

June 2008

Inside this issue

Obama and Me
Isaac J. Bailey '95

Student Profiles
Clint Smith '10

Alumni Profiles
Rusty Lindsey '76

Annual Fund
Why Do You Give?

Campus Update

Career Corner

THE DBAN QUARTERLY

Volume I, Issue 2

OBAMA and ME: By Isaac J. Bailey (Class of '95)

On May 5, a dozen Philadelphia police officers were captured on tape kicking and beating three young black men. On May 7, the Rev. Al Sharpton and others were arrested in New York City while protesting the acquittal of police officers who killed an unarmed young black.

Sandwiched in between was the day Sen. Barack Obama won the North Carolina primary, all but wrapping up the Democratic presidential nomination and becoming the first black man to lead a major party ticket in our 232-year history. Those days made me think more about raising my six-year-old black son.

Obama will be accepting the nomination on the 45th anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech at the March on Washington, 40 years after the Kerner Commission found "two Americas," one black, one white. The events aren't connected, except in one significant way: perception.

The perception that Sharpton and others like him are too eager to blame racism for every societal shortcoming. The perception that cops are too eager to ship black men off to a "prison industrial complex" that thrives on black dysfunction.

The perception that too many young black men are considered suspect for good reason, given that they are more likely to be killed by other young black men than by racist cops. Police chased down the men in Philadelphia after an alleged drug deal gone bad. The perception that Obama's candidacy is long overdue in a country that was founded upon freedom *and* the exploitation of dark-skinned people.

None of those perceptions lends themselves to easy analysis. Each of them is old. Except Obama. A black man just months away from the presidency is new.

Continued on page 3

DBAN Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Events</u>
Jun-08	30th - Annual Fund Participation Deadline
Summer 2008	Reconnect Event Community Service Project
Aug-08	17th - S.T.R.I.D.E Pre-orientation Program
Sep-08	20th - Discover Davidson 26th and 27th - Homecoming
Oct-08	19th - Discover Davidson
Nov-08	TBD - Alumni Dinner with President Ross
Dec-08	TBD - Family Sponsorship TBD - Career Pannel Discussion

Black Alumni Associations Across the Country

The Harvard Black Alumni Society (HBAS) was founded in 2002 by nine alumni. Since then, it has grown into a national organization with operations in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Washington D.C.

YBAN: Yale Black Alumni Network (YBAN) was founded in 1996. It is an independent, autonomous online community for alumni of African descent.

The Black Ivy Alumni League, founded in 1998, is a national non-profit organization representing alumni of African descent from the colleges and professional/graduate schools of the nation's eight Ivy League institutions.

Cornell Black Alumni Association (CBAA) was founded in 1976 to provide a communication network for Black alumni. Over the years, CBAA's mission and scope of activities has expanded to encompass four major programs— Recruitment, Mentorship, Update, and Scholarship.





Alumni Profile: Rusty Lindsey

Oracle Corporation, Regional Sales Manager

Class of 1976.

Hometown: Fayetteville, NC.

Currently resides in Raleigh, NC

Who was in your “crew” at Davidson and where are they now? Larry Hardaway, Lakeland, FL; Charles Bethea, Greensboro, NC; Ricky Sadler, Lynchburg, VA; George Pindar, Columbia, SC; Wendell Patterson, Washington D.C.

Favorite Class and/or Professor and why? William Hight, who taught Education and also ran the Career Services office; he took a personal interest in my decision to have a teaching option as well as supported my decision to take a break and work after graduation versus going straight to post-graduate studies. **What was your major at Davidson and your current occupation?** Political Science. That decision was based on the fact that I was very politically active and considering law as a career option. I worked in banking after graduation, and earned an MBA. Since then, my career has been in technology, primarily sales, management, and consulting.

When was the last time you were back on campus? Alumni Weekend. As VP of the Alumni Association, I hosted the Alumni Awards ceremony. **What was your impression?** I am most proud of evolution of the student body with respect to diversity. I consider myself fortunate to have worked with and known Bobby Vagt, who I think deserves a lot of credit along with the Board of Trustees for their willingness to change and adapt. **If you could go back, is there anything you would do differently while at Davidson or after graduation?** I would engage more with faculty and fellow students. That being said, the times were very different: integration was recent; coeducation was in its early stages.

What advice would you give to current students or younger alumni? One of the advantages of Davidson's size is the ability to know faculty, staff, and fellow students to a degree that is impossible in larger institutions. Take advantage of that and it will benefit you for your entire life. Also, regardless of your experiences, positive or negative, engage with Davidson through the alumni association and DBAN, if only for the positive impact you can have on current Black students. Last, enjoy your college years - there is no other time like it in life!



