African American All Class Reunion

Adrienne Riley
University of San Francisco

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.usfca.edu/blackactivismeducation_ed

Part of the African American Studies Commons, and the Higher Education Commons

Recommended Citation
Riley, Adrienne, "African American All Class Reunion" (2013). Black Activism and Education. 15.
https://repository.usfca.edu/blackactivismeducation_ed/15
Greetings this afternoon on behalf of your fellow alumni of the late 60’s & early 70’s.

I would like to first acknowledge those that are unable to be with us today.

WE TRULY STAND ON THE SHOULDERS THAT CAME BEFORE US!!!

There are many important people in our alumni community – to name a few before the co-ed days:

Ollie Matson, Hal Perry, Joe Ellis, KC Jones, Bill Russell, Huey Thomas, etc.

But to highlight a few we knew personally:

**Burl Toler**

- star athlete
- professional NFL referee
- a former USF trustee
- a strong and prominent educator & person of character who supported young African American talent and would have been thrilled about this gathering.

**Priscilla Scotlan** (a childhood friend)

- graduate of the 1st coed class of 1968 and lifetime educator at UC Berkeley
- USF’s Career Services Office was re-named in her honor
- a former USF trustee

1
Harold Logwood (a fellow student and friend)

- spent 5 yrs. in the air force a little older & brought a sense of strength & maturity

- following Joe Marshall, served as USF's 2nd Black Student Union president (more affectionately known as the "chairman"

- he once called the Pope to report USF was not treating Black students fairly

- Harold with others like Johnny Burks and Leon & Valata Monroe worked to revitalize the Black Alumni Society

- Harold spent his life fighting for the equal treatment of African Americans, with special attention of the recruitment to HBCU's especially his Law School alma mater Howard University

Let me be brief, but I did want to frame a little history with you of the 'times' ..... WE WERE ALL YOUNG, HAD AFRO'S, and OUR BLACK & COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS LEVEL WAS HIGH!

We only had ourselves, and there were not many of us.

THE ESTABLISHMENT ACROSS THE NATION WAS BEING CHALLENGED ON MANY FRONTS ..............

- VIETNAM WAR SOLDIERS WERE COMING BACK & DEMANDED THINGS CHANGE

- STUDENTS PROTEST & ACTIVISM

- CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

- COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WERE IN UPROAR

- Emergence of ... BSU’s, Ethnic Studies, and Black Studies ...... which began @ SFSU & Merritt
Following Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr's assassination (April 4, 1968) USF's Black students established the BSU; activities & goals included but not limited to:

- Working with USF admission office & we went out to local high schools & community colleges & recruited Black students (at a record # that may still stand)

- Demanded the university retain Educ Services Center for Minority Students

- We recruited the first Black faculty here, people like

  Mona Scott – Sociology
  Elizabeth Parker – History
  Dr Lenneal Henderson – Political Science
  Dr Njisane – African History
  Dr Robert Thornton – Physics
  Dr Pat Hill – English (still at USF)

- We worked with USF to develop Black Studies & Ethnic Studies programs

- With community folks like Thomatra Scott, Z Butler & Dr Richardson (Marcus Bookstore) we worked to enlighten the university and reach out to the community:

  annual Carnival for children in the surrounding communities
  Campus ‘guests’: Angela Davis, Muhammad Ali, Dick Gregory, Eldridge Cleaver, and Curtis Mayfield

  annual Thanksgiving Food Drive for needy families in the community

  annual Black Cultural Week (full week of activities)

  Tutoring @ local Elementary School (Sacred Heart Elementary School)

- Demanded the gym be renamed “Bill Russell” – got a room named in his honor off the main bathroom in the gym
In closing ..........................

With all the African Americans with USF degrees across the country, we know the more recent graduates & younger generations have the ability to truly affect change here at USF and the nation.

I urge you to stay connected with the university, whether it is treasure, time, or talent. Of course, the treasure is an important piece that we cannot overlook. I believe there is information in a handout you received today about scholarships that support African American students specifically. I mention this because it is important to support our own and give back to help students that had similar experiences as us in college to be successful in life.

It was an honor to speak this afternoon. I understand the planning committee wanted a historical perspective. I must be honest, there may have been some bias involved in my selection. I sincerely want to thank you all for coming, I know I share with many of my brothers & sisters & friends in this room today, that it warms our hearts to see all of you here at USF!

Make sure you network with at least one person you did not know before you leave.

Thank you all for your time and keep the faith.