Oakwood's Aeolians Minister in Jamaica

Rather than tour from city to city to present concerts as they usually do, the Aeolians are spending time ministering to children and teenagers suffering from HIV in Jamaica, during their Spring Tour.

Their priority this week is to bring as much joy as possible into the children's lives, spending quality time, sharing words of encouragement and love, playing group games, and singing songs.

Student Jim Williams said that he couldn't "put into words everything that we saw or experienced. We went from one place to the next - giving back. But here's the plot twist: we seemed to be the REAL ones on the receiving end... Pictures don't do justice.

At one particular place, we weren't even allowed to capture photos or videos. Nevertheless, what we experienced was real and will stick with me for the rest of my life."

Oakwood University and CFDRC sign $1.7M Mentor-Protégé Agreement
Kevin Byrnes, vice president and site executive for Raytheon Huntsville, and Joseph Cosumano, Jr., president and chief executive officer of CFDRC (Photo: Lucy Berry | lberry@al.com)

On February 25, just before last week's snowstorm in north Alabama, Raytheon Missile Systems and CFD Research Corporation (CFDRC) came together in Huntsville to sign a $1.7 million Mentor-Protégé agreement approved by the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA).

The three-year contract allows Raytheon to provide mentoring to CFDRC in the areas of product development, commercialization and other business systems and processes.

Oakwood is supplying engineering support (from our students in the dual engineering program), technical and business services in support of the Department of Defense Mentor Protégé Program. Evangeline Rivers-Lang, contract analyst at Oakwood University, is the project coordinator.

Click here to read the rest of reporter Lucy Berry's story on al.com.

Oakwood Honors Anti-Violence Activist Sybrina Fulton

On February 28, the culminating Sabbath of Black History Month, the Oakwood University Church honored Ms. Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, as the 2015 Black History Achievement Award Recipient.

February 26 marked the three-year anniversary since Trayvon Martin was fatally shot by George Zimmerman in Sanford, Fla. Out of this tragedy, Ms. Fulton has become an activist, speaking against violence towards children and the need to build better, safer communities for all.
Voting Continues in The Home Depot's Retool Your School Competition

This year, the Retool Your School Grant Program is using a new grant structure which will award a total of $255,000 in grants to nine accredited HBCUs in $50,000, $25,000, and $10,000 grant denominations. Based on student enrollment, schools will be categorized into one of three clusters:

- schools with 4,000 students or more,
- schools with between 3,999 and 1,201 students, or
- schools with less than 1,200 students.

"This is a very exciting year for The Home Depot's Retool Your School program," says Melissa Brown, manager, Multicultural Marketing, The Home Depot. "For the first time, student bodies are competing for grant money against schools their same size. This allows for larger and more impactful improvements to be made to the winning schools."

Online voting began on February 27, and continues through April 20, at www.retoolyourschool.com/vote-now/. You can cast one vote per day per computer and/or electronic device! Also remember to use Oakwood's designated hashtag, #Oakwood_RYS15, as often as possible on all social media.

More voting, more tweeting - let's show them the power of the Oakwood network!

Alumni Notes

Tia D. Jeffery, Ph.D., '03, was honored by the Washington Wizards on February 24, during their Black History Month spotlight of individuals who are making a difference in their communities. She is a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist and...
Certified Health Educator, and believes the development of a healthy mind and body empowers our youth to overcome obstacles in life. Her passions include adolescent health, minority health, and faith-based wellness initiatives.

Tia is currently an adjunct professor of nutrition and health education at Towson University, and serves as a nutrition and health education consultant for several healthcare agencies in Washington, D.C., and suburban Maryland. Jeffery earned a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics from Oakwood University, a Master of Science in Human Nutrition (with a cognate concentration in Exercise Science) from The Ohio State University, and a Ph.D. in Public Health (with a specialization in Community Health Promotion and Education) from Walden University.

Tia enjoys providing health screening and health promotion services at local churches and non-profit run/walk fundraisers. She has traveled to Tanzania to build housing for children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic. Dr. Jeffery's mission is to be an advocate for full-access to health services, nutrition education, healthy foods, and physical activity in underserved communities.

Pollard's Places

This past weekend, we had the privilege of attending the Adventist Health Mission Conference in Orlando, Fla. The conference was attended by more than 600 employees of Adventist Health Systems. The theme for the entire weekend dealt with the wholeness of our Adventist Health physicians, focusing on the journey toward physician well-being. Pictured above is the president of Adventist Health and Oakwood University Board of Trustees member, Dr. Donald Jernigan. The Thursday evening gala provided a wonderful opportunity for celebrating employees who deliver outstanding service to the mission of Adventist Health.

