



THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL

# Scholarship

## LUNCHEON

*Igniting the Light: A Legacy of Giving*

**Monday, February 19, 2024**

Noon



HPE ARENA • FVSU CAMPUS

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER'S BIOGRAPHY

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## STEVIE BAGGS JR.

Actor, Author and  
Inspirational Speaker

**STEVIE BAGGS JR.** is a three-time All-American linebacker/defensive-end, playing in both the NFL and CFL for teams including the Baltimore Ravens, Arizona Cardinals, Saskatchewan Roughriders, and Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Stevie Baggs Jr. earned his nickname, "Shakespeare," during his college football career by making plays on and off the field. He graduated in 2005 with a degree in International Business from Bethune Cookman University.

Drawing from his experience in professional sports and as an activist for human rights, Stevie Baggs Jr. has dedicated time in his career to empowering youth and adults as an impactful inspirational speaker. His driven attitude and gracious service to the community have gained him the support and partnership of many renowned charitable, educational, health, and sports organizations. Named Health and Wellness Ambassador for the City of Atlanta, Stevie continues to be a strong voice for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Stevie can be spotted on television having worked alongside Barry Jenkins in the hit series "The Underground Railroad." He is also working alongside Tyler Perry in the hit show "Ruthless." You will also see him in Kobra Kai and in the currently airing television show, "The Game," on CBS and Paramount Plus. Stevie has appearances on The Steve Harvey Show, Wendy Williams, and The View. In addition to his acting career, Stevie is also very passionate about real estate investing. He believes that you can't change the culture without having agriculture.

As an advocate for change, Stevie Baggs Jr. works in communities to enhance the minds of youth to fuel the future through his CETA (Creating Empowerment Through Autonomy) foundation. The CETA Foundation, currently celebrating 18 years of service, envisions a world where all individuals have the health and wellness tools, resources, and support to maximize their quality of life.

Recognized as the only athlete to play for eleven professional teams in ten years, "Shakespeare" continues to inspire and make plays off the field. In his bestselling book, "Greater than the Game," Baggs shares how his experiences on the field prepared him for a purpose beyond the stadium and guides readers to self-discovery by challenging them to examine how they can elevate their personal "game." As a man of many hats, Stevie continues to execute his destiny with an unwavering heart of leadership and service. With all that he does, he knows "I'm not flawless, but I am faithful." Stevie's latest book, "WOKE" is a dictionary for the conscious mind. This is a thought leader's dream book.

# PROGRAM

MASTER AND MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES  
16th Mister and 86th Miss Fort Valley State University  
**Ahmad S. Harden and Anaya S. Arnold**

WELCOME ..... Mister and Miss FVSU

INVOCATION ..... Anthony Thomas II '24  
Psychology Major

GREETINGS..... Genesis Ivey '24  
Student Government Association President

\*SONG ..... "Lift Every Voice and Sing" ..... FVSU University Choir

OCCASION/HISTORY ..... Aniya Warfield '25  
FVSU NAACP President

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER..... The Honorable Patty M. Stinson  
Georgia State Representative

KEYNOTE..... Stevie Baggs Jr.  
Actor, Author and Inspirational Speaker

## **INTRODUCTION OF MAGGIE DAVIS LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENTS**

The Honorable Sanford Bishop Jr.  
U.S. Representative for Georgia's 2nd Congressional District

SPIRITUAL SELECTION ..... FVSU University Choir

## **INTRODUCTION OF HONOREE AWARD RECIPIENTS**

The Honorable Calvin Smyre  
Former State Legislator • Past Chair, FVSU Foundation

PERFORMATIVE SELECTION ..... Phases Dance Troup

## **RECOGNITION OF SPONSORS & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Karen Wright  
Interim Vice President for University Advancement and  
Executive Director for FVSU Foundation, Inc.

