary to pursue a career in dancing.”

She earned an undergraduate degree in dance from Southern Methodist University, and while there, had the opportunity to study at the Laban Center for Movement and Dance, where she learned the technique of

Labanotation, a system of recording or notating bodily movement. When she continued her education by pursuing an MFA in dance at Florida State University, Roosa learned that she liked another aspect of dance: teaching.

“To me, teaching is like performing,” she says. “There is a level of preparation necessary to articulate a successful performance or class, and when you bring that to the table you can find the potential of what can happen in the moment.”

After joining Agnes Scott’s faculty, Roosa redesigned the department’s dance minor, and in 2006, created the first major in dance. Today, the department has two accompanists so students can learn to perform to live music. She teaches everything from ballet to modern dance to jazz — at all levels — as well as choreography and Labanotation. Roosa also oversees the annual dance performance at the college, which she choreographs herself. And, she remains an active performer.

Roosa believes there are many benefits in learning how to dance.

“Students pick up life skills such as time management, creativity and determination,” she says. “Those are valuable skills to have no matter what they do.”

She is proud that students who have graduated from Agnes Scott’s program have gone on to pursue some aspect of dance, whether it is performing, choreography or teaching.

Through all the classes and performances, at the end of the day, what she really hopes to do is to pass on her passion for dance to her students.

“I found joy in dancing,” she says, “and I want to share that with my students. I hope I can enrich their lives through my classes, because they enrich mine.”



BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG DREAMS

Agnes Scott alumna Saycon Sengbloh '00x was not sure she had what it took to be a professional actress. Luckily, she proved herself wrong. —By Sara Baxter

In 2016, Saycon Sengbloh '00x got the call every Broadway actress dreams about: She was nominated for a Tony Award for her performance in the critically acclaimed play “Eclipsed.”

“A friend of mine called me, and I was so shocked and excited,” she remembers. “I couldn’t believe it.”

The nomination was a crowning achievement in a career that started back at Ridgeview Charter Middle School in Sandy Springs, Georgia, when Sengbloh played a chef in her school’s performance of “Alice in Wonderland.” She later went on to act in productions through the Visual and Performing Arts Program at Tri-Cities High School and as a member of the Youth Ensemble of Atlanta.

“I was bitten by the theatre bug,” she says. “I became a theatre nerd — eating, sleeping and breathing theatre. I loved everything about it, and it’s all I did.”

Cultivated at a young age, this combination of work ethic and love of performing has allowed Sengbloh to make a name for herself as an actress and a singer on Broadway, film and television over the past 20 years.

This fact is slightly surprising, considering she majored in Spanish at Agnes Scott College because she was not sure her acting was “serious enough” to make a career out of and wanted to have a plan B. She chose a college close to home because she was still very much entrenched in Atlanta’s theatre world.

“I had never heard of Agnes Scott,” says Sengbloh, who grew up in College Park, a suburb south of Atlanta. “But I received a brochure in the mail and decided to come visit. I loved the campus right away, and the fact that it was a women’s college appealed to me.”

Although she did not have time to perform in any productions at Agnes Scott, she did pursue a minor in music and took theatre classes. She fondly remembers the professors who had an impact on her.

“I still use some of the skills taught by Dawn-Marie James, my voice teacher,” she says. “And I keep in touch with David Thompson, who reaches out to me from time to time.”



“I feel very fortunate and happy that I have been able to play a wide variety of roles. For that, I am extremely proud of my achievements.” — Saycon Sengbloh '00x

Sengbloh’s college career was cut short when she left Agnes Scott in her junior year to perform in a touring production. When that tour did not work out, she returned to Atlanta and continued to work and audition. Her tenacity was rewarded when she was cast in the role of Mimi in the national tour of “Rent,” a show she auditioned for seven times. After a year of touring the country, she earned the title role in the national tour of “Aida.”

“At that point, life was taking me for a ride,” she recalls, laughing.

In 2003, she moved to New York City and became a consistent performer on Broadway, adding roles in “Secret Life of Bees,” “Wicked” and “Eclipsed” to her resume. Parts in television programs and movies followed.

Though “Rent” might be considered her first big break, Sengbloh prefers to view every role as a stepping stone.

“I look at them as breakthroughs rather than big breaks,” she says. “I feel like every job is another step in my career. I move a level up each time.”

Her role as Helena in “Eclipsed,” a play about women who survived the Second Liberian Civil War, earned her the Tony Award nomination for best performance by an actress in a featured role. “Eclipsed” was written by actress and playwright Danai Gurira and also featured actress Lupita Nyong’o. Not only did Sengbloh feel proud of her achievement, but it also meant something else.

“That was one of my first nonmusical parts,” she says. “Being nominated proved I was an actress, not just a singer.”

It was also a special role for her because her late father was Liberian. “It was an opportunity to fuse that Liberian culture I grew up with into my professional life.”

Though she did not receive the Tony Award that year, she was recognized with a Drama Desk Award and an Obie Award for her performance in “Eclipsed.” She also received a Drama Desk Award nomination and an Outer Critics Circle Award for her role as Rosaleen in the off-Broadway musical production of “The Secret Life of Bees.”

To Sengbloh, acting is all about “mining emotions” and she enjoys “getting into a character’s head” and finding the motivation for why the character acts a certain way.

“It’s all about managing and considering human thoughts and emotions,” she says, “and I enjoy the study of human nature.”

