

Alisea McLeod

Students asked to think!

By L. Michelle Fox

Alisea McLeod asks one thing of her students, she asks them to think.

The Detroit native is bright and engaging, and her voice is pleasant and enthusiastic as she leads them into a lively discussion of "Who are we and where are we going."

McLeod has a bachelor of arts degree in English and Communications from Stillman College in Alabama, she also holds a master's degree in English Composition and Research from the University of Miami in Ohio; and she is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan.

One gets the distinct impression that the English professor knows how to kick back and have fun.

But she gets her blues too, when she sits down in the lobby of the Boyer Building. She is quick to say, "I am concerned about the black condition. But when people talk of killing white babies because they will eventually kill ours, I come to a halt. I am concerned about us as a people, but I am also concerned about the world and white people are in the world."

Concern and care make her voice quiver, her lips tremble as she asks young people to change their thinking.

She does not care whether her students read every book. She wants them to critique and criticize everything they do so that when they have completed her course, the work is a part of them, she says with a weary sigh that makes her seem far older than her 31 years.

McLeod's greatest accomplishment has been "coming to my own knowledge." "I know that my writing skills were good," says McLeod, who began writing at the age of four. "But I don't think I was great. I guess my grandfather saw a lot of potential in me because he gave me, the youngest of four children, a wooden chest. My grandfather's brother brought me nice paper to write on. Now tell me what they must have seen in me."

Despite her writing abilities, McLeod, by choice, has had only four articles published. "I wrote for scholarly publications. But they (the editors/publishers) don't allow you to explain why you are writing the paper. They edit. So what you see is really not what it ought to be and a person needs to be allowed to write in his or her way."

In the meantime, McLeod spends most of her time with her husband, Carter, her 20-month-old daughter and her twin infant sons, Clifford and Carl. When she is not busy, she paints abandoned buildings. "I can't say from which

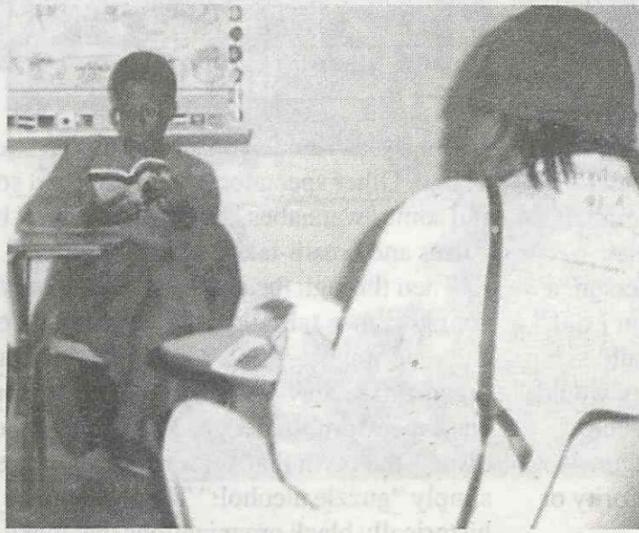


Photo by Michelle Fox

THOUGHTFUL SPEECH- Alisea McLeod, a professor in the English dept., orates some literary style to students, during her English seminar class.

point I started loving writing, but I can say from day one I loved to draw. I wanted to go into painting but no one in my community valued painting as a career, although they thought it was a good idea to paint."

McLeod's first love is serving and helping others. She vows to make St. Augustine's College her community service. This is her first time teaching a majority black school. She taught in majority white schools where she obtained her degrees.

"It's amazing what you learn. It (the mood) feels better. You feel like you know people and they know you and that you come from a common ground and you don't have to translate.

"My St. Aug students have reminded me that I cannot take for granted that they feel they share a common ground with me. That when I say black that means the same thing to them as it means to me. I am challenged with that everyday here at St. Aug."

She admits that her consciousness was not raised until her senior year at Stillman College. "A professor asked the class what we thought the key problem in the world or country was. Everyone sat with their mouths open. She demonstrates, "I said that the speed limit was increasing to 65mph. The instructor looked at me like 'What are you talking about?'"

"It was not until I spent time at a summer program at Northwestern University that my eyes began to open. One day the professor came back with our assignments. She criticized them. She said you all just don't get it. Then she held up my paper and said this is what I expected. I was surprised because I still didn't have a clue. I was just going through the system. I had learned the system. I was not attached to any work I did."

She pauses for a moment. "That's why it is important to get young people to think. You must show them the

value of black history. Show them black history in their lives everyday. When Black History month comes, they do not feel like this has nothing to do with their lives."

Despite her soft appearance, McLeod is stronger than she looks, maybe even stronger than she knows. She is in good hands—her own. "If you are on a path and not doing it for yourself, you will wonder why you are there. Sometimes you may have to do the first degree for your family. But, hey, make sure everything else is for yourself."

Food manager plans menu to woo diners

By Anishka McKenzie

"The customer is always right. Our aim is to please. Friendly with a smile." James H. Cotten Jr., a native of Durham employed at St. Aug since February 5, firmly believes in the adages as assistant food service director and production manager of the cafeteria.

Before coming to the Aug, Cotten worked at the Marriot Corporation, UNC Chapel Hill for five years as production supervisor. Lack of management opportunities ultimately resulted in his taking a job at St. Aug.

Cotten admits that he enjoys his job at the Aug tremendously. It is obvious in the way he takes time to talk to students asking whether they enjoy their meals or changes they would like to see in the cafeteria's menu.

Initially, Cotten wanted to be a coach. He received his undergraduate degree from Eastern Illinois University in physical education. After learning he would not be able to coach without teaching, he went on to pursue a cooking degree at Johnson and Wales in South Carolina.

He admits that he has no regrets since entering the food and beverage profession. Food and beverage have always been a part of his life. His father has been a chef for more than 40 years, and now Cotten follows in those footsteps with more than ten years experience already logged in the field.

Even though no major changes have been made in the service or food in the cafeteria since Cotten's arrival, a wide variety of new vegetarian entrees like the spinach cheese calzone are in the cafe because of him. Cotten feels that it is the cafe's duty to cater to the food needs of all students.

Cotten has big plans for the Aug's cafeteria. By spring, students eating in the cafe can expect to see Belgium waffles machines at breakfast time. Students will be allowed to make their own waffles. Cotten is also looking into setting up an omelet bar to provide more variety and to enhance the present breakfast menu.

For the next semester, Cotten is hoping to eliminate the Fast Food Fare which offers students foods like hot dogs, chips, pizza, cheeseburgers, and tacos and replace it with a Sub-Fare. The Sub-Fare will allow students to actually put in orders for the sub sandwich of their choice.



AGREAT CELEBRATION - St. Aug's fans and cheerleaders had a lot to cheer about during the basketball season. For the first time the Falcons captured the CIAA conference title.