Student Profile: Clint Smith (Class of 2010)

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

Major : English

Favorite Class and/or Professor so far and why? Dr. Gill Holland. He really reinvigorated my excitement and passion for literature and writing. You'll never pass him by on campus without getting a smile and a wave.

What are your aspirations after Davidson? I would like to be a columnist for a major newspaper or magazine (i.e. *New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *Chicago Tribune*) and ultimately the editor and chief of one of these major print media organizations. **What are you doing to prepare yourself for life after Davidson?** This summer I was accepted to the *Institute of Political Journalism* in Washington D.C. I will have a full time internship with National Public Radio (NPR) and will take classes at Georgetown University in the evenings. I am also a regular new correspondent for our campus newspaper *The Davidsonian*.

Has your impression of Davidson changed over the course of your time there? If so, how? Since the basketball tournament a lot more of my friends and family know about the school. I don't really get funny looks anymore when I tell people I go to Davidson either. But overall I have always enjoyed Davidson. The small school setting is definitely one that suits me more than a large state school would have. I think I've actually changed more than my impressions of the school have. I have definitely grown great deal and have become a lot more mature. People often think of Davidson as some protective bubble, but it's had a different effect on me. I feel like I can confront nearly any situation effectively after my experience here.

If you could go back, is there anything you would do differently while at Davidson? Ask Commons to add rotisserie chicken to the menu. **What advice would you give to other current students?** College is what you make it, if you always complain about Davidson and how hard it is you'll miss the full experience and won't enjoy your time here. Appreciate the unique opportunities afforded to us here and take advantage of them.

Campus Update: From the BSC President



The annual DBAN Senior Induction Luncheon was held on Sunday, April 27th. President Ross spoke about the importance of diversity and how he will continue to ensure that diversity is in the fore front for incoming and existing Davidson students. After Ross spoke, the DBAN Council officially inducted each senior into DBAN and presented them with a small gift. In addition, the 2008 DBAN Scholarship Award winners were announced (Kiara Boone '11, Jessica Givens '10, Ebony Hartley '09).

Immediately following the luncheon, the BSC-DBAN Discussion on the Davidson Experience was held in the student Union. Current students were paired, in groups of 6-8, with alumni. They were provided with a list of questions and talking points. Current students were able to share their perspectives on life as a student at Davidson College while alumni reflected on their opportunities and experiences when they were students. These discussions were an excellent chance for students to not only interact with individuals who threaded the same path, but it also allowed them to form relationships with alumni that will benefit them as they leave Davidson and enter the world. The students were excited about the outcome of the discussions and asked that they continue during the 2008-2009 school year.

So, the executive council of the Black Student Coalition (BSC) for the 2008-2009 school years is very excited about the upcoming year and anticipates working with DBAN to encourage more interaction between students and alumni. We are currently planning and scheduling next year's events, so if you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact Ebony Harley at [ebharley@davidson.edu](mailto:ebharley@ davidson.edu).

OBAMA and ME: continued

I'm 35 years old and didn't expect to see it. Maybe that's why I feel more emotionally involved in presidential politics than I ever have. Initially, Obama wasn't considered black enough, because he didn't bear the scars of the dogs and water hoses. Neither do I. By the time I was born in South Carolina, the "Whites Only" signs had been removed.

Then it was unsettling for some that he garnered so many black votes, as though it was a crime for black people to vote for the first viable black presidential candidate after spending their entire adult lives voting for white men. I understood. Some said I wasn't mainstream enough to command space as the primary columnist for my newspaper, that I saw things through the black perspective too often, as if seeing the world through anything but my own eyes was possible. Then he was considered out of touch because he had dark skin yet attended elite schools. So did I, graduating from Davidson College, one of the "New Ivies." Never mind that Obama had a single mother who had to use Food Stamps, or that my family relied on government cheese.

Then he was considered too black because his pastor said offensive things, and because he initially refused to abandon the man who introduced him to Christ. I got that, too. I attended the Million Man March, which was organized by a black man who has uttered anti-Semitic comments. I went to see if black men could gather for a positive cause - a commitment to personal and social responsibility - given what I'd grown up seeing - a friend who was blinded by a bullet during a nightclub fight; a brother convicted of murder; a father who beat my mother. And I remain friends with a NAACP leader who spent years angering and insulting the sensibilities of whites because I know he was always about more, about uplifting the poor and voiceless.

Then Obama was disparaged by a white man who called him an unpatriotic Muslim and wouldn't shake the hand of the would-be-president. I won't forget the white man who refused to shake mine while I interviewed him, or the time a white reader said I was secretly flashing a gang sign in my column photo, or the anonymous writer who sends racial epithet-filled threatening letters, saying I got my position because I was black, just as Geraldine Ferraro said Obama was successful primarily because of his race.