Her next role is on the big screen, playing Aretha Franklin’s older sister, Erma, in the movie “Respect,” due out in January. She stars alongside Jennifer Hudson, who plays Aretha Franklin.

“It was so much fun,” she says of filming the movie, and adds that singing in a film is much different from singing onstage.

“It was a little nerve-wracking,” she admits. “In musical theatre, you rehearse a lot ahead of time and you know what to expect. In movies, things can change quickly, but the whole experience was lovely.”

She says one thing her fans may not know about her is because she majored in Spanish at Agnes Scott, she considers herself “pretty good” at speaking the language. Fans also may not know that outside of the theatre, they can hear her on podcasts and see her on YouTube in her series “Saycon Talks,” in which she discusses lifestyle topics, entertainment, pop culture, book and music reviews, and really anything else that comes to mind.

“It started as a blog and went from there,” she explains. “It’s really me talking about the things that are on my mind. It’s a chance for me to be myself — not a performer — and I really enjoy connecting with people beyond the stage.”

To someone who was not thinking her acting could be a serious career, Sengbloh is grateful and proud of a long career that is still going strong.

“I feel very fortunate and happy that I have been able to play a wide variety of roles,” she says. “For that, I am extremely proud of my achievements.”



From left to right: Saycon Sengbloh '00x starred in a recurring role as FBI director Angela Webster alongside Tony Goldwyn on season six of ABC’s hit television show “Scandal.” (Photo by Bryon Cohen/Walt Disney Television via Getty Images.) Sengbloh celebrating with her “Eclipsed” Broadway co-star and Academy Award-winning actress Lupita Nyong’o at the show’s opening night after-party on March 6, 2016. (Photo by Rob Kim via Getty Images.) Sengbloh onstage with Zainab Jah, Lupita Nyong’o, Pascale Armand and Akosua Busia at the “Eclipsed” Broadway opening-night curtain call at The John Golden Theatre. (Photo by Walter McBride/WireImage.)



Standing

at the Vanguard: Agnes Scott on the Leading Edge of Tackling Racial and Social Injustice —By Jennifer Jiles

In late spring, as the world grappled with the intensifying COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing issue of systemic racism, referred to by many as the second virus impacting the U.S., came to the forefront. The deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd ignited global Black Lives Matter protests, reinvigorating the focus on race-based social justice. College students across the country became a part of the movement. While some higher education institutions may have wondered how to develop a coordinated effort to respond to this urgent drive for change with sensitivity and leadership, Agnes Scott College already knew the way forward. Even before these important events unfolded, Agnes Scott was immersed in social change.

“The renewed focus on racial justice as a pressing social challenge highlighted the importance of this work for many, but it is not new for Agnes Scott College,” says Yves-Rose Porcena, vice president for equity and inclusion. “We have been addressing racial inequities for a long time.”

Agnes Scott’s mission of “engaging in the intellectual and social challenges of our times” has long guided the college’s commitment to addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion and to shaping socially conscious leaders.

More than a mission statement, the college’s approach to liberal arts

education has always been solidly grounded in a commitment to the principles of social justice. The centerpiece of this commitment is the Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion, which creates and hosts programs and events focused on inclusive excellence at Agnes Scott. These programs and events have brought significant recognition to the college, and Agnes Scott’s reputation for advancing equality and justice led the Association of American Colleges & Universities to select it as one of only 24 colleges in the nation to host a Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation campus center.

As the pandemic lay bare the racial, social and economic inequities affecting communities throughout the U.S., the college

events: the COVID-19 podcasts highlighting the social inequalities of the global pandemic and the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Courageous Conversations on racism and hate.

Porcena created the platform for the Agnes Scott community to learn from each other and advance the movement after seeing the significant work in which many people were already involved. “I wanted to provide a model and highlight the work of those who have been doing racial justice work way before it was trending,” she says.

Janelle S. Peifer, assistant professor of psychology, participated in the “COVID-19 Social Inequities Impact on Mental Health” panel and spoke on the deepening and perpetuating inequities in the U.S. In

“As the most innovative institution for three years in a row, Agnes Scott must stand at the vanguard of envisioning the world ahead. We truly believe that education can catalyze important change and help correct historic ills for the betterment and flourishing of all people.”

— Janelle S. Peifer, Assistant Professor of Psychology

quickly put systems in place for critical support and discussions. And when cries for racial justice seared the consciousness of many Americans following the death of George Floyd on Memorial Day, the center worked with members of the campus community to create two series in the wake of these national

addition to the meaningful dialogue on the topic, Peifer says the panel served as an opportunity to offer attendees some concrete steps for radical self-care amid the ongoing trauma of the pandemic and how to filter and moderate media consumption. She applauds the center for its “active, engaged,





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— Yves-Rose Porcena, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

timely work,” noting, “To create this webinar series in the midst of a crisis communicates the priorities from the college and our strategic directions that make us an innovative space to teach, work and learn.”

“As the most innovative institution for three years in a row, Agnes Scott must stand at the vanguard of envisioning the world ahead. We truly believe that education can catalyze important change and help correct historic ills for the betterment and flourishing of all people,” she adds. “At this juncture, it’s vital that Agnes Scott stand as a leader to address systemic inequities, particularly anti-Black racism, that stymie our unity and progress as a nation and a global community.”