CLOSING REMARKS ..... Paul Jones, Ph.D.  
Fort Valley State University 10th President

BENEDICTION..... Anthony Thomas II '24  
Psychology Major

\*AUDIENCE, PLEASE STAND.



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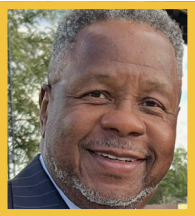


THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL

# FVSU Scholarship LUNCHEON



## MAGGIE DAVIS LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENTS



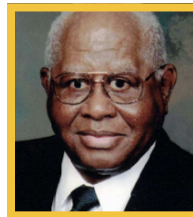
### LTC ANDREW REESE

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Andrew Reese, a distinguished member of the class of 1979, stands as a beacon of unwavering commitment to Fort Valley State University (FVSU). A Lifetime member of the FVSU National Alumni Association, LTC Reese epitomizes devotion, serving as a local NAA Chapter President across various locations. His Platinum Lifetime Membership in Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated underscores his enduring dedication to community and brotherhood. Currently, LTC Reese holds pivotal roles as Developmental Committee Chairman on the FVSU Foundation Board and as a member of the FVSU Athletics Board, Wildcat Nation, and GROWL Club. A True Wildcat, he leaves an indelible mark, inspiring countless students and donors, earning his place in the esteemed FVSU NAA Hall of Fame honoree.



### MR. KENNETH HOWARD

Mr. Kenneth Howard, a distinguished member of the class of 1985, embodies excellence and leadership as a lifelong contributor to Fort Valley State University (FVSU). A devoted life member of the FVSU National Alumni Association, he currently holds the historic position of the first African American City Manager for the City of Hinesville, Georgia. In addition to his professional achievements, Howard is the Vice Chairman of the FVSU Foundation Board, demonstrating his commitment to the university's growth and success. A former Wildcat football player, his passion for athletics is evident through his roles as Chairman of the Lomax Porter Golf Tournament and President of the GROWL Club. Together, these organizations have raised over \$200,000 for the Wildcat football team, showcasing Mr. Howard's dedication to fostering excellence and community engagement.



### MR. Y. N. MYERS II

Y. N. Myers II, an esteemed member of the class of 1952, stands as a pillar of commitment to Fort Valley State University (FVSU) and beyond. A lifelong advocate, he is a distinguished Life Member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, initiated in 1950, and a devoted Life Member of the FVSU National Alumni Association, earning recognition as the Alumnus of the Year in 1981. Mr. Myers's leadership extends to his pivotal role as National President from 1970–71, and he is a founding member of the Augusta Alumni Chapter. Inducted into the FVSU Hall of Fame in 2006, he served the Richmond County School System for 34 years, leaving an indelible mark as a teacher and Social Worker. His dedication to education is further evidenced by seven terms on the Richmond County School Board and leadership roles in the Georgia School Boards Association and School Social Workers Association of Georgia.



### VERNARD HODGES, DVM

Vernard Hodges, a Fort Valley State University and Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine graduate, is a distinguished fish biologist and veterinarian in central Georgia. As a founder of successful veterinary hospitals, including Critter Fixer Veterinary Hospital in Bonaire, GA, he gained national recognition with the television show "Critter Fixers: Country Vets" on National Geographic Wild and Disney+. A Renaissance man, Dr. Hodges thrives in diverse enterprises, from operating the Critter Fixer Cattle Company and real estate ventures to launching Vetopia, a national conglomerate. Committed to community service, he founded the "It Takes A Village" Foundation in 2011, fostering youth business skills. Dr. Hodges, a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., extends his impact through nationwide programs like "Vet for a Day" in collaboration with Zoetis, promoting veterinary careers among youth. Awards for his business acumen and community service underscore Dr. Hodges' exceptional contributions.