But like Obama, I know those obstacles are few compared to my opportunities, those barriers not nearly as daunting as they must have been when Obama's pastor was growing up. I know that ugly is far out weighed by the good. Millions of white people line up to hear Obama speak and want him to be president. And while a few white readers call me ni____, the majority say they appreciate what I do.

And I understand, as Obama must, that his triumph, while seminal, isn't an elixir. Because while he could take the oath of office during the centennial of the NAACP, my son was born during the year - 2001 - researchers said marked the beginning of a trend that will see one third of black boys go to prison if nothing changes.

A first black president who is serious about prison and educational reform is an important step. Obama sounded serious about such things when I spoke with him before the South Carolina primary. His record in Chicago provides evidence that he is. But it won't be enough to stop my son from becoming another statistic. That's still my responsibility - just like we vowed at the Million Man March.



Tiara Henderson '97
President
tiara.henderson@53.com

Brandon Zeigler '05
Vice President
brandon.zeigler@wachovia.com

Tetty Tei '06
Secretary
tetteytei@gmail.com

Sakira Curbeam '98
Treasurer
sakira.v.curbeam@bankofamerica.com

Website:

<http://www3.davidson.edu/cms/x9418.xml>

Davidson College
Office of Alumni Relations
Box 7169
Davidson, NC 28035-7169

The Annual Fund: Why Do You Give? The current Annual Fund fiscal year ends June 30, 2008 and DBAN's current participation rate is only **10.84%**.

Davidson has given me so much. As a student in the late 70s, I was able to develop important relationships with very unique people, many of them who are still in my life today. As a DBAN member, I have been able to network with fellow alumni who make me feel like I am part of something very special. As a trustee, I am very proud of being associated with an institution that could see the profound impact that the Davidson Trust could have on the Davidson family. Finally, as the parent of a recent Davidson grad, I have had the opportunity to be exposed to the present day Davidson experience which truly values diversity. So, why do I give to Davidson? I give because I know that Davidson is making a huge difference in the lives of many people, including myself.

- Erwin Carter '76

Career Corner: Don't Lose Faith in your 401K

Walter Updegrave 5/7/2008

<http://asktheexpert.blogs.money.cnn.com/2008/05/07/dont-lose-faith-in-your-401k/>

I can understand why you might feel anxious about contributing to your 401(k) account at a time when the national mood is so gloomy. It's hard not to let the travails of the moment color your long-term planning. But the fact is, when you invest money in your 401(k), improving your retirement prospects over the long-term should be your focus.

When you're contributing to your 401(k) early in your career - say, when you're in your 20s or 30s - you know that this money is going to be invested at least another 20 to 40 years. So as long as you're investing in a diversified mix of stock and bond funds, it doesn't make much sense to get caught up in the short-term ups and downs of the market.

If you're on the verge of retirement, then clearly you've got to give more consideration to what might happen to the value of your account over the next few years. You don't want to see your 401(k)'s value decimated by market setbacks on the eve of retirement. I realize, however, that concern about the short-term can often blind us to long-term considerations. So I'd like to offer three more immediate reasons why you shouldn't abandon your 401(k) now.

You'll be giving up a tax break, and possibly free money. One of the nice little advantages of participating in a 401(k) is that you get to invest pre-tax dollars, which lowers your current tax bill. What's more, the investment gains on your contributions - as well as the gains on your gains - grow without the drag of taxes. Yes, you do eventually pay tax on this money at withdrawal. But years of tax-deferred compounding allows you build a bigger nest egg than you could with taxable accounts alone, which in turn allows you to live a more comfy retirement. And if your 401(k) plan is among the majority that provides employer matching contributions - typically 50 cents for every dollar you contribute up to 6% of salary - then bowing out of your plan now is like giving up free money.

You may be foregoing attractive returns. There are no guarantees when it comes to the financial markets. But there's a good chance that the money you invest in your 401(k) when the markets are struggling will give you some of the highest returns you'll earn over the long run. This is a somewhat counterintuitive concept. People tend to feel most comfortable about investing after the markets have been on a roll and have racked up big gains. But the exuberance that naturally occurs during bull markets eventually leads investors to bid up share prices to blimpish levels. That diminishes the potential for future gains much the same way that overpaying for a house does.

You might not resume contributing if you stop now. Another nice advantage of contributing to a 401(k) is that it forces you to live a bit below your means. Your contribution comes out of your paycheck before you get your hands on it, so your spending naturally conforms to what's left - that is, your income after you've allowed for saving.

Bottom line: It's challenge enough to create a retirement nest egg these days even if you contribute faithfully to your 401(k) throughout your career. Start moving in and out of your plan based on how you feel about the economy and that challenge could become a mission impossible.