Zoie Moore ’21, an African studies major who moderated the “Preparing to Rebound from the Pandemic: Economic, Workplace and Legal Implications” panel, says she appreciates the interdisciplinary nature of the series’ topics and panelists. She says, “It is a reminder of how interconnected the world is and the power of a liberal arts approach. I learned how everyone has a role and uniqueness they bring to the table. COVID-19 is impacting all aspects of life, and it’s important to hear leaders and those who specialize in those diverse areas coming together for solutions.”

“The podcasts are providing so much more than knowledge sharing but also a safe space to learn, grow

and communicate with diverse peers,” Moore says. “As a person of color, I think this series is more evidence of the college expanding its diversity and inclusion efforts.”

Moore represents the impressive growth in enrollment of students of color at Agnes Scott — 63 percent as of 2020. The growing diversity of students adds another layer of importance to addressing racial justice for the college. Many alumnae, including Brandi Collins-Dexter ’02, share their alma mater’s commitment to social justice, which is why she was an eager participant in the “Tackling Social Injustice: Strategies for Action” panel.

“I think it’s very important for colleges to support conversations like this because you want to know that your institution is working toward

kind of strong next-generation leadership we need.”

Collins-Dexter, currently a visiting fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School’s Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, earned a degree in history from Agnes Scott. She says her time at the college helped shape her political and personal outlook, and as a panelist, she emphasized that fights for justice are happening everywhere and people can make a difference right where they are in whatever job or role they have in society.

In addition to the COVID-19 podcasts and webinars, the Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion is also presenting workshops, providing training on racial sensitivity topics weekly and working with student

“There are campuses where these types of conversations are being shut down or discouraged, and to see Agnes Scott promote an open dialogue about racial and social injustice assures me it is incentivizing the kind of strong next-generation leadership we need.”

— Brandi Collins-Dexter ’02

solutions that we can all be a part of to achieve positive forward motion,” says Collins-Dexter. “There are campuses where these types of conversations are being shut down or discouraged, and to see Agnes Scott promote an open dialogue about racial and social injustice assures me it is incentivizing the

organizations to coordinate diversity and LGBTQ awareness events. Porcena assures the campus community that plans are firmly underway to offer robust racial justice programming and initiatives well into spring 2021 and as part of the center’s ongoing work.

Background photo by Elijah Nouvelle via Getty Images / Portrait by Martha Williams





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orks of art live everywhere on the campus of Agnes Scott College, providing an evocative, inspiring and contemplative backdrop for the community. As people move through their day, these pieces of art from the college's permanent collection are their silent companions, saying powerful things visually that spoken words can only hope to capture. While many are appreciative of it, some may not be aware of how this art was selected or why it is present on campus. Like every brushstroke made on a canvas by a painter, the acquisition and placement of thought-provoking works of art in the permanent collection are intentional. Art brings beauty and meaning, and at an institution of higher learning, it serves an additional purpose. For Agnes Scott, it is an integral part of the art students' curriculum and important in the education of every young scholar at the college.

Agnes Scott's permanent collection and The Dalton Gallery inspire and educate

By Karina Antenucci

Editor's Note: This story was written before Agnes Scott College transitioned to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.





The Dalton Gallery space undergoes a creative transformation with each exhibit. The “This Beautiful Tangle” exhibit in fall 2016 was a poetic investigation of the American South, contemporary life in it and the beautiful tangle that emerges when one begins to make connections and how over time these connections shape and guide us.

“These pieces aren’t just there to decorate the space. They provide a platform for students to ask questions of themselves and their place in the world.”

There is intellectual rigor involved. Every student is enriched by the art on our campus walls,” says Professor of Art Anne Beidler, who serves on the Art Advisory Committee, which is responsible for managing the permanent collection of art owned by the college.

Just a fraction of the 5,000 pieces in the overall collection are on display. They showcase high-quality examples of various styles of work: painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography and more. The roots of the collection began in the college’s early years and grew in 1965 with donations from Harry L. Dalton in honor of his wife, Mary Keesler Dalton ’25. Since then, Agnes Scott’s collection has expanded over the years. In particular, the 1990s brought a shift to both the art world and to the college’s collection, causing Agnes Scott to narrow the

acquisition focus to emphasize works on paper by contemporary women artists.

“There was a lot happening in art for third-wave feminists during the ’90s. It was a pivotal point not just in the sociopolitical outlook in the art world but also within our college community of forward-thinking women. Under the leadership of then-President Mary Brown Bullock, our department moved toward identifying the college as an international site for women,” notes Beidler. “Art is a symbol of change, and our past and current acquisitions mirror this.”

Over the years, the Art Advisory Committee, composed of art faculty, gallery staff, alumnae and local gallerists, has made decisions to acquire and install work that best enhances the campus environment. Considerations for purchase require thoughtful review. Acquisitions must respond to a larger vision. Does the work challenge the way we think about current social and intellectual challenges? Does it speak to the process of creativity rather than



The fall 2019 exhibit programming included the Voices in Arts Leadership panel featuring, from left to right, Anna Carnes ’19, assistant curator fellow; Anne Beidler, professor of art; Veronica Kessenich, executive director of Atlanta Contemporary; and Jiha Moon, artist.



In the fall 2019 Gallery Talks, as Professor of Art and Chair Nell Ruby looked on (foreground), Adena Adams ’21 presented on “Kara,” 2013, a portrait of the artist Kara Walker taken by photographer Catherine Opie as part of her “Portrait and Landscapes” series.

“The arts are leadership and can lead, not just through people, but through the power and life of the image alone.”