OU Picture of the Week
Shyenne Butler's photo accurately captures how still and quiet the campus is while our students are gone, during Spring Break. We wish our students a safe and warm week of relaxation and ministry, and trust they will return to classes on March 9 with a renewed determination, to complete the semester.

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.

Connect with Us
CFDRC in Huntsville signs $1.7M mentor-protege agreement with Raytheon Missile Systems

A few hours before the snow hit north Alabama on Wednesday, Raytheon Missile Systems and CFD Research Corporation (CFDRC) came together in Huntsville to sign a $1.7 million Mentor-Protégé agreement approved by the U.S. Missile Defense Agency.

The three-year contract, which was officially approved Jan. 16, allows Raytheon to provide mentoring to CFDRC in the areas of product development, commercialization and other business systems and processes.

Officials with Raytheon, CFDRC, Oakwood University and the Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County were present at the signing event.

"As we grow, I think the things that this program brings -- staff processes and procedures and certifications -- are what a small business needs to be competitive in this community," said Joseph Cosumano, Jr., president and chief executive officer of CFDRC.

Established by Congress in 1991, the U.S. Department of Defense Mentor-Protégé program helps small businesses boost their participation in prime and subcontract awards by creating long-term relationships with larger companies.

DoD contractors (mentors) receive incentives to develop subcontracting relationships with small business protégés. Four Mentor-Protégé teams with Huntsville ties recently won the prestigious Nunn Perry Award for their involvement in the program.

"Sometimes larger companies get a little stifled and they don't see past the quarter and they don't see past the core," said Kevin Byrnes, vice president and site executive for Raytheon Huntsville. "I think it's important that we keep the pipeline full of new thoughts, energies and innovations because that's how you grow. If we are both to achieve our growth goals, doing it together is the best possible outcome."

CFDRC, a woman-owned small business founded in 1987, employs 95 and is headquartered at HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology in Huntsville. The company provides aerospace, biomedical and life science, energy and materials products and services.
Trayvon Martin's mother, Sybrina Fulton, to be honored in Huntsville for violence-prevention work

Trayvon Martin's mother, Sybrina Fulton, will be honored in Huntsville, Ala., on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2015, during a live broadcast of Breath of Life, which is headquartered at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church. The honor is a way to signal the continuing struggle for a fair society, said Dr. Carlton Byrd, senior pastor of Oakwood Church and speaker-director of Breath of Life.

"The Oakwood University Church and Breath of Life want to support the on-going conversation about the injustices that still take place in our society," Byrd said. "We hope that we can help mitigate the daily struggles all people are plagued with during these challenging times."

Fulton, who with Trayvon's father, has co-founded the Trayvon Martin Foundation to create violence-prevention projects and to support other gun victims, will be honored during the 11 a.m. worship service at Oakwood with the Black History Achievement Award. Fulton's 17-year-old son was shot to death in a Florida neighborhood on Feb. 26, 2012, by community watch vigilante George Zimmerman. Zimmerman was later acquitted of second-degree murder and manslaughter charges, a decision that set off a firestorm of protests, demonstrations and a few crimes around the country - including a white man's beating by a mob in Mobile during which someone yelled, "This is for Trayvon."

During March and early April 2012, marches in support of Trayvon and calling for Zimmerman's arrest were held in Huntsville, Birmingham and other cities around the country. Zimmerman was eventually arrested on April 11, 2012. Marches centering on the case continued to be held around the country during the summer of 2012.

Fulton comes to Huntsville just two weeks after the annual "I am Trayvon" Day of Remembrance Peace Walk and Peace Talk, which will be held in Miami on Feb. 14.

Previous recipients of the Black History Achievement Award include Adam Clayton Powell, IV, Peggy Wallace Kennedy, Karen Lowery, U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, U.S. Congressman John Lewis, Judge Glenda Hatchett, Mayors Shirley Franklin and Kasim Reed of Atlanta, Ga., the Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery and basketball legend Julius "Dr. J." Erving

Special music during the service in Huntsville will be provided by the Central State University Choir directed by Jeremy Winston. The Central State chorus has twice been nominated for a Grammy Award for its recordings. The worship service is planned as a capstone to the congregation's Black History Month programs. The Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church is at 5500 Adventist Blvd. in Huntsville. The service will be broadcast live in the Huntsville area on channel 36, and also live-streamed at www.BreathofLife.tv.