From DSU to the planet MARS

Dr. Noureddine Melikechi and graduate student Alissa Mezzacappa are collaborators in a NASA mission studying the surface of the Red Planet.

Dr. Kevina Vulinec works for the good of bats.

How do you stay in touch with DSU?
Social networking 101: Connect with us online
A look back at DSUAA, Hornet fan events in photos

Alumnus Kenneth Parker’s nontraditional career path took him from landscaper to company executive.
Dear DSU alumni and friends,

As I have completed my second year as president of Delaware State University, the journey we are on toward fulfilling our vision for DSU has given me a great sense of purpose every morning I rise to begin my day for this institution. With the recent accomplishments of the University, it is clear to me that DSU is on the right track toward becoming the best.

We learned in September that DSU’s stock is rising within the HBCU community, as the University’s standing among 72 other HBCUs in the country — as ranked by U.S. News & World Report — improved this year from 17th to 15th.

The outstanding research work in our Optics Program has received great validation, with the state of Delaware earmarking $10 million to go toward an Optics Research Facility on campus. Our internationally accredited College of Business won a competitive $500,000 federal grant through which it will establish a new DSU Center for Economic Development and Trade that will be a valuable resource for the state.

More and more students want to be a part of what is happening at DSU. We received more than 9,000 applications for the 2011-2012 school year, and that culminated in a record freshman class. DSU’s retention rate is rising within the HBCU community, as the University’s standing among 72 other HBCUs in the country — as ranked by U.S. News & World Report — improved this year from 17th to 15th.

Moest improvements in giving last year helped the University better its new freshmen retention this fall from 67 to 70 percent, and while that was certainly appreciated, I remain convinced that alumni can do more.

Please know that making a financial contribution will not only tremendously assist our students in fulfilling their aspirations, but also help bring a significant amount of funding to the University by matching the challenge grant.

Help DSU reach new pinnacles, and your contributions will be based on not only what this institution has been able to achieve, but also your contribution to your alma mater’s success.

Alumni can help DSU fulfill vision

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The Echo is a publication of the Division of Institutional Advancement at Delaware State University. Alumni news for future editions may be sent to Lorene Robinson, director of alumni relations, at alumni@desu.edu. She can also be contacted at 302.857.6050.
Delaware State University is once again making history, this time through its involvement in one of NASA’s current space initiatives: the launch of the Curiosity rover to the Red Planet. On November 26, Dr. Noureddine Melikechi and Alissa Mezzacappa were part of a select group of scientists and onlookers at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida to witness the launch of the Curiosity rover to Mars. The rover is scheduled to reach the surface of the tiny planet in August 2012. The purpose of the Curiosity’s mission is to explore the elemental composition of rocks on the Mars surface using an instrument specifically created for this mission, the ChemCam.

ChemCam is comprised of 10 different systems that will collect samples and transmit data to an international team of scientists for analysis. Dr. Roger Wiens is the principal investigator on the ChemCam project. Resultant data will provide insight into whether or not there once existed the presence of elements such as carbon and nitrogen, a.k.a. “signs of life.”

From DSU to MARS

With the launch of NASA’s Mars Science Laboratory, Dr. Noureddine Melikechi and graduate student Alissa Mezzacappa will play an important role in analyzing data from the surface of the Red Planet.

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Enter DSU

Melikechi, professor of physics, vice president for research and dean of the College of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology, along with Mezzacappa, a graduate student, were enlisted on the ChemCam project for his expertise in laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy (LIBS). The ChemCam is equipped with a laser instrumentation that will be able to shoot from a distance of 7 meters into the rock, clearing through dust, breaking through the weathering layer and then providing a laser analysis of a significant depth of the rock itself. Melikechi and Mezzacappa have played a crucial role in this aspect of the project over the past two years, traveling to and from Los Alamos National Laboratory to work with the other collaborators. During this preparatory mode, they were able to conduct experiments under atmospheric conditions similar to what the Curiosity rover will encounter on the Red Planet, using a Mars Chamber at Los Alamos. From this experience, Mezzacappa was able to replicate the Mars Chamber in the Luna 1 Mishoe Science Center for continued work on the project at DSU.

Melikechi describes the actual process as taking rock and sediment and turning it into extremely hot plasma — just as depicted in cartoons. Unlike in the cartoons, however, the scientists expect the information that will be garnered to have promise of significant implications for us here on Earth. As the plasma decays, it will emit a light that will be collected by spectroscopy. The data yielded is expected to reveal the composition of Mars’ rocks, and provide new and valuable insights related to evidence of previous life on Mars, the past existence of water and the habitability of the planet.

Once the data begins coming back from ChemCam in early fall 2012, it will be Melikechi’s and Mezzacappa’s job to analyze it. “Our role,” said Melikechi, “has been to do some measurements and analyses, to try and understand a lot of the physics that takes place under Mars conditions. When the data actually starts to come (from Mars), we will have an idea of how to analyze that data that has come through those extreme conditions.” Mezzacappa, currently a second year optics Ph.D. student, is using this experience as the subject of her doctoral dissertation, specifically targeting the degree of impact the planet’s pressure has on the temperature of the plasma. She readily acknowledges that being a collaborator on a multi-national rover mission to Mars as a grad student has been an excellent opportunity and will be an impressive highlight on her curriculum vitae.

“The experience of working with so many great scientists from all around the world is invaluable, and it has matured me as a scientist and a person,” says Mezzacappa, 24, of Holmdel, N.J. “I have gained a lot of perspective on how these missions actually work. It has definitely inspired me to continue in this vein in my future career.”

Optics at DSU

Even though selection to work on the ChemCam project is certainly an impressive achievement, this is just one more innovative turn in the evolution of an Optics Program that began as just a dream by Melikechi 14 years ago at DSU, but has since grown into so much more. The Applied Optics Center was founded by Melikechi in 1997, backed by the generous support of NASA/JPL-Caltech image.
support of their Gov. Thomas R. Carper and then-President William B. DelaLanter. Under Melikechi’s leadership, it has since developed into a multi-million dollar grants-funded enterprise (both the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and National Science Foundation have awarded $5 million grants to support ongoing research). Along the way paving the way for the creation of both a master’s degree in Applied Optics and, later, a Ph.D. program in Optics, having as a point of distinction the fact that this program is one of less than 100 Ph.D. optics programs in the world. The Optics Program has also attained a reputation for its expertise in the use of laser-based spectroscopy that has put DSU on the map.

"People respect (a program that has a niche), and as they respect that, you get more support," says Melikechi. "As you get more support, you keep growing more, because you are delivering the service not only to the students, but also the region and everyone else.”

This status, of having garnered “respect” within the scientific and science-related community, led to the University’s first-ever intellectual property transfer involving a company currently developing a laser-based diagnostic device to be used in hospitals and medical laboratories. In May, Delaware Gov. Jack Markell further raised the stakes when he announced that he was including $10 million in his fiscal 2012 budget to go toward the construction of an Optics Research Facility on the DSU campus. Melikechi said that it will provide the Optics Program with improved laboratory facilities and bring about greater synergistic possibilities among scientists who are applying optics techniques and developing new optics technologies, start-up and established high-tech companies and others involved with the discipline.

"Optics is not a field that is just limited to lenses and lasers, its very broad. It is in homeland security, in medicine, in space and a lot of other areas," says Melikechi. "So how can we create these multi-discipline approaches where we can work with everybody, if we don’t have the room to work with these varied pursuits? That’s what we are looking for (in the construction of the new optics facility)."