— Nell Ruby,
Professor of Art and Chair

the product? Does it engage liberal arts learning by touching multiple ways of knowing? What is the work's historical, political, sociological, philosophical and religious value? Does the work have an aesthetic longevity? How does it complement and augment the current works in the collection? And finally, is it possible for Agnes Scott to responsibly steward the work over time and maintain, house, install and keep it safe from fluctuating light and temperature?

“Campus spaces are public spaces, so things have to be appropriately placed and protected. It's not like a museum, where people leave their coffee and backpacks at the door,” explains Beidler.

Agnes Scott students also have an opportunity to acquire art for the college's permanent collection. As part of the art department's Seniors Select program, senior studio art and art history majors are given access to a budget to select a work that is then purchased and installed as a gift to honor their class. The students collaborate to generate a list of work to present and create a cohesive and persuasive argument about why the work is important for the collection. The argument necessitates a visual analysis of the work, including a detailed description of its aesthetic dynamics and historical contextualization as well as a review of its value as a teaching tool.

“In this process, students showcase their ability to contextualize and analyze the work, the art experience and how the art plays into the world at large,” says Nell Ruby, professor of art and chair of the department.

An elegant complement to the permanent collection is The Dalton Gallery, which opened its doors within the Charles A. Dana Fine Arts Building in 1965 and is named in honor of the Daltons. Everyone who enters the Dana Fine Arts Building finds themselves inside the gallery, which forms the central core of the building. As an integral part of



Fall 2018's exhibit “Transformers: Artistic Alchemy” featured artists reimagining recognizable objects, subverting and enhancing them. Susan Lenz's “Time” is a collection of found objects steeped in the symbolism of passing time.



Examining the nature of acquiring a collection and learning about art, the fall 2019 exhibit “Side by Side: Selections from the permanent collection” juxtaposed past and present works, highlighting Agnes Scott's rarely exhibited works and recently acquired acquisitions.



Fall 2020's exhibit “Searching for Home,” supported by The Margaret Virginia Philip Art Endowment Fund, included Macey Ley's installation and video “Family Dinner 2020: The Pandemic Year(s)?” Photo by Karin P. Koser and Andrew Dunbar, KPKinteractive.





The fall 2006 “Blackbird on My Shoulder: Stories and Other Truths from the South” exhibit featured visual artists, writers and performers strongly attached to the Southeast and inspired by auto(biography) and storytelling. George Long’s installation “Tincture,” year unknown, was one of the striking works included.

the open-plan building, designed by renowned Atlanta architect John Portman, the gallery is a dynamic space that features four art exhibitions each year. A typical fall show features living artists and focuses topically on current social and political challenges, such as climate change, immigration or gender. The thematic emphasis of the exhibition guides the tenor of student Gallery Talks, a capstone project in which art majors research the featured artists and then present a public talk at the exhibition’s opening.

As Katherine Smith, professor of art history, notes, “This is the moment when our students become our peers as scholars.”

The popular annual “showing | thinking” exhibition features Agnes Scott professors and is designed to showcase the creative process inherent

to all original research and writing, regardless of discipline. The exhibition displays the unique ways that specific objects, habits and images spark and inspire ideas. For example, in a past installation, a poet represented their process with marked-up drafts and rewrites of poems on the gallery’s walls, while a mathematician with a practice of playing music and integrating theory had their process portrayed by a dynamic hanging mobile of sheet music.

“The ‘showing|thinking’ exhibition demonstrates to students that the way faculty think is no different from the way they think. They see the humanity involved in our accomplishments, and we float down off the pedestal. Ironically, through literally putting the professors on a pedestal (or in a frame), we are seen as less picture-perfect, and more human,” Ruby explains.

“That’s how a well-curated gallery works — you begin to make connections through contrast and juxtaposition,” she adds. “It leaves you with powerful images for your imagination.”

Immediate programming and ongoing gallery exhibitions are funded in part by The James T. and Ella Rather Kirk Fund that was established in 1974 by Mary Wallace Kirk ’11 to enrich the arts, history, philosophy, music and creative writing at Agnes Scott. Representatives from various disciplines review proposals and distribute funds from the endowment to different departments within the college, allowing them to host speakers and present other programs for the campus community. For the art department, in addition to supporting exhibitions this past year, it funded a Kirk graduate fellow in curatorial service, the framing and restoration of works that were in need, and other projects.



The 2016 installation for David S. Thompson, Annie Louise Harrison Waterman Professor of Theatre, in the annual “showing | thinking” exhibit reflected the different “hats” a theater person wears and included recordings of his voice work, notes from his time as a Tony Awards critic and life-sized photographs of his bookshelves filled with scripts.





The Dalton Gallery's fall 2017 exhibition, *"weatherwise/otherwise: Artists Respond to Climate Change,"* featured artists who observe varied facets of the weather and climate picture and their impact on our world. Nathalie Miebach's *"Sibling Rivalry II"* (2017) depicts the two narratives — scientific and emotional — in every storm. Photo courtesy of Nathalie Miebach.

Currently, curators from Atlanta Contemporary and Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum assist the Art Advisory Committee in coordinating The Dalton Gallery's exhibitions and managing the permanent collection. Veronica Kessenich, director of Atlanta Contemporary, developed last fall's exhibition, "Side by Side," which juxtaposed selected older works of art in the permanent collection with some of the newer contemporary pieces. There are a number of notable alumnae artists who have works in the college's permanent collection, including Maria Artemis '67, Yehimi Cambrón '14 and Jordan Casteel '11.

