

Opinions

President Scott reminds Bennett of Juanita Shell's legacy

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the Death of Dr. Juanita Shell, Benefactress and supporter of Bennett College. She passed away on May 1 in Los Angeles, California. We will remember Mrs. Shell's exuberance about Bennett and her excitement about enabling the mass communications program to have a home.

It may be appropriate to share some of the flavor of the Bennett friendship with Dr. Shell. I first met Dr. Shell in 1983 in Detroit at the Delta Sigma Theta Convention. We became acquainted because I was a floor candidate for the Office of National President of Delta Sigma Theta, and had a platform that attracted her attention. She said to me that she really agreed with the philosophical position that I had expressed and the vision that I had about what Delta Sigma Theta could become as an organization responding to contemporary needs. She indicated that she had watched me closely since I had been National President of Girl Scouts U.S.A. As history records, I was not elected, though with her support and help and many others, I succeeded in motivating the Sorority to rethink the immediate pathway under pursuit.

Several years passed, and a

year after I became president of Bennett, she sent a message to me that she was interested in seeing what I would do with Bennett. Bennett alumna, Villa Frierson, was a very good friend of Dr. Shell, who told me of Dr. Shell's possible interest in

Birmingham, and the United Negro College Fund for all of my life. I will continue to give and perhaps if there seems to be reason to do so, I will consider investing in Bennett College."

After she decided to begin

Trustees of the College to give, so she initiated a challenge match that she would provide as Trustee giving increased. She had the faith and the vision for Bennett. She clearly felt and demonstrated that Bennett was worth a great deal of love and

She graciously accepted an honorary degree from Bennett thereby giving a public signal that she indeed cared enough to join the ranks of Phenomenal Bennett Women as they contributed toward changing the world. We recall with joy her participation in the Founder's College's highest honor - the Doctor of Humane Letters.

Mrs. Shell was active in several organizations, including Delta Sigma Theta, and Links, Inc. She truly achieved success as she lived well, laughed often, loved much. She gained the respect of intelligent men and women - Bennett Belles, Bennett Trustees, Bennett Faculty, Bennett Staff, and Bennett Friends. She made Bennett better than she found it through her philanthropy.

We fondly remember the dedication of the Ernest and Juanita Shell Hall in October 13, 1991, and we will always remember Honorary Belle Juanita Shell. Her memory was and will continue to be an inspiration. Her legacy is rich and exemplifies that of the Phenomenal Bennett Women.

President Dr. Gloria Scott

Services for Dr. Shell were held Monday, May 8, 1995 in Los Angeles, California



Faculty, students and staff of the Mass Communications, Speech and Theatre stand in front of the Shell Hall buildings. Photo courtesy of Bennett College Public Relations Staff

Bennett College. We sent a videotape about Bennett and several sets of information.

Then we talked. She said, in the way that only she could say "I'm waiting to see what you will do with Bennett. I have followed you since you were an undergraduate in Delta, and I and my family have given funds to support Miles College in

investing in Bennett, she urged me to come to Los Angeles to the UNCF Lou Rawls Parade of Stars so that she might make her first donation on the Telethon. I went, she gave, and she continued giving to Bennett up until her last surgery. As those who know her, typical Mrs. Shell, wanted to motivate the

caring.

She gave a lot of both, and she shared a portion of "a poor widow woman's assets" (as she liked to describe herself) with Bennett women. Trustee Rosa Hill and I have often been the recipients of the "poor widow woman's treatise" as she so generously gave to Bennett College.

From Belle to Belle

I couldn't leave you without expressing my sincere gratitude for what you have meant to me for the last three years. I am grateful for your support and your encouragement. I was able to succeed here because of the outpouring of love that you have given to me.

I will truly miss each and every one of you. I may not be able to call you by name but I know you and love each of you through Christ Jesus.

Some of you have become life long friends. Some of you have become sister-friends. Some of you have become my daughters. I have mothered, mentored, fed, fought, counseled, chastised, cared, and called you out (smile).

I have done each of those things because I love you and want the

best for you as you want for me. And, in return, you have taught me so many things. You have taught me the true gift of sisterhood. you have taught me the gift of laughter.

You have taught me the gift of love.

I want to leave with you some words of wisdom. First, your reputation is what men think you are - your character is what God knows you to be. Second be empowered with knowledge so no one can disempower you.

God's blessings and Godspeed to each and everyone of you.

You are Phenomenal Bennett.

Antoinette Rochell,
psychology major
Graduating Class '95

Letter Policy

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Once submitted the letters become the sole property of the of Bennett Banner.

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