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***ALUMNI NEWS ARCHIVE***

***Dobard tapped to serve as liaison between the state and RSD***  
***May 16, 2011***



**Patrick M. Dobard ('89)** has been tapped to serve the Recovery School District (RSD) as Deputy Superintendent for Community & Policy. In the role, he will be responsible for RSD's "policy agency, public process, communications and outreach efforts" according to a May 13th press release from RSD.

Upon the resignation of former Superintendent Paul Vallas, Dobard had been appointed by Louisiana State Superintendent of Education Paul Pastorek as his personal Liaison to the RSD. He had served as the Deputy Director of Governmental Affairs for the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) where he served in the position for nearly three years.

Before joining LDOE, Dobard spent eleven years in the classroom. He taught in math and social studies in Orleans, Tensas and East Baton Rouge Parishes on the junior high and high school levels. Not only did Dobard teach, but he also led. At Northdale Magnet Academy he created the Young Men's Club pairing male high school students with the Cortana Kiwanis Club to facilitate mentoring opportunities. He later moved on to serve as an adjunct professor of History at Baton Rouge Community College where he was named "Adjunct Faculty of the Year" in 2002. In 1998, Dobard was named "Outstanding Young Educator" by the Baton Rouge Jaycees.

Dobard, a native of New Orleans, graduated from Southern University at New Orleans with a degree in Secondary Education. He later received his master's degree in History from Southern University and A&M College in 1999.

***Options plentiful for first post-Katrina Mathematics graduate and multi-sport athlete***  
***May 5, 2011***



**Ashley Cagle ('11)** can go anywhere she wants. All she has to do is decide. The cum laude graduate, who is Southern University at New Orleans' first post-Katrina Mathematics graduate, is elated about the options that sit before her as she enters the ranks of SUNO alumni.

With aspirations of becoming a dermatologist, Cagle has been accepted into a summer math teaching program; and she is considering two fellowship options for Fall 2011. The summer, she will board a plane to Los Angeles where she will teach math to gifted middle and high school students as a part of a youth national youth enrichment program. The 2011 honors graduate has to decide, however, whether she will accept a fall fellowship to Clark Atlanta University or Tulane University later in the year. At CAU, Cagle would pursue her master's degree in math. At Tulane, she would have the opportunity to work toward becoming an M.D./Ph.D. Should she take the Tulane option, it will put her on track to getting her M.D. for dermatology and a Ph.D. in optical or biomedical engineering.

"I'm really excited," says a beaming Cagle. "The funny thing is that sports is still deep in my heart." Having received her Associate of Science in Mathematics from Snead State Community College, Cagle arrived at SUNO to become one of the hardest working athletes on the basketball and volleyball courts. The six-foot Argo, Alabama native played forward on the Lady Knights basketball and middle blocker on the volleyball teams. Perhaps Cagle's most memorable performance came in the 2010 GCAC volleyball championship when she turned in a guppy and

inspirational performance by playing her two final sets as a Lady Knight on an injured knee. Sports has such a special place in her heart that Cagle even looks forward to possibly coaching volleyball at a New Orleans area high school.

"SUNO gave me a lot of opportunities," she says. "I got a chance to be a multi-sport athlete, I was an Alliance Scholar, and I did summer internships. Plus it's pretty cool to be SUNO's first math graduate, post-Katrina." Among her treasured SUNO experiences, Cagle points to the mentorship of Dr. Joe Omojola and her membership in the Beta Kappa Chi Scientific Honor Society. With athletics being so close to her heart, she definitely points to the leadership of Coach Eltson King as a major influence on her path to success.

***Alum featured on WDSU-TV  
April 26, 2011***

**Jimmy Chase ('10)** was interviewed by reporter Gina Swanson for a story scheduled to air on WDSU-TV (Channel 6 New Orleans). Chase, who is an HIV/AIDS activist and educator, does frequent presentations and classroom discussions on campus to provide students with information about the virus and disease. Chase hopes that his talks will help students take preventative measures against the disease. The date the feature will run has not been determined.

"I want people to see what the disease looks like," says Chase. Chase and other activists agree that there are still misconceptions about how HIV/AIDS victims look. They aim to show the community that people who look "perfectly healthy" can have the disease. Activists and victims also want to empower others with HIV by helping them learn how to live with the disease.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, New Orleans ranked 2nd for AIDS cases rates of the country's large metropolitan areas in 2007. Baton Rouge ranked 3rd. More information about HIV/AIDS can be viewed [here](#).

Chase has discussed the disease on the popular Saturday morning talk show, Q93's "Real Talk" (June 13, 2009, WQUE-FM). He is now pursuing his Master of Social Work at Southern University at New Orleans.

***SUNO's signature connection to the community comes through in series about crime  
March 16, 2011***

On the March 5th edition of WQUE-FM's (Q93) "Real Talk", two Southern University at New Orleans graduates lent their knowledge to the subject of crime in New Orleans. Dubbed "Crime in New Orleans: How Did We Get Into This Mess?", the show's host "Wild Wayne" Benjamin, Jr. used the first part of the three-part series to approach the question of how violence has become such an issue in the Black community. The SUNO alumni who were vital parts of the show were licensed social workers **Victor Sims (B'96, M'98)** and **Terry Clay (M'92)**. Both received their Masters of Social Work.

Clay brought significant depth to the conversation with his analysis of how people who live lives of crime are addicted to the lifestyle. Owner of the Institute of Behavior Science and presenter of the "Addicted to the Lifestyle" workshop series gave his perspective of crime as a public health issue. Clay's theory is that the influx of drugs into Black communities around the country by way of the Iran/Contra Scandal and intergenerational transference are among contributing factors to violence in urban communities. Clay pointed to his past struggles to support his theory.

Sims attempted to walk the listeners into the mind of a criminal. The owner of Sims Social Services used his knowledge and experience of working with people with aggressive behaviors as a foundation for his commentary. Sims pointed out that part of the thought pattern which contributes to aggressive behavior is the need to feel respected. From that need for respect and economic conditions in urban areas over the years, Sims said, has come the culture of crime that exists in communities.

Sims is also a monthly contributor to "Sunday Journal" on WYLD-FM, and Clay has also appeared on the award-winning talk show. Clay has spoken several times about violence using his "Addicted to the Lifestyle" theory, and Sims contributes as the show's mental health expert.

***Williams first woman to serve as parish council chair  
May 24, 2010***



**Arlanda Williams (B'03, M'06)** has been described as a rising star, and she seems to be putting herself on track. Williams has the distinction of serving on the Terrebonne Parish Council as chair for the second year in a row. As if her serving is not already an accomplishment, the Lady Knight is the first woman to ever serve as council chair.

Her path to leadership began when she was elected to the council and quickly appointed interim vice chair in 2006, one month before she received her master's in Criminal Justice from the University. In 2007, Williams solidified her role as vice chair. It was not long before she moved up to chair in 2008, and is serving her second term in the coveted role.

Williams credits her success to her personal development at Southern University at New Orleans. "I was taught as a SUNO grad to always leave a trail that someone will follow! SUNO allowed me to find myself and discover a world of opportunities!" she said in an email to SUNO Public Relations.

Williams was also elected secretary of the Louisiana Democratic Party in March of 2008 and president of the Louisiana Police Jury's Black Caucus.