# MAGGIE DAVIS LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENTS

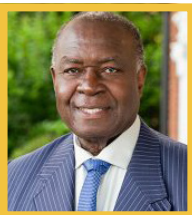
C O N T I N U E D



## **TERRENCE FERGUSON, DVM**

Terrence Ferguson, originally from Talbotton, Georgia, attended Fort Valley State College and Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine. Co-founder of Critter Fixer Veterinary Hospital, he's a dedicated veterinarian and TV star on Nat Geo Wild's "Critter Fixers:

Country Vets." Beyond his busy schedule, Dr. Ferguson prioritizes community engagement, founding the Peach County Youth Association and running Football Skill Development. In 2022, he and his son launched the T-Fergg One Yard at a Time Foundation, promoting youth and adult fitness. Dr. Ferguson, a muscle car enthusiast and co-owner of Critter Fixer Cattle Company, finds joy in family time with his wife Kimberly, a social worker, and their two children, Terri Nicole and TJ.



## **MATTHEW MCRAE, DMD, M.A.G.D.**

Dr. Matthew McRae Jr., a distinguished member of the class of 1970, boasts a remarkable legacy as a dental practitioner in Athens, GA, spanning over five decades. His commitment to excellence is exemplified by the establishment

of three thriving dental practices in the Athens area. In 1973, Dr. McRae achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first Black graduate of the Dental School at the Medical College of Georgia, a significant accomplishment that recently earned him the honor of having his portrait displayed. Beyond his professional achievements, Dr. McRae is a dedicated supporter of Fort Valley State University (FVSU), contributing significantly to the betterment of students. His philanthropic endeavors include substantial contributions to the Jeddie Lee and Matthew McRae Sr. Family Scholarship, benefitting Math and Science students at FVSU, a testament to his enduring commitment to education and community.



## **FREDDIE MCRAE, MD**

Dr. Freddie L. McRae, a distinguished graduate of Fort Valley State University's class of 1972, personifies a legacy of excellence and trailblazing achievements. Celebrating 52 years of marriage to his college sweetheart, Dr. Inez Holloway McRae, they proudly raised

two daughters, Ms. Jeddie McRae and Frita McRae Fisher, MD, as well as a son, Mr. Freddie McRae Jr., and six grandchildren. A retired general and peripheral vascular surgeon, Dr. McRae graduated from the Medical College of Georgia in 1975, where he attained the highest honor for a medical student, induction into the A.O.A. Honor Medical Society. Dr. McRae's journey has been marked by consistent trailblazing, from graduating as valedictorian

of his high school to becoming the first Black surgeon in St. Petersburg, FL. A member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Dr. McRae exemplifies the excellence fostered by Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).



## **SYLVESTER MCRAE, MD**

Dr. Sylvester McRae, a distinguished member of the class of 1975, is an exemplary advocate for Fort Valley State University (FVSU). As a dedicated Life Member of the FVSU National Alumni Association and a past member of the Fort Valley State University Foundation Board,

Dr. McRae has consistently demonstrated his commitment to the university's growth and success. A distinguished medical professional, Dr. McRae has served in various leadership roles, including past president of the Georgia State Medical Association, member of the National Medical Association Executive Board OB/GYN Section, and member of the Morehouse School of Medicine Board of Trustees and the Medical College of Georgia Foundation Board. A proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Dr. McRae has delivered over 10,000 babies and continues to contribute to the field with a focus on GYN Minimally Invasive Surgery, including Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Dr. McRae is an avid supporter of scholarships and Wildcat athletics at FVSU. Together with his wife Rose, also a member of the class of 1975, they are proud parents of three children and grandparents of three. During his leisure time, Dr. McRae enjoys honing his skills on the golf course, rounding out a life dedicated to excellence in both his profession and his support for FVSU.



