

Mary L. Fair Gleaner Branch crowns queen

OES event held to raise funds for local female youth group

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Last weekend talented young ladies from around the city competed for a chance to be crowned the 2016 Gleaner Queen during the first ever Queen's Contest.

Themed "Black Butterflies," the event was hosted by the Mary L. Fair Gleaner Branch #137, the female youth group of Bivouac Chapter #530, Order of the Eastern Star, serves as a fundraising event to assist participants

with expenses to travel to the State Youth Assembly held in Raleigh later this year.

During the pageant-style event held at the Kate B. Reynolds Education Building, A'Nayjah Bullard, Jayla Herndon, Londyn Hunt, Quincie McKnight, and Madison Murrell made it known that they all are worthy of wearing the crown.

Each of the contestants was presented with a gift, but only one could be crowned 2016 Mary L. Fair Gleaner Queen. That honor went to Quincee McKnight. Second runner up was Londyn Hunt and first runner up was Madison Murrell. Following the crowning and a brief photoshoot featuring the contestants, emcee for the event, Judge

Denise Hartfield, announced that combined the participants raised more than \$2,000.

Similar to the big name pageants held across the country, the Queen's Contest featured three different portions which included a fashion show, a talent portion and a formal entrance where contestants walked the makeshift runway in their best evening gowns.

The pageant also featured performances from other talented young ladies who were not competing for the crown.

Committee supervisor and coordinator for the event, Lisa W. Smith, said that aside from raising funds for the organization, the Queen's Contest is a great way for the girls to interact with each other and



Photo by Tevin Stinson

Quincie McKnight takes a moment to take photos after being crowned 2016 Mary L. Fair Queen, during the Queen's Contest held at the Katie B. Reynolds Education Building last weekend.

display their many talents.

"We have some amazing, talented young ladies here in Winston-Salem," she said. "This event highlights the talents and beauty of the young people in our community."

Smith noted the contest

will also encourage the participants to continue to be smart and soar to higher heights.

Committee chairperson Vaness Lyerly applauded the participants for all their hard work. Lyerly mentioned that she expects the

contest to grow and include more participants in the future.

"You are all winners today," said Lyerly. "I am proud of you all. You are all queens."

Theologian to deliver Livingstone College commencement address

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

SALISBURY, N.C. — A scholar who earned her degrees from Ivy League schools and is the director of the Center for Black Church Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary will deliver the 2016 Commencement address at Livingstone College.

The Rev. Dr. Yolanda Pierce will address Livingstone graduates on May 7 inside Alumni Memorial Stadium. Commencement begins at 9 a.m. and will be moved to Varick Auditorium in the case of inclement weather.

Also during commencement, Pierce and a few other individuals will be awarded honorary doctorate degrees.

Pierce, the Elmer G. Homrighausen Associate Professor of African-American Religion and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary, has a bachelor's degree in English from Princeton University. She earned two masters degrees from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in English, also from Cornell.

Pierce's academic and teaching interests include African-American religious history, womanist theology and literature and religion.

Her most recent book, "Hell without Fires: Slavery, Christianity & the African-American Spiritual Narrative," and her forthcoming book, "Religious Ecstasy & African-American Cultural Expression," focus on the historical and contemporary significance of the African-American religious tradition. Pierce is an accomplished writer who has penned more than 40 critical essays and articles in academic and trade journals.

An ordained Christian minister, Pierce is also a dedicated mentor, community activist, board member of a foster care agency and a commentator for MSNBC and CNN. She is a member of various professional organizations, including the Modern Language Association, the American Academy of Religion and the Society for the Study of Black Religion.