The success of the Optics Program at DSU, Melikechi asserts, is also a success

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FOR PROGRAM SUCCESS

The program head needs to be passionate about the discipline.

The research needs to be original and to push the state of the art.

Education and research need to be combined to both result in contributions to science and the development of future scientists.

There must be a mission for what you want to achieve and why you want to achieve this. This includes a vision for your research and education, and how you can help the region in which you live, especially in connection with the economic impact.

You shouldn’t let problems — bumps in the road — deter you from your vision. Stay the visionary course.

Do not compare yourself to other programs, but rather learn from them. There must be a vision for the university’s moment, its time and history.

There must be a vision for the rest of his story has been history in the making.

He’s hope, out of all of this, has been to pursue graduate and doctoral studies at the University of Delaware, Melikechi came to DSU as an undergraduate alma mater in Algiers and some post-doctoral studies at the University of Delaware. Melikechi grew up in the small village of Thoma, Boumerdes, in the north African country of Algeria. Although he was not necessarily exposed to many scientists in his hometown as a youth, he was inspired by mathematicians and biology teachers he had, and dreamed that he could from the various opportunities that presented themselves to him.

Early on his aspirations included becoming a brain surgeon who saved lives or a mathematician who solved complex problems. However, an aversion to blood soon squelched any ideas of pursuing medicine.

So, armed with a solid foundation in mathematics, he pursued — and achieved — a baccalaureate degree in mathematics, followed by a diplôme d’études superieures (D.E.S.) in Physics at the University of Sciences and Technology of Algiers, Algeria. He went on to pursue graduate and doctoral studies at the University of Sussex in England, taking to hear what his teachers and mentors would tell him.

"I was told that if you are very strong in math you can do anything you wish," he recalls. "I really wanted to see how I could apply the mathematical tools that I had in the real world.”

The time spent at Sussex proved to have a profound impact on shaping Melikechi’s future research. It was there that he worked in the lab of Dr. Leslie Allen, a leading authority in lasers at that time and in the world today. He continued his post-doctoral studies with Allen at the North East London Polytechnic in 1987.

Following a two-year lecturer post at his undergraduate alma mater in Algiers and some post-doctoral work at the University of Delaware, Melikechi came to DSU as an assistant professor of physics, to begin working on making his mark on the world. So far, the rest of his story has been history in the making.

His hope, out of all of this, has been to inspire youth to pursue their dreams, regardless of where they come from. They can even shoot for beyond the stars, if they so desire. Mars seems like a good destination.

From humble beginnings

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Delaware State University moved up to 15th among 72 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the country in U.S. News & World Report's 2012 ranking.

DSU tied with South Carolina State University for 15th place. Among Mid-Atlantic region schools, DSU joined Howard University (2nd), Hampton University (4th) and Morgan State University (18th) in the top 20.

DSU President Harry L. Williams said while moving from 17th to 15th reflects well on the University, it also shows there is much work to be done to reach the ultimate goal of becoming the No. 1 HBCU in the country. Nevertheless, he said, the University’s current rise in ranking affirms that DSU is moving in the right direction.

“IT shows what happens when we focus, stay on task with clear goals and remain consistent with the vision that we have developed for this University,” Williams said. “We are happy, but not satisfied; we are encouraged by the latest ranking and remain steadfast in our efforts to become the best.”

When U.S. News & World Report published its first HBCU ranking in 2006, DSU ranked No. 22; it rose to No. 17 in 2009 and 2010. The HBCU rankings are based on the following categories to assess academic quality: assessment by administrators at peer institutions, retention of students, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources and alumni giving.

Spelman College in Atlanta was ranked as the No. 1 HBCU in the country by the magazine, a top distinction it has held since 2008.

The University also set a record this fall of 1,086 new students, the first time the 4,000 threshold was surpassed. The previous record of 3,819 students was set in fall 2010.

The 2011 enrollment included:
- 3,744 undergraduate students
- 333 master’s degree students
- 101 doctoral students

The University also set a record this fall of 1,086 new freshmen, exceeding the previous record of 940 new first-year students in 2005.

DSU President Harry L. Williams said the record enrollment is clearly a reflection that “it is an exciting time” to be at DSU.

“While it is great to see the growth, it is just the beginning. We are continuing to work toward the fulfillment of the University’s Vision Statement we established last year, and we are developing a new strategic plan and a facilities master plan,” Williams said. “We are looking at how we can sustain this growth and continue to move up in the rankings.”

Williams noted that the University received more than 9,400 applications from prospective students this year. “A lot of students want to be a part of DSU,” he said.

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Exchange agreements formalized with Korean university

DSU has further broadened its international horizons as it recently formalized two new agreements with Korea’s Jeju National University. A five-year agreement will facilitate the exchange of faculty for teaching or research purposes, as well as the exchange of five students each between the two institutions. The three-year agreement involves a third partner — Disney Theme Parks and Resorts College Program. The agreement between DSU, JNU and Disney will facilitate the enrollment of JNU students at DSU, during which time they will also participate in the Disney Program.

DSU President Harry L. Williams meets with U.S. Sen. Chris Coons during the DSU in Motion Research Showcase on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., in October to host the first-ever “DSU in Motion” Research Showcase for the Delaware congressional delegation and their staffs. The University contingent included DSU President Harry L. Williams, Provost Allison Thompson, Dean and Vice President for Research Yvonne Henry, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Chief of Staff Carolyn Curry, Dean Dyremple Marsh and more than two dozen University researchers. The event was attended by U.S. Sen. Thomas R. Carper, U.S. Sen. Chris Coons, staff members of all three Delaware congressional offices and some DSU alumni members, including DSU Alumni Association President Dr. K. Bernard Chase. The group was enlightened on groundbreaking DSU work in the areas of optics, neuroscience, bioenergy, natural sciences, human nutrition, bioinformatics and more.

Visit www.desu.edu/news to read the full stories and see a photo gallery from the “DSU in Motion” event.

The Princeton Review names College of Business among Best

The Princeton Review has included DSU’s College of Business in the new 2012 edition of its book The Best 294 Business Schools. The Princeton Review notes that 95 percent of those in the college are employed three months after graduation at the average base starting at $55,000 per year. The review recognizes the College of Business’ Master of Business Administration Program for its convenient location and for its attention to the needs of working professionals and aspiring managers in offering evening and weekend classes. The review also notes that the College of Business offers an accelerated MBA program that is geared toward the working adult. The DSU College of Business totaled 644 undergraduate students enrolled in its degree programs in 2010-2011 and 139 graduate students enrolled in its MBA Program.

Marvel Comics is not the only place you can find ‘Batwoman.’ While not counted among the pantheon of superheroes, Dr. Kevina Vulinec, a Delaware State University associate professor of natural resources, believes her missions relating to bat preservation are vitally important to the ecological balance that needs to be maintained.

Vulinec, who is also known as a bat ecologist, returned last summer from her spring semester in Brazil as a Fulbright Fellow, where she shared her bat expertise with scientists there who are working to preserve species of the fruit bats that are indigenous to that Amazon region. Fruit bats are not only named because unlike the predominant insect-eating bats in North America, these Brazilian bats eat the fruits of the rain forests and then while in flight expel the fruit seeds back down to the ground, which is important in replenishing the forest.

“I was looking at areas of Brazil forest that have been
Dr. Kevina Vulinec, associate professor of natural resources, said she has returned to DSU with 200 gigabytes of bat sounds that she will analyze and then share with those colleagues.