## **KEITH MCRAE, DMD**

Dr. Keith L. McRae, a distinguished member of the class of '81, has made an indelible mark on the field of Family Dentistry in Gainesville, Georgia, where he has practiced for an impressive 39 years. His commitment to Fort Valley State University (FVSU) is not only

professional but deeply personal. Married to Wanda McIntyre from Augusta, GA, Dr. Keith and Wanda are parents to two accomplished daughters, Dr. Keshia McRae Andrews (Class of '07) and Attorney SeNita L. McRae. Yet perhaps his proudest role is that of "Poppy" to his five grandsons: Harland, Tristen, Tucker, Taji, and Tyland. Dr. Keith's unwavering support for FVSU is a family legacy, as he is the youngest of five siblings who all graduated from the university. His dedication stems from a profound belief in the FVSU family ethos—being taught that "FAMILY ALWAYS TAKES CARE OF FAMILY." Dr. Keith's love for FVSU goes beyond nostalgia; it is a testament to the enduring sense of kinship and shared values that define the university's distinguished community.



# HONOREE AWARD RECIPIENTS



## **ARETHA HILL, PH.D.**

Aretha Hill, CPA, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Accounting at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University where she previously served as the Associate Dean and MBA Director. Aretha also served as the Chair of the Department of Business Administration and Economics at FVSU and on the faculty at Florida A&M University and North Carolina A&T State University. Prior to her academic career, Aretha held positions with PWC, KPMG, and Ernst & Young international accounting firms. Aretha is a former AICPA National Accreditation Commissioner and member of the AICPA Academic Executive Committee. Aretha is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and the FVSU National Alumni Association.



## **MR. BERRY JORDAN,** *Posthumously*

Berry Jordan, a distinguished graduate from the class of 1965, earned his BS degree in Social Science and went on to achieve an MS degree in Public Administration through a Ford Fellowship at Georgia State University. A member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, and a lifelong contributor to the FVSU National Alumni Association, Mr. Jordan's legacy is one of remarkable service and leadership. As the Equal Opportunity Director at Robins Air Force Base, he broke barriers as the sole minority on the Robins Air Logistics Center Commander's Staff. Passionate about community service, he chaired the Board of Directors for the Rainbow House, combating child abuse, and led Volunteer Houston County. Notably, Mr. Jordan presided over the Fort Valley Evening Optimist Club and the FVSU End Zoners Club, raising substantial funds for athletic programs. His commitment extended nationally, earning him the title of Kentucky Colonel from the Commonwealth of Kentucky for his exceptional service, and accolades such as the FVSU President's Trailblazers Award and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education's President's Citation for his contributions to education.



## **MR. DENNIS HERBERT,** *Posthumously*

Dennis Herbert, a lifelong Fort Valley resident, embodied a spirit of service and commitment from his early days as an Eagle Scout to his endeavors in music as a teen and adult. A proud Auburn University graduate, Dennis returned to his roots in Fort Valley, seamlessly integrating into the family business, Herbert Jewelers, alongside his parents. Dennis and his wife, Peggy, demonstrated unwavering dedication to Fort Valley and the Fort Valley State University Foundation. Invited by Ralph Malone in 1989, Dennis assumed the role of Foundation Treasurer for over 25 years. Ever accessible, he diligently signed checks, crafted plaques, and offered insightful suggestions for dignitary gifts, leaving an indelible mark on Fort Valley State University.



## **MR. LUTHER JONES**

Luther Jones, a Lincolnton, Georgia native, stands as a distinguished alum of Fort Valley State University, graduating with a B.S. in Agriculture in 1982, followed by an M.S. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois in 1984. Residing in Huntersville, North Carolina, with his wife Letitia Toomer-Jones (FVSU Class of 1984), Luther boasts a remarkable career with nearly four decades of service at the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), concluding in January 2018. Notably, Luther coordinated national programs, including the impactful Longleaf Pine initiative, during his tenure at NRCS headquarters in Washington D.C. In his retirement, Luther has transitioned into a consulting role and currently serves as co-lead for the Longleaf Partnership Council's Longleaf for All Working Group, contributing significantly to The Longleaf Alliance Board.



