

THE FALCON FORUM

Enlightening minds. Broadening perspectives. Informing a community

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What's your next?

By Clayshawn Moore

With graduation right around the corner, students are realizing that a new chapter of life is about to start. For some students, graduation has arrived sooner than they expected.

"I can't believe I'm about to graduate, it came so quickly," stated Shavona Hill, a senior majoring in journalism and mass communications.

But graduates do not have much time to reflect on all they've accomplished. Instead, they are confronting the same questions emblazoned on T-shirts that students were issued their freshman year: What's Your Next?

Some have jobs waiting for them. Jameka Johnson has a job with the Boys and Girls club in Raleigh as a Youth Development Leader. Da'lon Scott will be working with the U.S. Post Service in Largo, Maryland. Skyler Wallen will be the assistant manager at The Property Owners Association of Old Fort Bay in Nassau, Bahamas.

According to university records, more than 40 seniors have been accepted into graduate or professional schools, including the College of Pharmacy at the University of Massachusetts-Worcester, the Xavier University School of Medicine at Aruba and Florida A&M University Law School.

Antwoine Coleman is among those opting to further his education; he will

be attending North Carolina Central University School of Law.

But Coleman already is getting a taste of the working world. He is currently an intern with at the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina in downtown Raleigh. Coleman believes he is ready to take on the world.

"I do not believe I would have this opportunity if it were not for Saint Augustine's and my faculty advisor's assistance," he said. "SAU ensures that its students leave prepared to compete against all effectively."

Tavashane Brown is in a similar situation; she is interning at WRAL TV in Raleigh but will further her education before pursuing her career. The journalism and mass communication major will be attending Illinois State University in the fall, pursuing a masters in communications.

"I received a teaching assistantship which covers full tuition plus a stipend of 1,000 a month," Brown said.

For the university's ROTC participants, military service is the next step. Kanya Jabari, for instance, will be commissioned into the U.S. Army as an Active Duty Chemical Officer. Following graduation, he will attend the Chemical Basic Officer Leader's Course (BOLC)

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'I feel good about where we are'

Pres. Ward discusses his tenure so far, challenges ahead as he takes the reins

By Shavona Hill & Clayshawn Moore

As the school year comes to an end, it is also a new beginning as Dr. Everett B. Ward has been appointed the 11th president of Saint Augustine's University.

Dr. Ward, who has served as the university's interim president since April 2014, recently sat down for an interview with the *Falcon Forum* to discuss his accomplishments, challenges and goals.

Dr. Ward said he already has been able to make progress on some of his key goals. "I came in with an objective to strengthen our relationship with our external stakeholders – our alumni and our community – and I feel that we've worked hard to build bridges and strengthen our communication with our alumni and the community," he said. "And I really believe we're on the right track to making people know about all the great things that we're doing here at

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Falcon Forum editors Shavona Hill (left) and Clayshawn Moore talk with Dr. Ward. Photo by Jaquan Leary

Early College students bring a fresh vibe to campus

By Christian Roberson

On Saturday, March 25, an event was held in the MLK ballroom that is usually not seen in a college campus – a high school prom. The event, which had the theme "Peruvian mascara" and featured students with brightly colored masks, was part of the different vibe that students in the Early College Program bring to Saint Augustine's University.

Under the program, students from the Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy and the Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy attend classes at Saint Augustine's University. This year, 57 students are taking part in the program. The students take high school courses for the first two years and then they take two years of college courses.

They still take one high school course a semester in order for Wake County to continue to pay their tu-

ition. At the end of the program, the students earn 64 college credits with the option of doing a fifth year of high school and continue to earn more college credits, which Wake County will still pay for.

The program benefits both the Early College students and St. Augustine's University. For the Early College students, the program allows them to get a sense of college life and to get an education in a different environment.

"My experience here at Saint Augustine's University, incorporated with what I'm learning at the Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy, will help me advance in my efforts to pursue a higher education," said Moises Benitez, a high school junior participating in the early college program.

Wake County's men's and women's academies offer

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Early College students pose for a photo at their prom. Photo by Jaquan Leary

Faculty Spotlight:

Spiritual journey eventually brought him back home

By Donald Carey

Dr. James E. Graham began his career with little direction. His only goal was to graduate from college and get a good job. After receiving his undergraduate degree in clinical psychology at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C., his first job was a social worker in New York City.

The Raleigh native found the experience a bit overwhelming. "Some days I would wake up in a bit of a culture shock," Graham recalled. "New York was so fast-paced. Being from Raleigh, it took me some time to get used to it."

And although he was earning a decent income, life in New York was a constant struggle due to the high cost of living. Eventually, Graham decided to come home. "I had to return to the place I felt the most comfortable."

The experience left Graham a little wiser. "The most important thing I



Dr. James E. Graham
Photo by Donald Carey

learned from that experience is that, throughout life, each day is a journey."

Graham's journey has led him to Saint Augustine's University. He serves as the university's director of judicial affairs and as the assistant director of student activities.

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Student Spotlight:

Sophomore does not let difficulties hold him back

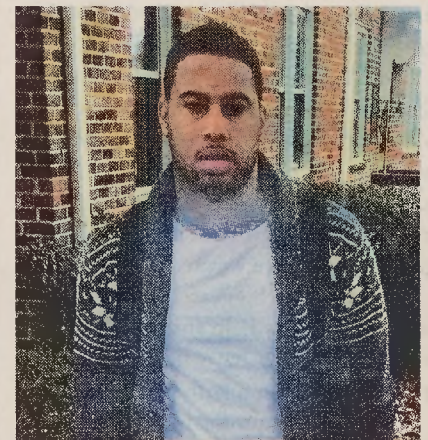
By Shavona Hill

"I wish for a better day and pray that the day is better than my last." That statement sums up Erinn Godfrey-Richardson's life so far. The sophomore psychology major has had some tough times but he has tried to not let troubles get him down or keep him from moving forward.

In high school, Godfrey-Richardson wanted to go to college but his family did not encourage him. After graduating in June 2011, he took a break from school and hung around his hometown, Philadelphia. He wanted to go to college but could not afford it despite working two jobs, at the Foot Locker and Sam's Club.

Life got more complicated when his girlfriend became pregnant and he had a daughter.

Godfrey-Richardson had two friends at Saint Augustine's University,



Erinn Godfrey-Richardson
Photo courtesy of Godfrey-Richardson

Richard Gilliam and Lamar Woodson, and decided to pay them a visit.

"It was gratifying," Godfrey-Richardson said. "I liked the people in North Carolina and the environment."

He returned home to Philadelphia with a new determination. Godfrey-Richardson

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