“Challenges in North America

While working to help Brazilians with their bat preservation issues, Vulinec also has challenges to the North American bat population to be concerned with as well. Because most North American bats are insectivores, these species feast on pesky flying insects, reducing the number around to irritate and distress human populations and farm crops. However, that importance is being challenged by a disease — White Nose Syndrome — that is threatening bat populations.

White Nose Syndrome is a fungus that gets on the nose of bats while they are hibernating in caves," Vulinec said. “The fungus makes the bats wake up prematurely, and then they fly out of the cave and starve to death because there are no insects out there in the wintertime.”

In addition to being threatened by White Nose Syndrome, some bats are also being killed by the blades of turbine wind farms. “The bats either get whacked up by the blades circulating at 120 mph or killed by the vacuum that is created causes bats to explode,” she said.

“There will be a big surge in the insect population if the population of bats is reduced,” Vulinec said.

Dr. Kevina Vulinec and graduate student Megan Walrichs take data from a red bat in a DSU lab.

WHAT IS WHITE NOSE SYNDROME?

• In North America, bat populations are being threatened by White Nose Syndrome, a fungus that gets on the nose of bats while they are hibernating in caves. The fungus makes the bats wake up prematurely, and then they fly out of the cave and starve to death because there are no insects out there in the wintertime,” according to Dr. Kevina Vulinec.

Dr. Kevina Vulinec, left, carries out her Fulbright-funded research with a Brazilian scientist during her trip to the South American country last spring.
**A songbird’s seasonal journey is uncovered**

Using a new, lightweight tracking technology, Dr. Christopher Heckscher and student Syrena Taylor have made discoveries in Veery migration patterns

**Story by Carlos Holmes**

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Songbirds risk a lot each time they undertake migration. … To think these birds have an extra migration is really remarkable.

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Dr. Christopher Heckscher and student Syrena Taylor detailed their Veery migration findings in a peer-reviewed paper published in the 2011 edition of *The Auk* by The American Ornithologists’ Union.

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The advent of a new tracking technology has enabled a DSU assistant professor of natural resources to make his mark in ornithology research.

Dr. Christopher Heckscher, with the assistance of junior year natural resources major Syrena M. Taylor, has taken advantage of the development of new lightweight tracking technology that has allowed them to determine the previously unknown migration patterns for a forest songbird, the Veery (Catharus fuscescens).

Because songbirds are so small, conventional tracking devices used on larger birds are too heavy for species such as the Veery — which is 16-18 centimeters in length and weights about 30 grams. For that reason, very little was previously known about the annual migration habits of the Veery and other similarly sized birds.

A few years ago, Heckscher became aware of a new lightweight “geolocator” used successfully by York University ornithologist Dr. Bridget Stutchbury in her research in tracking the migratory plans of the Wood Thrush (Hylocichla mustelina), a medium-sized North American passerine bird.

Stutchbury’s success opened up a new area of ornithological migration research, and Heckscher did not hesitate in setting this opportunity.

With the knowledge that some Veeries came annually to nest at White Clay Creek State Park north of Newark, Del., in June 2009, Heckscher and Taylor proceeded to capture 24 of the species. They then attached a lightweight geolocator to each Veery and freed them. By August, those birds had begun their migration south.

The trick is you have to catch the bird a year later in order to download data from the tracking device,” Heckscher said. “These Veeries made it easier because the same individuals return to White Clay Creek Park every year to nest.”

The following spring, the researchers set up netting in an attempt to capture some of the Veeries on which they had attached the tracking device the previous year. Heckscher said they imitated the Veery mating song, which attracted some male Veeries to come and investigate what bird was encroaching on their territory.

Four male Veeries that had returned with the tracking device were lured into the net. Capturing female Veeries — which are not attracted by Veery song — with the geolocator attached was more of a challenge. However, the research duo managed to secure one female with the device, giving them a total research group of five Veeries.

It took several months to analyze the latitude and longitude data from the geolocators on those five birds.

Migratory patterns revealed

By October 2010, Heckscher and Taylor’s data analysis had determined that all five Veeries had traveled to separate areas south of the Amazon River region in Central Brazil. South America, by the late fall. In addition, the tracking data revealed that the Veeries also made second migration stops during the mid-winter January-February months in other parts of Brazil (two birds went to sites north of the Amazon and three went to sites south of the river).

Late fall 2009

The Veeries had traveled to separate areas south of the Amazon River region in Central Brazil.

Brazil, South America

January-February 2010

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**Dr. Eric B. Kmiec**

Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Dr. Eric B. Kmiec is a professor and chair of the Department of Chemistry. Prior to his arrival, Kmiec was the director of the Marshall Institute for Interdisciplinary Research at Marshall University from 2009-2011, where pioneering biotechnology advances were made under his leadership. Kmiec is a renowned expert in gene editing—a technique that employs synthetic DNA molecules to repair mutations in gene editing—a technique that employs synthetic DNA molecules to repair mutations in human chromosomes.

His research aims to identify therapies for diseases including Huntington’s disease, Muscular Dystrophy and Spinal Muscular Atrophy. A recipient of many research and community service awards, Kmiec holds upwards of 60 patents. He also established several biotechnology companies, including OrphagenX Inc., of which he is co-founder. Prior to his arrival at Marshall University in 2009, he was a professor of biology at the University of Delaware and director of the Delaware Biotechnology Institute.

**Dr. Lloyd Benjamin Mallory Jr.,
Director of Choral Activities**

Dr. Lloyd Benjamin Mallory Jr. is an associate professor and director of choral activities at DSU. Mallory also directs the University’s Concert Choir and choral ensemble. Mallory most recently served as the interim choral director at Clark Atlanta University and also assisted with special projects and performances at the Duke Ellington School for the Arts in Washington, D.C. He was the associate pastor for worship and music at St. George Church in Takoma Park, Md., from 2006-2010 and an associate professor of music at Oakland University in 1996-2006.

**Dr. Dr. Horace B. Lamar Jr.,
Department of Music Chair**

Dr. Horace B. Lamar Jr. is chair of the Department of Music. In that past, he oversees all academic aspects of the department and provides leadership for faculty development, fundraising, as well as student recruitment and retention. Lamar formerly served at Alabama State University from 1991-2006, where he taught woodwinds and for nine of those years was dean of the University’s School of Music (1996-2005). Under his dean leadership, the ASU School of Music earned accreditation through the National Association of Schools of Music. After retiring from ASU, he did consulting work, workshops and recitals.

**Dr. Joe Amoako, Author, “Ghanaian Pidgin English”**

Dr. Joe Amoako, an associate professor of English and Foreign Languages, has authored the book “Ghanaian Pidgin English — Diacronic, Synchronic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives,” which deals with the bridging of traditional African languages with English in the West African country of Ghana.

The book studies this particular language phenomena in the context of social and structure definitions of “pidgin,” which deals with both the need to bridge two or more languages and the resulting reduced linguistic structure that serves as a means to communicate among people who don’t have a common language.

In his book, Amoako—a native of Ghana and a 13-year associate professor at DSU — explores the definitions of pidgin and creole and why Ghanaian variation is of the pidgin variety.

**INSPIRE EXCELLENCE AWARD AND VICE PRESIDENT CHOICE AWARDS**

DSU held its annual Employee Recognition Ceremony and Dinner in September. In addition to honoring employees who had reached specific longevity anniversaries, Vice President Choice Awards and the Inspire Excellence Award were presented to the following:

**Inspire Excellence Award Winner**

- Dr. Sheridan Quarles Kingsberry, a DSU faculty member since 2003, has been elected as the president of the Delaware Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Kingsberry, who teaches primarily at the University’s Wilmington site, will lead a state chapter of about 400 members.