In The Dalton Gallery's history, the years from 2002 to 2013 were an especially robust period. During that time, curator Lisa Alembik was the full-time director of the gallery and permanent collections manager. She curated exhibitions important to the community and that often moved beyond the space of the gallery. Using blue yarn, artist Mandy Greer wove a "river of water" throughout the trees in front of the campus, symbolizing our connectedness to nature. Artist Bill Nixon created an installation of ceramic salmon heads and tails running into and out of the earth alongside the path leading up to the Bradley Observatory to call attention to fisheries and the effects of overfishing.

Alembik, who is now an assistant professor of art at Georgia State University's Perimeter College, describes every exhibition at Agnes Scott as "a little treasure."

She echoes Beidler on the intersection of art and academics.

"Art is a living thing instead of something dead just hanging on the wall," says Alembik. "Talking about artwork is an intellectual experience that is part of a rich liberal arts education."

What lies ahead for The Dalton Gallery is unknown, but what is certain is the power that art holds to engage the public and vitalize the college.

"The arts *are* leadership and can lead, not just through people, but through the power and life of the image alone," says Ruby. "Images require no verbal explanation. They are immediate and intuitive, and if they're good, they will resonate with you. Images and objects are passive teachers that act on the viewer. Just the act of seeing them can change your thinking."

To make a gift to support funding of the permanent collection or The Dalton Gallery, contact 800.868.8602, ext. 6302.



The fall 2009 *"Still Water"* exhibit explored the complexities between humans and water in the environment and included artist Mandy Greer's *"Mater Matrix Mother and Medium,"* a crocheted fiber "river" installation.



Collection Highlights

Look for these contemporary works on campus created by foremost women artists.

Professor of Art Anne Beidler places a spotlight on selected works from the college's permanent collection, observing, "Each of these pieces question space and ideas about what is art and what is beauty. They ask you to question the very history of our nation. They also reflect the transformation of the college into this diverse, forward-thinking place for young women leaders to grow."

- **Barbara Kruger**, "Untitled (Everything will be okay/ Everything will work out/Everything is fine)," 2000, photographic silkscreen on vinyl
Location: Ground floor of Alston Campus Center

"Known for including assertive text that challenges viewers, Kruger is an important contemporary artist. This piece asks us to interpret it through the lens of our own experiences. The affirmation can be perceived as either patronizing or comforting, and some of the plants rest safely on the shelves while others are teetering, which also conveys a conflicting message."



- **Kara Walker**, "Resurrection With Patrons," 2017, etching.
Location: McCain Library (Installation location inside the library is being determined)

"This is a large, powerful piece by an enormously important contemporary artist who grew up in Atlanta. Walker's images work to bridge unfinished folklore in the Antebellum South, raising identity and gender issues for African-American women in particular."



- **Yehimi Cambrón '14**, "Somos," 2018, a wall of text/image portraits printed on fabric
Location: Second floor of Alston Campus Center, Gué Pardue Hudson Center for Leadership and Service

"As a bold declaration reflecting the themes of solidarity, inclusivity and identity, this work's title is the Spanish word meaning 'we are,' and it features personal stories of Agnes Scott students and alumnae. Cambrón is a passionate and committed artist-activist, and her award-winning murals are found throughout the Atlanta area and beyond."

- **Sally Mann**, "Untitled," 1996, gelatin silver enlargement print, toned with tea
Location: First floor of McCain Library

"Many of Mann's large black-and-white and hand-manipulated prints from this series exploring the Southern landscape were taken using the 19th-century wet plate collodion process in which glass plates are coated with collodion, dipped in silver nitrate and exposed while still wet. This gave the photographs what the New York Times called 'a swirling, ethereal image with a center of preternatural clarity.'"



- **Pam Longobardi**, "Flag of Lesbos (anamnesis)," 2017, recovered life vests from Lesbos, Greece
Location: Ground Floor of McCain Library

"Longobardi is a Georgia State University professor and an ecoartist. This work brings attention to the Lesbos refugee crisis and ocean plastic pollution. The piece is part of the larger collaboration of a social enterprise between Drifters Project and Lesbos Solidarity, and funds from its sale were donated to the refugee effort on Lesbos."

- **Jordan Casteel '11**, "mother," 2011, oil on canvas
Location: First floor of Buttrick Hall, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

"This portrait of Casteel's mother represents the beginning of a style of painting and a body of work that would lead her to the MFA program at Yale and later to a residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Through her intimate and genuine paintings of family, friends and neighbors, she is recognized as one of the foremost figural painters of her generation."





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Facing the Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic

As it grows close to a year that the world has been grappling with COVID-19 and pandemic fatigue has begun to set in, there are those still working tirelessly to combat the many issues affecting every aspect of society due to the virus. Always at the forefront of facing global challenges, Agnes Scott graduates have been doing their part and being of service. Asheley Chapman '06, Joëlle Atere-Roberts '14, Vaughn Wicker '19 and Julia Marshall '19 are just a few of the Scotties fiercely dedicated to doing what they can. — *By Nicholyn Hutchinson*

SCIENCE AS SERVICE

In a laboratory on Georgia Tech's campus, with a gloved and steady hand, Asheley Chapman '06 holds a multichannel micropipette, first pressing on its plunger to draw up liquid samples into the device's tubes and then again to carefully deposit the contents into one of the rows on a 96-well plate. Amid the ongoing global COVID-19 health crisis, she is at work on what could be one of the critical keys in unlocking discoveries that may save lives. A fifth-year doctoral student in Georgia Tech's School of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Chapman is a part of a collaborative research project studying antibodies, with the goal of improving diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and aiding in the development of a safe and effective vaccine.

