Oakwood Remembers 9/11

Thirteen years ago, militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. On that day - September 11, 2001 - which has come to be known as "9/11" - two of the four airplanes hijacked were flown into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City.

As an institution with an international enrollment, students and employees at Oakwood University have vivid memories of the events of 9/11.

Reporter Muriel Bailey from Huntsville's NBC affiliate stations - WAFF-48, interviewed Mrs. Erika Hairston, accountant. Erika said:

"My sister was in the NYPD police academy on 9/11. She and all of her classmates were put immediately on active duty that day, and worked around the clock for weeks and months thereafter. With that kind of on-the-job training, they never returned to the classroom. They later graduated in March 2012 once things settled down.

My brother worked in Manhattan a few blocks from the WTC. He'd just come out of the subway when he looked up and saw the second plane hit. He said he was looking at the building and realized it was going to fall. He ran toward the water, away from the building. He ended up covered in debris. He took the ferry over to Staten Island and stayed with a coworker until he could get home the next day.

All communication was down in NY. No phone calls were going through. I knew my brother worked in the neighborhood, and I had no idea where my sister's class was that day, as they would be at the shooting range some days and in different locations for specialized training. It was extremely scary not being able to contact my loved ones."
As it turned out, my brother and sister were both fine but one of our church members, a girl I grew up with, died in the WTC that day. She worked there."

The Oakwood University family will observe a moment of silence in memory of the 9/11 attacks during the University Chapel service on September 11 at 9:50 a.m.

**Oakwood Listed as #33 Among the Nation’s Best HBCUs**

Yesterday, U.S. News & World Report (USNWR) released the 2015 Best Colleges Rankings for the 30th consecutive year. Oakwood University was number 33 on the list.

The annual peer survey is conducted in the spring, where administrators at HBCUs (including the president, provost, and admissions dean) are asked to rate the academic quality of all other HBCUs with which they are familiar. In addition to the survey results, the rankings are based on the same data indicators used in the Best Colleges 2015 rankings for Regional Universities, weighted the same way, from retention and graduation rates to high school class standing and test scores and the strength of the faculty.

To be part of the Best Black Colleges universe, a school has to be currently designated by the Department of Education as an HBCU, a status created as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Additionally, the college must be a baccalaureate-granting institution that enrolls primarily first-year, first-time students and must also have been part of this year's Best Colleges process.

Click [here](http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs137/1111139991575/archive/1118409719463.html) to view the rankings.

**Oakwood Hosts UNCF North Alabama Campaign Kick-Off**

*President Dr. Leslie Pollard and Monica Spencer, Oakwood's Miss UNCF 2014, cut the ribbon to launch the UNCF North Alabama Campaign, assisted by staff from the Huntsville Madison County*
Oakwood's Division of Advancement & Development launched the 2014-2015 UNCF North Alabama "Building Bridges to Opportunity" Campaign at a kick-off reception on September 9, in the Bradford-Cleveland-Brooks Leadership Center, to appreciate our generous sponsors and donors, and to begin the new campaign season.

In attendance were local UNCF campaign sponsors, representatives from the UNCF regional office, Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce, Huntsville Mayor's Office, UNCF committee members, United Student Movement officers, UNCF scholarship recipients, graduates from UNCF member institutions, and Oakwood faculty and staff.

Oakwood is a proud member institution of the UNCF and thankful to the individuals and corporations that invest in the mission of the UNCF and our students across Alabama and the country. Each year, the Division of Advancement and Development, along with the UNCF Community Planning Committee, coordinates the North Alabama Campaign to bring more awareness to the community about the impactful work of the UNCF, HBCUs, and our phenomenal graduates and student servant leaders.

The campaign schedules several fundraising events throughout the year, including The UNCF Golf Classic at The Ledges of Huntsville, on October 6, and the Women's Leadership Tea, on November 16, at The Ledges of Huntsville Ballroom.

The culminating fundraising event will be the 37th Annual UNCF Gala, scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2015, in the Von Braun Center North Hall.

All proceeds from the campaign support the 37 UNCF member colleges and universities, including the five schools in Alabama: Miles College, Oakwood University, Stillman College, Talladega College, and Tuskegee University, and the thousands of students attending member institutions.

For information about the local UNCF campaign and to register for golf, visit the website, or email uncf@oakwood.edu.

**First-ever HBCU-created MOOC Offers Context for Understanding World Religions**

Although Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have been shaking up higher education since 2012 by offering free courses to students anywhere in the world, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have been notably absent from MOOC platforms, until now.

Canvas Network and the Center for
Excellence in Distance Learning (CEDL) at Wiley College announced a new MOOC developed by Dr. Keith Augustus Burton of CEDL member institution Oakwood University, "Understanding World Religions: An Occupational Approach." Enrollment is free, and anyone can register at www.canvas.net.

This MOOC is the product of innovation-focused collaboration between Oakwood University and the Center for Excellence in Distance Learning at Wiley College, which promotes greater sharing of resources and best practices in online education among the HBCU community.

"On behalf of all the members of the Center for Excellence in Distance Learning at Wiley College, we are proud to be standard-bearers for educational innovation in the HBCU community with the introduction of its first massive open online course," said Dr. Haywood L. Strickland, president and CEO of Wiley College. "We recognize the substantial contributions of Canvas Network in providing a superior platform that will make Dr. Burton's MOOC and scholarship freely available to students across the globe."

Dr. Burton is the director of the Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations at Oakwood University.

Pollard's Places
On Friday, September 5, I participated in the North American Division’s “Summit on Pastoral Leadership Effectiveness in 2025,” on the campus of Andrews University. Dr. Ivan Williams and his team of colleagues from the NAD convened the event, in which 40 administrators from higher education, church administration and conference work participated. Dr. Finbar Benjamin, acting Dean of the School of Religion, also represented our institution at the meeting.

On Sunday evening, September 7, we were also blessed to able to spend a delightful evening of fellowship with approximately 25 Oakwood University alumni who are attending the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary. They expressed their deep appreciation to Oakwood faculty and staff for all of the support they enjoyed during their days at the Oaks.

**OU Picture of the Week**
Dr. Jon Robertson, former chair of the Music Department and a former director of the Aeolians, presented a lecture/master class on yesterday to music major students. Robertson is a world-renowned performer and conductor. He currently serves as Dean of Music at Lynn University. In this photo, Robertson is giving a vocal performance critique to Joseph Getfield. (Photo by Anthony Chornes II)

**About Oakwood**

The mission of Oakwood University, a historically black, Seventh-day Adventist institution, is to transform students through biblically-based education for service to God and humanity.