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The book studies this particular language phenomena in the context of social and structure definitions of “pidgin,” which deals with both the need to bridge two or more languages and the resulting reduced linguistic structure that serves as a means to communicate among people who don’t have a common language.

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After the deaths of his parents, Kenneth Parker and several of his siblings were raised by their sister, Patricia Parker, after she graduated from college and purchased a home. “My sister (Patricia) could have said ‘they have got their placement in a foster home,’ and have washed her hands of the situation and gone on with her life,” Parker said. “But she didn’t do that.”

From landscaper to executive, with a path through DSU

Kenneth Parker ’90 has spent more than two decades climbing a utility’s career ladder.

Kenneth Parker’s story does not follow the conventional DSU alumni path to success. But then again, neither does his life story.

After his junior year at then-Delaware State College in the summer of 1984, Parker decided to take a landscaping job for Atlantic Electric in New Jersey during the summer break.

Against the wishes of probably everyone who was rooting for him to become the first male in his family to earn a college degree, Parker sensed an opportunity and decided to put his degree pursuit on hold and cast his future with Atlantic Electric.

Somehow he just knew where hard work would get him. His work ethic and diligence fluidly moved him up his career ladder — even while the company changed corporate hands — through a progressive level of posts, and by 2003 he became the regional vice president of Pepco Holdings Inc.’s Atlantic Region. He had gone from tending to landscapes to managing stockholder relations with government, community, consumers and nonprofit stakeholders.

Sounds like his expertise went exponentially beyond his adept handling of a weed eater.

Oh, yes — and in the meantime, Parker also returned to DSU during that corporate climb and finished his Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education in 1990. From that point on, his meteoric rise continued. From 2005-2009 he was president of Pepco’s Atlantic City’s Electric Region. He has since moved out into the bigger national realm of the corporation and now occupies an executive office in a Washington, D.C. skyscraper, where he serves as Pepco’s vice president of Public Policy.

“I was taught by my sister, whatever job you have, be blessed that you have it. And if you do it well, that will serve you a long way without even looking what the next move is.”

Kenneth Parker

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“Any time you are asked about what the formula to your success is,” Parker said. “I was taught by my sister, whatever job you have, be blessed that you have it. And if you do it well, that will serve you a long way without even looking what the next move is.”

Kenneth Parker
Family life

Parker’s story cannot be told without mentioning his sister, Patricia Ann Parker, the oldest of 10 siblings. Without her intervention in his circumstances, his life may very well have turned out not to be so successful.

By the time Ken was 2, his mother had passed away and his father had abandoned the family and was soon after killed in a barroom brawl in Florida.

While a few of Ken’s siblings were already adults and on their own, the rest of the Parker children were panned out to foster homes. This was not an acceptable situation for Patricia, who was attending Glassboro University. Initially, however, there was little she could do, except stay connected with her younger siblings as best as she could.

Even after she graduated with a degree in elementary education, New Jersey guardianship laws would not permit her to reunite the siblings as one family, because she didn’t own a home. But eventually she was able to purchase a home in Winslow Township, N.J., where she brought her siblings under one roof as their guardian and finished raising them.

“My sister (Patricia) could have said ‘they have got their placement in a foster home,’ and have washed her hands of the situation and gone on with her life,” Parker said. “But she didn’t do that.”

Raised during the rest of his youth in a home bonded by the love of his blood-family, Ken and his siblings finished their regular schooling in Winslow. Along the way, a fellow who dated Patricia and also worked at Atlantic City Electric told Ken stories that he heard from friends about Delaware State College.

“He had never set foot on Del State’s campus, but he was like a promoter of the school,” Parker said. “And guess where he wound up?”

Despite the interruption after his junior year that would send him on to his career in the utility industry, Parker said he still credits Delaware State as being a factor in his success story.

“My experience at DSU reinforced and instilled in me the importance of education, continuous learning and thinking out of the box. The DSU school environment also helped me build self-confidence and enhanced self-esteem.”

— Kenneth Parker

Although he left school to take a job as a landscaper, he soon proved to the company that his potential went far beyond that first job. Parker, 49, said his attitude about his work — regardless of the position — has been what has propelled him.

He notes that now that he is at the executive level, hard work must come with planning, mentorship and prayer. “And you have got to have faith, because everyone playing at this level is not playing fair.”

Patricia Parker, his sister and the real matriarch of the family, said she was disappointed when he left school but was later elated when he returned to Delaware State College in 1980 to complete his degree.

She added that although his Bachelor of Science was in Early Childhood Education, that degree has still served him well.

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Giving back

She added that his education degree also benefited him during the years he was a member of the Winslow Township (N.J.) Board of Education and later the New Jersey Board of Education.

He has gone on to serve on numerous other state boards and community service endeavors, such as chair as chair of the Southern New Jersey American Heart Walk, co-chair of the N.J. Economic Growth Council, board member of the Ronald McDonald House of Southern New Jersey, Leadership New Jersey, the N.J. State Chamber of Commerce and many other volunteer pursuits.

He credits his alma mater for teaching him the importance of giving back.

“Delaware State College emphasized the importance of giving back to the community individually and collectively,” Parker said.

Along the way there have been many awards: the AFL-CIO Business Man of the Year, the state Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Service Award, the Winslow Board of Education Outstanding Service Award and the National Association of Women Business Owner’s Community Advocate Award, among others.

Parker resides in Maryland with his wife, Sheri, and their two children, Ken Jr., 16, and Lauren, 12.
Every day I wake up, that is another day for me to make someone’s life better.”

Melanie Haynes

Melanie Haynes ’06: After mother’s illness, Miss Essence title holder changes focus

Melanie Haynes and her mother, Frances

Competing against 22 contestants in the Delaware Pageant and against 45 state winners in the North American Pageant, Haynes said that in light of her mother passing away two days earlier, the final question in the state contest provided a most poignant moment when she was asked: What was the toughest thing you had to endure throughout the year?

“Every day I wake up, that is another day for me to make someone’s life better.”

Melanie Haynes

Melanie Haynes and her mother, Frances

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“My mother and I look just alike, she was my best friend, I saw her take her last breath,” Haynes said. “But I made it through.”

That emotional moment notwithstanding, Haynes not only won the Delaware Miss Essence Pageant, but she also went on to win the 2011 Miss North America Essence Pageant held in late June in Kansas City, Mo.

Although it should not be confused with Essence magazine, the pageant — founded by Drakeford Productions LLC — was originally planned to be in association with the magazine’s 2005 Essence Music Festival in New Orleans. However Hurricane Katrina wrecked those plans, forcing the cancellation of the concert. After that, Drakeford and the magazine never renewed its effort to collaborate.

Nevertheless, Drakeford Productions pressed on and held its first national Essence Pageant in 2007. The Essence Pageant prides itself on “Celebrating the Essence of Today’s Modern Woman” and differentiates itself from other pageants by accepting contestants who are single mothers, divorced or over the age of 27.

Haynes, a 29-year-old DSU Fashion Merchandising graduate, said both the state and North American Miss Essence pageants involved the competition categories of swimwear, evening gown, community service and the final question.

For DSU alumna Melanie Haynes, ’06, she just had to compete in the Miss Essence Pageant. Her mother wouldn’t have had it any other way.

Yet, it was a very hard thing for her to do.

Two days before the Oct. 9, 2010, Delaware Miss Essence Pageant, her mother, Frances L. Haynes, lost her fierce fight against breast cancer. Despite the fact that her mother was a driving force in Haynes’ development as a model and a pageant contestant, pressing on in the state competition was tough.