Important players in the human body's defense against infections, antibodies seek out invading pathogens, such as viruses and bacteria, and attach to them to block or destroy them. Under the direction of M.G. Finn, the project's co-principal investigator and chair of the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Chapman and her colleagues in Finn's lab are examining methods to enhance the immune system's response against SARS-CoV-2.

"We have designed a series of vaccines for use in mice, presenting to their immune system large synthetic portions of the virus or smaller viral peptides, which are short chains of amino acids.



Asheley Chapman '06 at work in a Georgia Tech lab, where she is part of a collaborative research project involving SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Photo by Soumen Das. Headshot by Jacquelyn Strickland/Georgia Tech Office of Graduate Studies.

We then boost these mice with formulations that help immune cells, or B cells, create antibodies that bind SARS-CoV-2 tightly with high sensitivity and specificity," explains Chapman.

Georgia Tech provides these lab-made antibodies to its research partners — the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Immunodiagnostic Development Team in the Reagent Diagnostic Support Branch, Division of Scientific Resources, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases — that screen and test hundreds of them to identify and isolate the ones that function the best.

Chapman says the project's results have been promising, with several antibodies showing the ability to neutralize the virus. What the research team is learning about these antibodies could lead to a COVID-19 vaccine to prevent infection in humans, the production of reagents (substances for chemical reactions) for detecting

the virus and their use in therapeutic treatments.

With the rapid pace at which scientists around the world are racing to solve what Chapman calls "one of the biggest scientific problems of our time," the pressure they are under is immense. But their commitment is greater.

"For everyone working in science, this is our priority right now. We're not going to stop until we find something that works," she says.

This drive to discover the answers has always been with Chapman and is what drew her to the field of biochemistry. Growing up, she remembers being fascinated by how the interaction of molecules governs the behavior of living systems.

"The concept that you can understand the fundamental building blocks of life, and by extension, the way the physical world works, still amazes me," she says.

While she initially enrolled at Agnes Scott College as a biology major, Chapman instead earned a bachelor's degree in religious



studies, becoming enthralled after taking a world religions course. She went on to complete post-baccalaureate studies at Georgia Southern University before entering the graduate program at Georgia Tech. Looking back on her time at Agnes Scott, she notes that it had a significant impact on her.

“Science can be very male majority, and often I am the only woman in the room. Agnes Scott instilled in me an unshakable confidence such that regardless of demographics, I don’t question the validity of my seat at the table,” she says. “My classes were full of curious, intelligent women who weren’t afraid to ask the hard questions, to seek to understand and to not doubt ourselves or our worth, no matter what our fields, and continue to be emboldened.”

As Chapman, an Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) scholar, reflects on the contribution she is making in the battle against COVID-19, she thinks of how deeply personal it is to her as a way to give back.

“I believe that science is service — that we have an obligation to use our tools, technology and understanding to discover mechanisms and applications that will directly improve human life,” she says.

Still, she recognizes that many people distrust science and misinformation remains prevalent, which she describes as heartbreaking.

“We are doing rigorous testing, and we are not trying to propagate information that is not true or safe,” says Chapman. “I want people to have confidence in the work that scientists are doing and to have trust and faith in us. We want to help people — that is what science is about.”

RAISING AWARENESS

One of the major social issues that the pandemic has called attention to is the ongoing problem of health inequities in the U.S. Data indicates that certain population groups are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, with higher rates of

infection and mortality among people of color and people of lower socioeconomic status.

For Joëlle Atere-Roberts ’14, a doctoral student in epidemiology at the University of North Carolina’s Chapel Hill campus, the greater risks facing these groups are a troubling trend and one unfortunately that is not unexpected.

“The pandemic has revealed that these social inequities and disparities have always existed. Now the current state of the virus has further exacerbated existing health inequities along racial and economic lines,” she says.

“Prior to COVID-19, these communities were already bearing the brunt of unequal structures that inevitably put them at higher risk. These individuals often work more essential low-wage service jobs, have higher rates of unemployment, lack the resources to get tested, have higher chronic illness burden, live in crowded conditions and rely on public transportation,” explains Atere-Roberts. “All these structural inequities affecting Black communities in particular are rooted in structural racism, which makes low-income and Black individuals more susceptible to succumbing to COVID-19. The increased vulnerability among Black communities is not biological, and it does not happen by chance. Systems of structural racism and marginalization are rooted in our country’s history of systemic oppression and have created the perfect storm for inequities in COVID-19 to thrive.”

While her current graduate research projects examine how factors such as experiences of discrimination and neighborhood environment impact poor outcomes in type 2 diabetes and gynecologic health outcomes, with a particular focus on Black women, Atere-Roberts is becoming an emerging voice in public conversations about the pandemic. She recently participated in the “COVID-19 Social Inequities’ Impact on Mental Health” virtual panel discussion hosted by Agnes Scott College’s Gay Johnson McDougall Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion as part of its Engaging Social Challenges series.

Atere-Roberts, who holds a bachelor’s degree in biology from Agnes Scott and a master’s degree in public health from Georgia State University, is driven to understand and uncover the reasons for inequities, which is why she decided to focus her studies on social epidemiology, a branch of epidemiology that explores the effects of social and structural influences on health.