Pierce has been a frequent guest on the



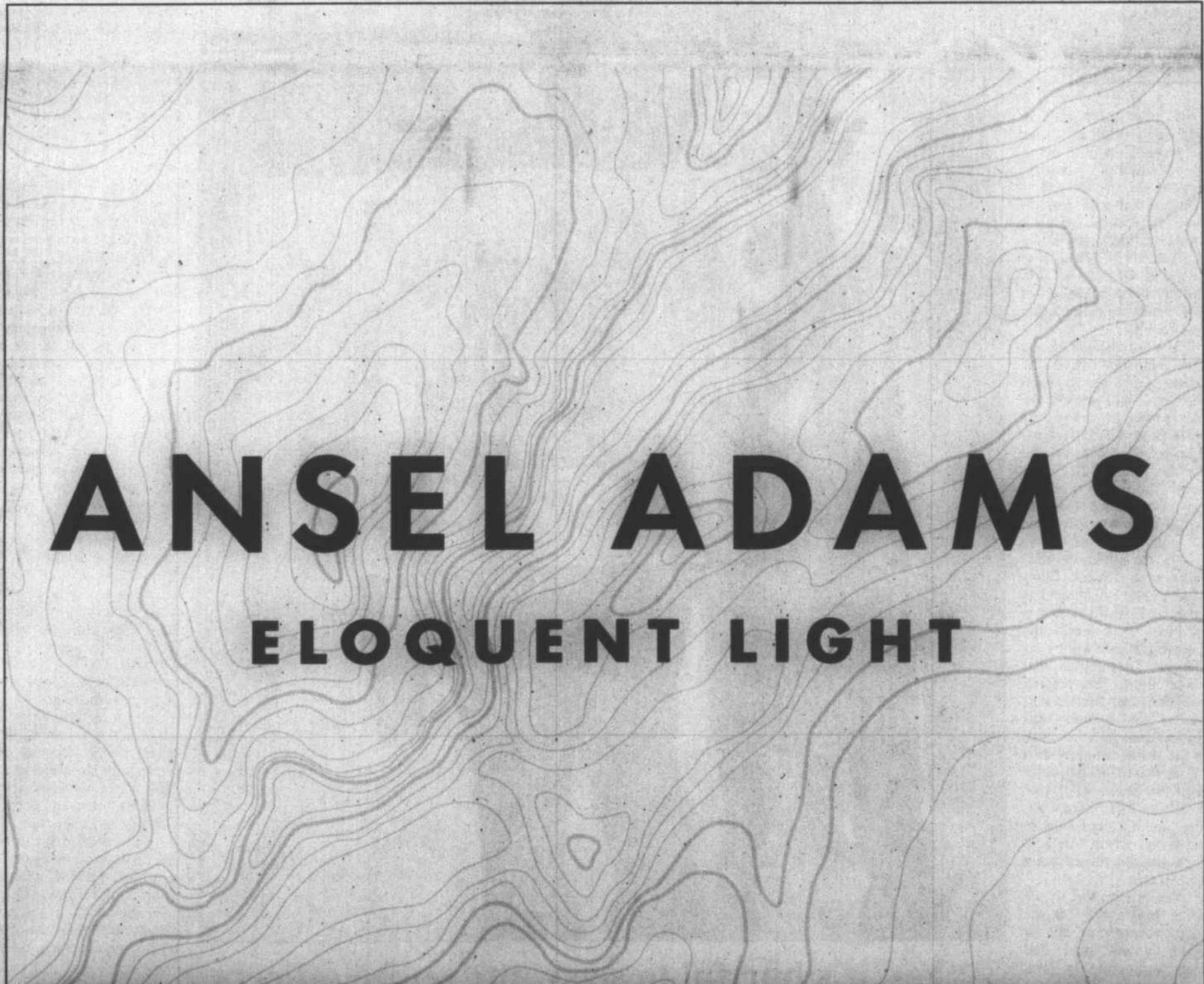
Dr. Pierce

Melissa Harris-Perry show on MSNBC and is known for being candid when speaking about race in America, particularly when writing on her blog, Reflections of an Afro-Christian Scholar.

"We are proud and fortunate to have an intellect of such high acclaim to serve as our Commencement speaker," said Livingstone College President Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, Sr. "Dr. Yolanda Pierce doesn't mince words, and I

am confident she will impart some sage and thought-provoking words of wisdom for our graduating seniors on May 7. Livingstone was founded by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, so it is highly apropos to have a speaker who truly understands the church, as it relates to African-Americans, to speak at Commencement. We look forward to having her on our campus and to establishing a relationship with her."

Approximately 110 students are expected to graduate from Livingstone College on May 7. In keeping with tradition, the institution will also hold its "Golden Graduates" ceremony, which recognizes graduates who earned their degrees 50 years ago. The Golden Graduates dress in gold robes and, after the undergraduates receive their degrees, walk across the stage to receive certificates from Jenkins in what is always a highlight of Commencement.



ANSEL ADAMS

ELOQUENT LIGHT

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