“I didn’t decide to go ahead and compete until the day of the pageant,” Haynes said. “Later during the state pageant interview, I broke down, it was one of those moments.”

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José Echeverrí ’04: Alumnus, DSU trustee chairs state college savings plan

Delaware State University alumnus and Board of Trustees member José F. Echeverría knows the value of higher education and the financial challenges it presents for parents who want to send their children to college.

Echeverría therefore cherishes the work he does as chair of the Board of Trustees of the Delaware College Investment Plan. “I love education and the empowerment issue, and I know that coming up with the funding to get kids in college and keep them enrolled is tough,” Echeverría said. “Here is an opportunity to begin saving for college early in a child’s life by putting away $50 to $200 a month toward college education.”

Created by enacted federal legislation, Delaware College Investment Plan (DCIP) is the First State version of the plan — known nationwide as the 529 College Savings Plan — that is found in every state and the District of Columbia. Then-State Treasurer Jack Markell actually first publicly introduced the establishment of the plan in Delaware in an event at DSU in 2007. When he became governor of Delaware, Markell appointed Echeverría as board chair of the DCIP in 2008.

Echeverría said whether it is the DCIP offered in the First State or a similar plan in any other state, it has several advantages: “The plan allows all savings interest to be tax-deferred. When it is utilized for college education, the plan’s funds that are used are tax-free (federal and state). Parents who establish the college savings account can change the beneficiary if a child for whom the savings plan was earmarked does not go to college, it can be redirected to another family member — and even used for the parents’ education if he or she decides to pursue a college education.”

The college savings fund has tremendous diversification possibilities — from the most conservative to the most volatile. Parents who desire to start such an account should be guided by an established financial representative to help navigate them through the various types of funds and the risks that are involved.

Delaware has contracted Fidelity to serve as the money manager of the DCIP, which administrators who manage $24,000 individual accounts with total assets approaching $500 million, according to Echeverría. “As public and private funding for higher education has dropped significantly, the burden for paying is growing more and more on the ability to get personal financing,” Echeverría said. “(As the DCIP chair) I feel it is my responsibility to the board and to the citizens of Delaware to make sure that the investments of the DCIP are performing well, that the costs are reasonable and fair, and that the portfolio is well-diversified to minimize risk.”

It appears that the DCIP is in good hands. Echeverría has worked as a financial advisor for more than two decades for some of the best financial firms in the country, including Dean Witter, Merrill Lynch and Legg Mason. He is currently the president and founder of his own investment management firm, SWAN Financial Group, which he has operated in Dover since 2001. Prior to that, Echeverría was the president and founder of Echeverría Financial Service.

Echeverría is a 23-year retiree of the U.S. Air Force and the Delaware Air National Guard who saw active duty in both Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. He retired as a captain. He has been a member of the DSU Board of Trustees since 2005 and currently serves as the chair of its Audit and Student Affairs committees, as well as a member of its Executive Committee. In 2008, he became the first DSU board member to earn a degree at DSU while serving as a trustee when he completed his MBA degree.

Offered by Jose Echeverria

Story by Carlos Holmes
One Hornet Nation

Fan Tent at Route 1 Rivalry game vs. University of Delaware

1. Hornet fans came together for fellowship at the Fan Tent created by Institutional Advancement before September’s football game versus the University of Delaware. Barbara Flowers, Isa Al-Muid and Audrey Chase were among those who took part.

2. President Harry W. Williams and Gov. Jack Markell talk before the game.


4. DSU Alumni Association President Dr. K. Bernard Chase shows his spirit.

5. DSU Facilities staff and a Hornet friend, from left, Molly Brown, Ben Turner, Carol Bynum, Earl Wilson and Mark Brittingham, a friend of Wilson’s, join in the fun.

6. Calvin Jones and Rose Caison Austin stepped out to support the Hornets.

7. Students also gathered with faculty, staff, alumni and friends in the Fan Tent.

8. Shakima Yarbray, Terry Coleman and Virginia Carson showed their DSU pride.

Alumni highlights

Philadelphia Alumni Chapter Cookout

The Delaware State University Alumni Association Philadelphia Chapter held a cookout in August at FDR Park.

1. Alumna Marlene Lawson, center, ’80, spends time with friends at the event.

2. From left, Michael Dawson, Walter Macklin ’74 and Deidre Otley ’90, DSUAA immediate past president, chat at the cookout, where President Harry L. Williams, football Coach Kermit Blount and Athletics Director Derek Carter also made an appearance.

DSUAA Alumni Retreat

1. The Delaware State University Alumni Association held an Alumni Retreat on campus in August. Returning for the event were sisters Martha and Veronica Hopkins and Janice Williams.

2. Alums Mary and Frank Marshall participated in the retreat.

3. Alumna Esthelda Parker-Selby also took time out for the event on campus.

4. Drs. Berlin ’67 and Reba ’49 Hollingsworth were part of the day’s activities.

Alumni Day — DSU vs. Norfolk State basketball games

• Saturday, February 4, 2012; women at 5 p.m. and men at 7 p.m. Tickets are $8, a discounted price for alumni with a valid 2011-12 DSUAA membership card and applicable to on-site purchases only. Ticket buyers must present their card at the ticket windows at the time of purchase. For general ticket or schedule info, visit DSUHornets.com or call 302-857-TIXX.

SAVE THE dates

“HBCU Old School Cabaret — Philly Style”

• Saturday, February 11, 2012, from 9 p.m.- 1 a.m. at St. Raymond’s Catholic Church, 1350 E. Vernon Road in Philadelphia, hosted by the Philadelphia Chapter of the DSU Alumni Association along with alumni of Jackson State and Shaw universities. Tickets are $25 in advance; $30 at the door. Contact Al Outlaw at 215.877.6055.

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Despite the rain, still a weekend for ‘Good Times’

1. Cynthia Alvin ’68 shares a smile with former band director H. Wade Johnson at the Delaware State University Alumni Association Alumni Homecoming Gala.

2 and 3. Under rain ponchos, members of the cheerleading team and Approaching Storm Marching Band tried to keep school spirit high during the Homecoming football game vs. Morgan State.

4. Four former DSU football coaches reunited during Homecoming weekend. From left are Jimmie Strong, a former offensive coach; Arnold Jeter, a former head coach; Rufus Simmons, a defensive coach; and Donald Blakey, a football scout.

5. At the President’s Pre-Game Reception, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Alton Thompson, left, along with 2011-12 Miss and Mr. DSU Erika K. Grant and Justin C. Caesar, show off the former Delaware State College motto that will be revived via a monument on campus.

6. Members of the 1956 Hornets football team returned to campus for Homecoming. Seated, from left, are Walter “Rock” Greene and Jerome Pinkett. Standing, with U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, from left, are William Murray, Emmit “Frank” Pharr, Frank Liston, Clarence Williams and Howard West.

7. BJ Cunningham, left, and Dylan Wiggins attended the gala.


9. Class of 1965 members, from left, are Maurice Pritchett, Dan Wright, J. Cagney France, Basil Gillian and Dr. Martin Drew. Seated: James Hogsten, Evalyn Brunnebeck, Deborah Harris, Carolyn Helgaard, Tina Strong and Jimmie Strong. The class held a meeting relative to its 50th Anniversary Reunion gift drive in which it has pledged to raise a minimum of $100,000 by 2015.
Alumni: When you think back to your days on campus, what do you miss most about DSU? Share your thoughts, and they could be included in an upcoming issue of The Echo!