“My interest in this area of research was sparked by my dissatisfaction with existing explanations for long-standing disparities in health. I think my dissatisfaction is directly linked to the social justice lens I gained from my liberal arts education at Agnes Scott,” she says. “The injustice of dying early or suffering unduly simply because you are in a certain social class, racial or ethnic group, or gender identity or sexual



Joëlle Atere-Roberts ’14 presenting her research at the Science of Cancer Health Disparities Conference in 2017. Photo courtesy of Joëlle Atere-Roberts ’14. Headshot by Noémie-Marguerite Photography.



minority group is beyond disheartening. I chose to pursue social epidemiology to use data to solve health problems with an eye toward how social factors impact health in order to prevent unnecessary deaths and advance toward health equity.”

She notes that on the front lines of the pandemic social epidemiologists are playing a key role in trying to save lives by trying to gather data that will provide clearer insight on the COVID-19 health inequities.

“Since there is no widespread testing, it is difficult to have a true estimate of how the virus is impacting vulnerable populations,” Atere-Roberts says. “Social epidemiologists are pushing for government agencies, hospitals and health departments across the U.S. to report the key demographic characteristics of COVID-19 cases, including race and ethnicity, income and geography. This data is critical to unmask the underlying health disparities and inform equitable COVID-19 prevention efforts.”

She says that these efforts need to be made across multiple sectors, including housing, education and health care. And while she observes that progress has been made recently to provide more accessible and affordable testing and treatment for communities of color, poor communities and the uninsured or underinsured, she says more work needs to be done for other high-risk groups.

“Efforts should be made to address the unique challenges faced by those in congregate settings, such as correctional facilities, detention centers and homeless shelters. These populations are another high-risk group due to the limited ability to physically distance, unsanitary conditions and lack of access to medical treatment. As COVID-19 treatments and vaccines develop, thoughtful plans need to focus on how to deliver interventions to those at highest risk first, not last,” she says.

After she receives her doctorate, Atere-Roberts knows that she wants to continue a career in social epidemiology so that she can make a difference by finding answers.

“I envision working in an interdisciplinary environment with other scholars interested in not just describing existing disparities in health, but also in seeking to understand why,” she says. “My hope is that my research will have sustained impact by framing my epidemiologic questions from a policy lens, with the ultimate goal of informing actionable policy solutions to public health problems.”

HELPING THE COMMUNITY

On an early Saturday morning in a parking lot off North Point Parkway in Alpharetta, Georgia, Vaughn Wicker '19 stands ready in his personal protective equipment. A vehicle pulls up beside him, and he greets the driver, provides information and then gives directions to the next checkpoint. As the driver moves forward following the traffic-coned lane, Wicker turns his attention to another approaching vehicle.

As a program associate at one of the Community Organized Relief Effort's COVID-19 testing sites in Georgia, Wicker fills a variety of roles depending on the needs for the day. Some Saturdays he manages traffic, and on others, he registers visitors into CORE's online system, confirms appointments and prepares test kits.

In the first critical months of the pandemic, the U.S. had a limited capacity for COVID-19 testing due to a shortage of test kits, which many health experts believe contributed to the spread of the

coronavirus. Once production increased and test kits became more widely available for the public, the issues of cost and access, particularly for vulnerable populations, became apparent. This is where CORE, a nonprofit co-founded by actor Sean Penn, stepped in.

The humanitarian relief organization has administered more than a million free COVID-19 tests, setting up stationary and drive-through mobile test sites in select cities and states throughout the U.S. No ID or insurance is required, which also makes the tests more accessible. In Georgia, CORE offers testing six days a week through 12 sites — 11 mobile teams operate throughout the metro Atlanta counties Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas and Gwinnett, with the Alpharetta location as the only fixed site. Since April 30, CORE has administered more than 150,000 tests in Georgia. One of those people tested is Wicker himself, which is how he came to work for CORE.

After participating in the Black Lives Matter protests in Atlanta, Wicker says he wanted to be responsible and get tested for COVID-19. He found one of CORE's mobile sites and was so impressed by the speed, ease and accessibility of the testing that he decided to apply for a job at the nonprofit. He has been working at CORE since June and has found it to be personally meaningful.

“Testing is a vital part of slowing the spread of COVID-19, and I'm so happy to work with an organization that provides free and accessible testing,” he says. “I've known people



Vaughn Wicker '19 provides information to a driver who has arrived for COVID-19 testing at CORE's drive-through location in Alpharetta, Georgia. Photos by Ellis Vener/CORE.

who have faced barriers to getting tested because they aren't Georgia residents or they don't have the financial resources to be tested elsewhere. It is important to me to support and work with CORE because I believe everyone deserves free and accessible testing."

In addition to his role at CORE on Saturdays, Wicker, who earned a degree in biology from Agnes Scott, has a job as laboratory aide at the Georgia Department of Public Health. And while many would be worried about exposure to the coronavirus by working at a test site that sees hundreds of people pass through a day, he understands the concern but is focused on being of service.

"Working on the front lines carries more risk than other jobs, but notably CORE provides full personal protective equipment and maintains strict safety standards. Working at CORE doesn't significantly increase my risk for becoming infected, which is why I feel a strong desire to continue with this work," Wicker says. "By helping people get tested, I'm doing my part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and help protect the health of my community."

"My experiences at Agnes Scott instilled in me the importance of investing in my community, so the work I am doing every day is a natural extension of that," he adds.

Wicker also credits the college for enabling him to successfully pursue his professional interests.