## **MRS. LETITIA TOOMER-JONES**

Letitia Toomer-Jones, a proud native of Fort Valley, Georgia, achieved academic excellence at Fort Valley State University, earning a B.S. in Agriculture in 1984. Currently residing in Huntersville, North Carolina, with her husband Luther Jones (Class of 1982), Letitia has had a distinguished career spanning approximately 30 years with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Letitia served as an Agricultural Economist in diverse locations such as New York, Oklahoma, and Virginia throughout her tenure. In the later stages of her career, she transitioned to Washington D.C., where she held a pivotal role at NRCS Headquarters, overseeing the agency's data quality and consistency. Letitia's commitment and expertise have left an enduring impact on the field of agricultural economics and conservation.



## **MRS. SHAREE' LAWRENCE**

Mrs. Sharee' J. Lawrence, FVSU Registrar for 31 years, ardently supports academic excellence. A LaGrange native, she safeguards the university's academic records and upholds its student-centered philosophy. As President of the Campus Alumni Chapter and a Life Member of FVSU NAA, Mrs. Lawrence exemplifies dedicated service. Chairing university and statewide committees, including past leadership in the University System of Georgia, she contributes significantly to higher education. Holding a BBA in Marketing from FVSU and an MS in Leadership from Capella University, Mrs. Lawrence, alongside her husband, Michael Lawrence, Sr., instills a profound FVSU legacy in their two FVSU graduate children, Michael, Jr., and Sydney.



# EMPOWER YOUR FUTURE

## IGNITE *your* POTENTIAL

Join the trailblazers of tomorrow in STEM excellence with FVSU's Cooperative Developmental Energy Program (CDEP).

**APPLY NOW** and start your pathway to dual degrees (with partner institutions), limitless possibilities and a bright future. Scholarship opportunities available.



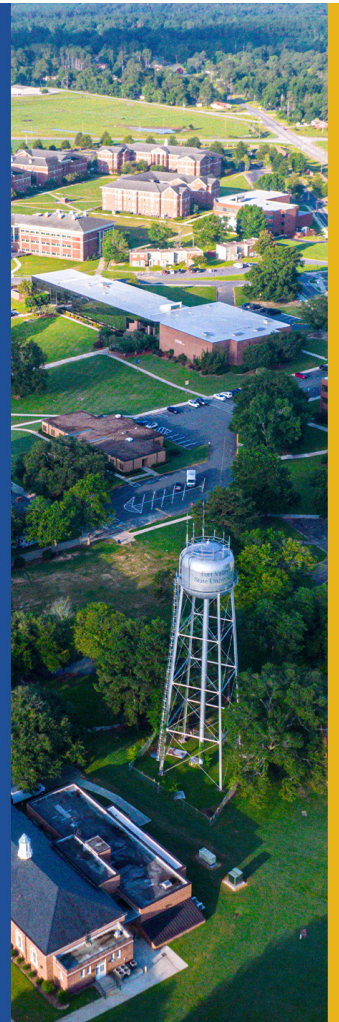
Visit [www.FVSU.edu/CDEP](http://www.FVSU.edu/CDEP) or call 478-825-6243 for more information

### REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum 3.5 High School GPA
- 1170 on SAT (Minimum 570 in Math or 26 on ACT)
- Submit FAFSA
- Apply for Hope Scholarship (Georgia students only)
- Admittance to Fort Valley State University

### PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

- Georgia Tech
- Grand Valley State University
- Penn State
- University of Alabama
- University of Arkansas
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Texas, Austin





**FORT VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EMPOWER *the* POSSIBLE.



# #1

**PUBLIC  
HBCU  
in GEORGIA** **SIX  
CONSECUTIVE  
YEARS**

Highest-ranked in Georgia for Social Mobility among public regional universities

— 2024 U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT



[www.fvsu.edu](http://www.fvsu.edu)



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