Lauren Jones-

The friends I made there. I wish I was connected to more of them. And...my only responsibility being classroom and being ready for football. Being able to sleep in at least one day a week during the week. Of course I did not appreciate that then.

Charles C. Primas

The step shows campus and head for the circle... to hang out there on a bench and watch people drive through.

Deshong

First of all, it was DSC ... but, I miss driving in down the main street, which is covered over with cement now ... we used to hang out there on a bench and watch people drive through campus and head for the circle...

Stephan Stockton

I miss going to class and I just missed how much college friends.

Deanna Conquest

I miss the East Coast vibe. Coming all the way from Cali and not knowing anyone and meeting many interesting and great people was a wonderful experience. Being at DSU was like having family away from my own. I miss attending the games and many other events DSU had to offer. It’s necessary for me to come back to DSU one day for a visit.

Terri Robinson

I really enjoyed the canteen. I would go there every Monday, Wednesday and Friday before my AP class in the old Science Center.

Tracy Matthews

In the Loop...

Get your inbox today! Event will sell out!
Presidents Prayer Breakfast
Figure 8 Pavilion
October 24th, 8:00 am

Delaware State University
www.desu.edu/act or call 302.857.6120

If you’re an alum and prefer email, it’s easy to stay “In the Loop” about what’s going on at your alma mater. Our alumni newsletter features updates about campus and Delaware State University Alumni Association events, as well as ways to give back to DSU. Sign up for the news-focused DSU update, too, and your “Loop” will be complete. Visit www.desu.edu/emailme to join our newsletter email lists.

CAREER SERVICES

Career Services is available to partner with alumni who continue to seek employment, move through their careers or go through the process of re-inventing themselves.

The department offers a variety of professional development services that include resume reviews, mock interview sessions, career coaching and job search assistance. Many of these services can be done through online resources that are available at www.desu.edu/career-services.

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The department is always looking for alumni to volunteer to assist with workshop presentations such as resume reviews, interviewing skills or mock interviews, professional dress, panels or discussion groups to help prepare collegians for the professional world.

Delaware State University

www.desu.edu/act or call 302.857.6120

Alumna Wayne Paskins ’69 stands ready to assist at her station at Conwell Hall.

2011-12 Mr. DSU Justin Caesar, left, and Miss DSU Ericka Grant join alumnus William Torian ’77 to help during Move-In Day.

Bernard Carr ‘77 and Donnell Carr joined alumni and student volunteers to help new students move onto campus in August.

It’s fun to serve your alma mater

Become a DSU volunteer by joining the Alumni Connection Team (ACT). Serve as hostesses for events on campus. Represent your alma mater at career fairs. Serve as a speaker or panelist for special programs and events. Your presence and participation are needed!

Fill out the form found on the Alumni Relations Web page: DESU.edu/act or call 302.857.6120. Get in the ACT!

VOLUNTEERING

How alumni can help

The department is always looking to identify alumni who are seeking students for internship or employment opportunities. Employers are requiring students who graduate to have at least two relevant work experiences through internships prior to graduation, so the more avenues that can be offered to DSU students, the better. The department can work with internship providers to establish work for credit options if providing paid internships is not an option. The department is always looking for alumni to volunteer to assist with workshop presentations such as resume reviews, interviewing skills or mock interviews, professional dress, panels or discussion groups to help prepare collegians for the professional world.

IN THE LOOP & DSUPDATE

www.twitter.com/DelStateUniv

Follow us on Twitter. If you’re planning to attend an event on campus, use a DSU-related hashtag — look for them on posters, ads and programs — to join the conversation with others Tweeting about us.

Like your DSU updates in shorter bits, or you’re not on Facebook? Check us out on Twitter. If you’re planning to attend an event on campus, use a DSU-related hashtag — look for them on posters, ads and programs — to join the conversation with others Tweeting about us.

www.facebook.com/DESUedu

On our Facebook page, get regular updates on Delaware State University news; faculty, student and alumni accomplishments; campus events; and important dates and announcements. In our discussion posts, like the one below, join a conversation or share a memory:

How do you stay in touch with DSU?
A $500,000 grant and $100,000 matching gift challenge from the Longwood Foundation is designed to support student scholarships and positively influence the student retention rate.

**DSU receives $500,000 Longwood grant and 2-to-1 matching gift challenge**

Delaware State University has received a $500,000 grant from the Longwood Foundation designed to support student scholarships and positively influence the overall retention rate of the student body.

The funds will provide scholarship support for a large number of DSU students in their path toward becoming DSU graduates.

The investment by the Longwood Foundation will be monitored to verify that a multi-pronged approach, including financial, academic and social supports, can positively influence DSU’s retention and graduation rates.

In addition to the initial $500,000 grant, the Longwood Foundation also awarded DSU a $500,000 matching gift challenge grant to be used for the same project.

This matching gift challenge grant is a 2-to-1 match for funds that the DSU Foundation raises through spring 2012. The University will need to raise $1 million in order to fully benefit from the challenge grant, thus receiving a total of $1 million award from the Longwood Foundation.

The proposal submitted to the Longwood Foundation by the Office of Development team in fall 2010 aimed to address challenging issues facing the University regarding the retention of promising DSU students who face financial difficulties in being able to securely complete their education. While the Longwood Foundation typically funds capital projects, the proposal was received with enthusiasm and awarded in early spring 2011.

**ABOUT THE CHALLENGE**

- The Longwood Foundation awarded DSU an initial $500,000 grant, and the University also received a $500,000 matching gift challenge grant that is a 2-to-1 match for funds that the DSU Foundation raises through spring 2012. The University will need to raise $1 million in order to fully benefit from the challenge grant, thus receiving a total of $1 million award from the Longwood Foundation.

**Family creates $10,000 W. DeEdwin Hursey Scholarship Endowment**

The family of W. DeEdwin Hursey, a former SGA president from the Class of 1967, has established a scholarship endowment in his memory.

Joined by friends from the Class of 1967, the family presented DSU President Harry L. Williams a $10,000 check to establish the W. DeEdwin Hursey Endowed Memorial Scholarship.

Characterized as a “dedicated and loyal son of DSU,” Mr. Hursey — known as “De” — provided creative leadership and impetus for a project called the “One Hundred by One Hundred Alumni and Friends Twilight March” in the mid-1960s. During an eight-year period, the project raised more than $40,000 to go toward University programs.

A proud native of Bridgeton, N.J., Hursey passed away suddenly in 2004. In his post-undergraduate years, Hursey remained connected to DSU and his classmates, celebrating the lifetime bonds that he felt could only be achieved at an HBCU. He was also a proud member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

Caroline Hursey Laster, DeEdwin’s sister, was joined in the visit by her son, who is also a DSU alumna, Regina Laster ’02, her granddaughters and grandnieces of DeEdwin, Madison and Kyra Laster, and his classmates and close friends, Dr. Scott King, Madison Laster and Iris Taylor-Smith.

The Rev. Dr. Lonnie Rector, president of the United Baptist Convention of Delaware Inc. and pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church, was the keynote speaker at the first President’s Prayer Breakfast hosted by President Harry L. Williams.

**President hosts first-ever Prayer Breakfast**

A sold-out crowd of 330 University and community leaders gathered at Delaware State University’s Martin Luther King Jr. Student Center in September for the first President’s Prayer Breakfast — “Stay Connected: It Takes a Village” — hosted by President Harry L. Williams.

A sense of pride for DSU was echoed by nearly all the guest speakers, and the atmosphere reverberated with the same sentiment. Guests enjoyed live music and were able to mingle and discuss the strides that DSU has made under the leadership of President Williams.