"At Agnes Scott, I developed not only a strong ethical code but also learned the foundations that have allowed me to break into the field of science. I'm on my path toward a bright career in the sciences, and I have Agnes Scott to thank for the knowledge and skills I carry with me," he says.

Just as strongly committed to serving the community and supporting CORE's mission is Julia Marshall '19, who is a site development and program scheduling associate. In her role, she selects locations for test sites in Georgia, using epidemiology reports and the Centers for Disease Control



Julia Marshall '19 on-site at one of CORE's drive-through COVID-19 testing locations. Photos by Ellis Vener/CORE.

and Prevention's social vulnerability index to determine which areas around Atlanta and the state to prioritize. She also finds and coordinates with community partners that want to host COVID-19 testing events and conducts in-person site assessments.

Marshall joined CORE in May after being evacuated due to the pandemic from Senegal, where she was volunteering with the Peace Corps as a community health support agent since graduating from Agnes Scott with a bachelor's degree in public health. After quarantining for two weeks upon her arrival back in the U.S., she started looking for a job and found the opportunity to work at CORE through the Atlanta Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers association.

"As I was searching for what to do next, I couldn't stop thinking that I had to directly address the reason for my evacuation. I studied public health at Agnes Scott and served in the Peace Corps for that same reason, so it only made sense to serve in a new capacity in the city that I grew up in. I am lucky that my Agnes Scott education gave me the skills I needed to pivot and serve my community in a valuable, constructive manner," she says about discovering CORE.

Marshall began as a program associate like Wicker, and she was then promoted to site manager of the Fulton County North Point Parkway location in Alpharetta and promoted again recently to her current position.

Describing what it is like to be on the front lines of the COVID-19

pandemic, she says, "CORE is an extremely grassroots, patient-centric organization. Every decision we make is based on how we can best serve the community and the individual. Because of the care and thought I have seen behind the scenes at CORE, my front-line experience has been punctuated by resilience and hope."

Seeing the way people have responded to the pandemic crisis has strengthened this resilience and hope that Marshall feels.

"Watching numerous diverse communities and organizations come together to support one another is one of the most rewarding parts of working on the front lines. The outpouring of kindness and empathy we see from our partners and patients is incredibly encouraging," she notes.

As she builds a career in public health, Marshall, who interned for a year at CARE USA while at Agnes Scott, says that her education at the college has helped her to be effective in her work.

"Although nothing can directly prepare you for working for a disaster response organization in the midst of a pandemic, my Agnes Scott classes and professors gave me the tools and transferable skills I needed to ensure my success in whatever situations I find or place myself in," she says. "I wrote my senior capstone thesis on medical missions in Guatemala, and that project specifically expanded my ability to think critically and problem-solve within my field, which has been an invaluable asset to my position at CORE."



giving highlights

Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Philanthropy

The commitment of Agnes Scott College supporters during a year of many uncertainties has been extraordinary. The college remains committed to providing the highest quality of education to our students and maintaining learning environments that are safe, supportive and equitable. Philanthropy helps keep the college flexible and resilient as it pushes forward and adapts. We are truly grateful for all you do. Every gift of every size to the college truly makes a difference as we continue to face unprecedented challenges this fall semester and beyond. Thank you for helping us remain #ScottieStrong!

See some of the incredible philanthropic numbers you made possible this year — including a record \$21.1 million in new gifts and pledges — through a special virtual performance by alumnae of Agnes Scott's a cappella group Luchsingers. Because of you, Agnes Scott will continue to Rise Up.

Watch the “Because of You, Agnes Scott Will Continue to Rise Up” video.



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BY THE NUMBERS:

\$21,097,921

in new gifts and pledges raised.

\$2,574,746

raised in support of
The Fund for Agnes Scott.

\$3,698,050

raised by reunion years
(classes of the 0s and 5s).

- **3,170** individuals and organizations made a gift.
- **2,511** were gifts under \$100.
- **160** gifts were at the Tower Circle level (leadership gifts of \$2,500 or more).
- **29%** of alumnae gave back to Agnes Scott.
- **60%** of 2018-2019 donors renewed their gift.
- **1,743** Fideles members (donors who have made a gift for three consecutive years).

President's Mini-Grants for Social Justice Awardees

The Agnes Scott College Office of the President was pleased to announce the awardees of the President's Mini-Grants for Social Justice this fall. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, these grants are designed to fund existing and new faculty and staff projects that “support inclusive humanities education and diverse learning environments — spaces where the ideas that enrich our understanding of a complex world are created and elevated” on campus (in and out of the classroom).

Projects that have been awarded include the “Psychology and Racial Justice Leadership Program,” “Decolonizing the Curriculum, One Syllabus at a Time: Pedagogy as Social Justice,” “R.E.S.T. Area for Athletes (Race & Ethnicity in Sports Training) Pilot Program & Virtual Conference” and more. [Click here to learn more!](#)



Campaign for Main Renovation

When have scaffolding and tarp looked so good? Thanks to gifts from more than 300 donors, phase two renovations of Agnes Scott “Main” Hall are well underway! Most of the inside is down to the studs, a new slate roof along with new copper gutters are being added, exterior bricks and masonry are being repaired and the windows are being replaced. And we’re not done yet. The Campaign for Main is still underway to raise the remaining \$16 million needed to fully fund and complete the final phase of renovations. To learn more about the renovations and how you can give to support the final phase, visit agnesscott.edu/givetomain.



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