Michael Leon Miller of United Negro College Fund expressed his delight with the event and also noted, “I look forward to continuing our dialogue and growing relationship.”

The event was created by Institutional Advancement.

**Bancroft Construction Company makes student scholarship donation**

The Bancroft Construction Company recently expressed its support for Delaware State University by donating $2,000 to go toward a scholarship for the 2011-2012 school year.

Bancroft’s Greg Sawka, president, and Stephen Mockbee, past president, presented the check to Dr. Alton Thompson, DSU provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, who accepted the financial gift on behalf of the University.

The gift is the first installment of an annual scholarship donation that Bancroft has committed to over the next five years, which Sawka said is a reflection of Bancroft’s mission and commitment to the community.

This year’s recipient of the Bancroft Scholarship is Devon Sivels, a DSU junior aviation major and honor student from Milford, Del.

The Bancroft Company is a Wilmington-based full-service construction management, general contracting, design-build, program management and estimating services firm that services the Mid-Atlantic region. The company — which has been in existence for 35 years — specializes in a variety of commercial, institutional and industrial sector projects.

From left are Bancroft Scholarship recipient and DSU student Devon Sivels, Bancroft Construction President Greg Sawka, DSU Provost Alton Thompson and Bancroft Past President Stephen Mockbee.
The Delaware State University men's basketball team hopes to erase the memory of last season in its quest to return to the upper echelon in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference. The 2010-11 Hornets dropped 12 of their final 13 games, including the last eight, to post a 9-21 overall record and were tied for eighth in the MEAC with a 5-11 mark in league play.

Delaware State head coach Greg Jackson expects to return seven letter winners in his 12th season with the Hornets, including four starters from last year’s squad. The returnees include, arguably, the MEAC’s top point guard, the reigning league Rookie of the Year and a potential all-conference power forward.

The Hornets will be led this season by point guard Jay Threatt (junior; 6’11”), Richmond, Va., who ranks in the Top 10 percent among nearly 4,500 NCAA Division I men’s basketball players expected to compete in the 2011-12 season. According to the Sabermatrics report by Concentricsports.com, Threatt comes in at No. 372 among nearly 4,450 NCAA Division I men’s basketball players likely to compete at the NCAA’s highest level this season.

During the 2010-11 season, Threatt was tops in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference in assists (6.0 pg), steals (3.1 pg) and assist-to-turnover ratio (2.7). Nationally, he was tied for second among all Division I players in steals, 156th in assist-to-turnovers and 166th in assists. Threatt, who averaged 9.7 points per game, also set a DSU single season record with 179 assists last season.

In addition, he is on pace to establish new Delaware State career marks for steals and assists. Emmannuel Davis (1988-89) is the Hornets all-time leader (183) for steals, and Miles Davis (2000-04) tops the school career list (400) for assists.

The Hornets will also return sharp shooter Casey Walker (sophomore; 6’4”, Broadnax, Va.), who ranks in the Top 10 percent among nearly 4,500 NCAA Division I men’s basketball players expected to compete in the 2011-12 season. According to a Sabermatrics report by Concentricsports.com.

HURDLES SCHEDULES
For the hornet men’s and women’s basketball season schedules — which began Nov. 12 and continue through early March — visit www.desushornets.com.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
Armed with ‘potential’, squad features young roster

delaware state University’s 2011-12 squad will bear little resemblance to the team that posted a 2-20 overall record and a 10th place finish in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (5-11 MEAC) last season.

The Lady Hornets return just four players who saw action during the 2010-11 season, although two were transfer students a year ago. ED Davis, who is in his 12th year as head coach, faces the challenge of replacing his top two scorers, leading rebounder and best three-point shooter from last season. His initial 2011-12 roster features five freshmen, two sophomores, two juniors and zero seniors.

Davis is hoping his team will make up in quickness and athleticism what it lacks in experience.

“We will have the youngest squad since I’ve been at Delaware State,” said Davis, who has led the Lady Hornets to a 117-155 overall record in his first 11 years with the team. His tenure at DSU has been highlighted by the 2008 MEAC Tournament championship and four other first place game appearances.

“I’m certain we will have our ups and downs this season, but I like the potential of this team,” Davis said.

Returners
Topping the list of returning players is point guard Tasia Bristow (sophomore; 5’5”, Baltimore, Md.), who was third on the Lady Hornets in scoring (9.1 pp) and second in three-point field goals (38) during the 2010-11 season. Bristow scored a team season-high 25 points (10-13 FGs) in a victory over St. Francis (N.Y.) last season.

Versatile Deanna Harmon (sophomore; 5’6”, Dorchester, Mass.) also joins the Lady Hornets.

Sophomore Deanna Harmon, left, led the Lady Hornets in assists (82) and steals (50) last season.

New faces
Topping the list of 2011-12 newcomers is forward Tianna Hawkins (freshman, 6’2”, Clinton, Md.), a former standout at Washington, D.C., area power Riverdale Baptist.

Hawkins, who cut out last season, helped lead Riverdale to two conference championships. She averaged 13 points and eight rebounds per game in her final season at the school. Her sister Tiana plays for the University of Maryland. The Lady Hornets have bolstered their front line with the addition of Morgan Wooddorf (freshman, 6-2; Bloomington, Ind.). Wooddorf was a top 10 Indiana recruit following a successful career at Bloomington North High School.

Guard/Forward Keyanna Tate (freshman; 6’, Beltsville, Md.) was a 2010-11 McDonald’s All-America nominee at Bowie (Md.) High School before signing with the Lady Hornets. Tate is a two-time All-District of Columbia Interscholastic Athletic Association First Team selection.

Baltimore (Md.) standout Chelsea Dukes (freshman; 5’11”) also joins the Lady Hornets. While at Maryland’s St. Francis Academy, Dukes helped lead the team to a 25-3 record and No. 1 state ranking (No. 21 nationally) as a senior. She was an All-Baltimore County First Team selection during her junior year.

Delaware State also welcomes forward Alexis Thornton (freshman; 5’9”, El Paso, Texas) to the squad. Thornton averaged 11 points and nearly three rebounds per game as a senior at Monterey High School.

13 introduced into DSU Athletics Hall of Fame

Delaware State University’s Athletics Hall of Fame inducted 12 former athletes and one administrator into its 2011 class during an October ceremony. The inductees were:

• Jammal Jackson
• Damian McCants
• Mandy Clark
• Douglas Lynes-Bell
• Jessica Gilbert-Wilson
• Terrance Hoover
• Darnerian McCants
• Maxine Lewis
• Terrance Hoover
• Darnerian McCants
• Maxine Lewis

Football

Jammal Jackson
Jackson is in his ninth season with the NFL’s Philadelphia Eagles.

Damian McCants
McCants played six seasons in the NFL including stints with the Washington Redskins, Philadelphia Eagles and Baltimore Ravens.

Terrance Hoover (guard)
Hoover is Delaware State’s all-time leader with 3,517 rushing yards.

Chuck Popolos
Popolos was a three-time All-MEAC punter.

Brian Randall
Randall was a two-time All-America and All-MEAC defensive back who signed with the NFL’s Kansas City Chiefs in 1994.

Lyndtiz Robinson
Robinson, a defensive lineman, was a member of the Hornets’ first MEAC championship team in 1985.

Walter Tullis
Tullis was a standout defensive back and kick returner for the Hornets in the mid-1970s.

Track & Field

Tiffany Barnes

Douglas Lynes-Bell

Jessica Gilbert-Wilson

Each competed in the NCAA Track & Field National Championships during their record-setting careers at Delaware State.

Basketball

James Roundtree
Roundtree collected more than 1,000 points and nearly 650 rebounds from 1971 to 74.

Mandy Clark
Clark was the MEAC Women’s Basketball Player of the Year during the 2004 season.

Sports Information

Maxine Lewis
Lewis was DSU’s first full-time sports information director.
Tenure marked by financial challenges

It is unknown what the Board of Trustees of the State College for Colored Students (SCCS) in Dover told William C. Jason to persuade him to take the job as the second president of the fledgling institution.

Whatever led the Methodist minister to accept the position, it is certain that he needed every bit of spiritual faith and strength he had to sustain himself and the college through the challenges that would hinder growth of the SCCS throughout his 1895-1923 tenure.

The then-36-year-old native of Trappe, Md., arrived to head the SCCS with the academic and spiritual wisdom he had attained in earning a Bachelor of Divinity and a Master of Arts, as well as the front discipline of preaching and ministering to people at his church assignments in Orange, N.J.; Wilmington, Del.; and Philadelphia.

His “can-do” attitude that would serve him well in his presidency appears to have well-manifested itself during his college years at Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, Allegheny College and Drew Theological Seminary, as family history documents noted that he worked his way through school “on clippers and shears” as a barber.

Upon being granted his release from the Methodist Church, he became the first Negro president of the institution inheriting an almost 100-acre campus that had a Maen College Building that was used for teaching, cooking, eating and sleeping, a trades building, a president’s residence and a horse stable that had formerly been slaves quarters. The absence of any type of school system for Negro youths in the state of Delaware resulted in hardly any of school system for Negro youths in the state of Delaware. The absence of any type of school system for Negro youths in the state of Delaware.

W.C. Jason, Pres.

History of DSU

The Class of 1913 of the State College for Colored Students

WILLIAM C. JASON’S FAMILY

- William C. Jason’s dedication to the State College for Colored Students was even placed ahead of his family early in his presidency. For reasons unknown, after arriving with Jason to the campus in 1895, his wife Madura. Jason chose to move to Philadelphia while she was pregnant with their son, Henry. The couple also had three other children: Mary, William C. Jr. and Madora E.

According to Jason family records, two highlights of his life were receiving an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Wiley College in Texas and serving in 1929 as the keynote commencement speaker at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Mo.

He would later return to the SCCS in 1936 to assume the role as college chaplain. He would serve in that capacity until 1941 when failing health forced him to resign. He lived out the rest of his life in the house he built just beyond the bridge by the College.

It is not known when his wife and children reunited with him in Dover. But Mr. Jason’s father, William Jason, a former boyhood slave, moved into a house he built for him. The house and the president’s house were located off of what is now College Road, which was developed by Jason and others as the College Settlement where SCCS-related residences were located.

The most pressing need is a building for the teaching of Domestic Science. With the funds appropriated for this purpose, we have not been able to live strictly within the law. Notice is now given that we must do so hereafter, or the appropriation will be withdrawn. With this prospect our Trustees petition the present Legislature for an annual appropriation from the state of $3,000. This has been granted and we shall be able to continue.

No salaries or executive or administrative officers can be paid, no land can be bought, no buildings erected or repaired, with such funds. Having no other source of revenues, we have not been able to live strictly within the law. Notice is now given that we must do so hereafter, or the appropriation will be withdrawn. With this prospect our Trustees petition the present Legislature for an annual appropriation from the state of $3,000. This has been granted and we shall be able to continue.

Tackling the issues

Early in his presidency, Jason took financial matters into his own hands, launching what would be the institution’s first known fundraising drive. Toward that end, he published the following letter circa 1900:

This institution receives from the National Government $10,000 annually. The low making that appropriation is precise in limiting the uses to which this money may be applied. It must be devoted wholly to instruction in Agriculture, the Mechanic Arts, Domestic Science and the English Language. Certain subjects necessary to a common school education are specifically excluded, such as History, Geography and Civics. No salaries or executive or administrative officers can be paid, no land can be bought, no buildings erected or repaired, with such funds.

Having no other source of revenues, we have not been able to live strictly within the law. Notice is now given that we must do so hereafter, or the appropriation will be withdrawn. With this prospect our Trustees petition the present Legislature for an annual appropriation from the state of $3,000. This has been granted and we shall be able to continue.

Out buildings, however, are utterly inadequate for the proper performance of the work required. I have secured permission to try to remedy this by bringing the case before any public spirited citizen who may be disposed to aid us. The most pressing need is a building for the teaching of Domestic Science. With the funds available we could pay a reasonable salary to a competent teacher, but we have no place for her to work, and no money to provide such a place. My plan is to raise for this purpose $5,000 FROM THE COLORED PEOPLE THEMSELVES. As an incentive, I am seeking to secure the guarantee of a like amount from some friend or friends among the white people upon the condition that we raise our half.

W.C. Jason, Pres.

With that message he traveled throughout the state speaking about the needs of the college. While not reaching the $5,000 goal, he was able to raise $1,100 that he used to renovate the horse stable/ slave quarters into a chapel. The building served the dual purpose of religious service and a place where students could assemble for other activities. Jason said the construction of the chapel was “to make over a place of misery and horror into a place of rejoice.”

Year after year he did what had to be done to keep the SCCS going, but it wasn’t easy. Some education reported critical of the College surfaced in the mid-1910s, provoking unfair criticism of Jason, a president who never enjoyed more than adequate limited resources in operating the SCCS. He nevertheless continued as president until he stepped down in 1923, at which time the College’s Board of Trustees named him president emeritus.

In light of the inadequate state support, Jason’s perseverance for 28 years cannot be overstated. However, despite the challenges the institution not only survived but also experienced modest gains in buildings, enrollment and faculty.

After his SCCS presidency, Jason returned to his Methodist ministry and was assigned to poorer rural churches in Delaware and Maryland. He also served on the Delaware Methodist Conference’s Board of Trustees.

W.C. Jason’s tenure at the College began in 1895 and ended in 1923, at which time he was succeeded by Alvin J. Pote, who served as president of the SCCS until 1927.

Tenure: 1895-1923

Building of DSU History

The most pressing need is a building for the teaching of Domestic Science. With the funds available we could pay a reasonable salary to a competent teacher, but we have no place for her to work, and no money to provide such a place. My plan is to raise for this purpose $5,000 FROM THE COLORED PEOPLE THEMSELVES. As an incentive, I am seeking to secure the guarantee of a like amount from some friend or friends among the white people upon the condition that we raise our half.

W.C. Jason, Pres.
Keep in touch

Do you have something exciting to report to your fellow alumni? Have you changed careers, been promoted, retired or expanded your family? Let your classmates and friends know in The Echo.

Email your news (up to 100 words) for Class Notes, along with your high-resolution photos (300 or more dpi) to alumni@desu.edu. You can also share your news online at www.desu.edu/echo-form.

Maurice Pritchett was recognized by the Board of Education of the Christina School District on March 8, 2011. The gymnasium at the Bancroft Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and principal for 32 years, now bears the name "The Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Elementary School in Wilmington, Del., where he served as vice principal and 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Annual Fund

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What does it cost to plant the seed of change in our world? We can’t know how far a student’s interest will take them, so DSU provides a rigorous academic foundation and supportive family environment to meet even the most unexpected query. Annual gifts provide scholarships, library subscriptions, athletics and academic programmatic support. Thanks to gifts like yours, Delaware State University remains a source for extraordinary discovery.

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