

The Onyx

Volume 5 Number 2

Fall 2003

Living the
Leadership
Life



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Semester
in
Pictures

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Plus...
Poetry, News
and more!

Meet

Tomorrow's
LEADERS



The ONYX

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Black Cultural Center

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

Following in their footsteps

This *Onyx* is for the leaders in the world, for those who have paved the way for me as a black person to achieve my goals. Over the summer I participated in the leadership-training program. I learned things about myself that will help me become a better leader and lead people in the right direction.

DANIELLE SAUNDERS, *Editor*



POET'S CORNER

I Believe...

I believe that one day all people will be given equal opportunity
In the workplace, on the streets, we'll all be in unity
Like One, Color Doesn't Matter
Like One, Not Black, Not White, Not Chinese, Not Indian
Like One, Hello my brother, Hello my sister
I believe that one day all people will be given equal opportunity
In the workplace, on the streets, we'll all be in unity
One day we will reach this plateau
For I do not believe, but rather I know.

JEREMY McSHAN

FACULTY REFLECTION

Living the Leadership Life

By JESSICA A. GERASSIMIDES

Picture this:

A small town anywhere in the world. You are a member of this community. The people of this town have decided to appoint you as their leader. Ask yourself:

Why me?

What leadership qualities would they see in me?

Who would follow me?

What would happen if others lived by my example?

What kind of difference would I make in this community?

Almost eight years ago, I began asking these questions within a leadership development program I called, *The Search for Excellence*. Somewhere in the middle of that first summer of the leadership program, my students renamed the course, *The Journey to Excellence*. Yeah, sure you search for better ways to live life they told me; but the bigger picture is that it should be a **journey** in which we do the searching, a journey to become excellent human beings. It's not just a blind search for something either—it's a journey of learning to see beyond the surface layers. Little did they or I know at the time that the word leader actually comes from an Old English word "lædare" which means "to take with one"; implicit therein is the journey: change, movement, shared leadership, direction, community. This

interaction with them has stayed with me all this time and it continues to be one of my favorite leadership lessons.

The concept of leadership has been defined in myriad ways throughout human history and the leadership canon is deep with metaphors, formulas, stories, equations, and countless "ten laws of leadership to live and work by". For me, leadership has become, not just a job, a task, or a set

of skills to be mastered, although there are those,

but a way of life. Leadership is both personal and communal, local and global; it can be learned no matter who you were at birth. We all lead and allow others to lead us, in the classroom, at the lunch table, in our place of worship, on the flag football field, going about our everyday lives. We all are, on some level, leaders if leadership is to be understood as the process of becoming an excellent community participant.

I think of the leadership life in two realms, personal and interpersonal—what I call *Intramural* and *Liturgy*.

The term intramural is most often equated with sports activities like football or soccer. In fact, the word, in translation, means "within the walls." Good leaders live the examined life with the knowledge that leadership is more than image. One of my favorite poets, Eudora Welty, and as one who lived well, says, "All serious daring starts from within."



NEWS BITES

Con-Grad-ulations!
Good luck and congratulations to
our graduating seniors!

BUSINESS
Markesha Flagg
Carl Settles

RELIGION
Roberta Shannon

ENGLISH
Walter Powell

CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES
Faith Calhoun
Stephanie Cole
Aeysha Morman

POLITICAL SCIENCE
LaDonna Burrell

PSYCHOLOGY
Rashaad Abdur-Rahman
Leslie Hayes

COMMUNICATION
Melvin (Shemar) McClendon
Mary Trumbo

2003 BSU Court
announced
Congratulations to you all!
Kimberly Morrison (queen)
Chris Hayes (king)
Lamont Hill (prince)
Ebony Walker (princess)

Here comes the bride!
On September 19, Samantha
Nicole Stowers, a junior Business
major from South Carolina, and
Xavier Durand McKinzie, a Berea
College Alum from Georgia,
united their lives by exchanging
vows of marriage. God Bless Mr.
and Mrs. McKinzie!

POET'S CORNER

Beauty

This girl was lovely, attractive, good-looking, pretty. She was cute, so splendid, how could I not remember? I called her Beauty. She put the pause in stop, clueless she was not, could boil water without a pot, this girl was hot. Staring at her would sometimes cause me to forget her name. You may think I'm giving a description of her features, but I'm really describing her brain. This female was far from lame. She often had me hypnotized, not by the prize between her thighs, but it was her intellect that made me rise, sent me on a natural high. I mean she had charm, charisma, elegance, perfection, class and plenty of ASS. This girl was something special. Her smile is the reason the sun shines bright and the moon stands out at night. Her eyes put the ooh in "ooh-wee," every time she looked at me. Her poise was unique. She had good posture, self-assurance, good composure and dignity. She even had nice feet.

Beauty was not just all that and a bag of chips; the girl had great hips. Her body was like the breeze hitting your face while riding your bike down a hill on a windy day. I mean this girl was cold. Enough about her figure; let me tell you about her soul. Beauty loved her father, the man upstairs; she also liked her pops. But her mother was not the only woman he called "Boo" or chose to screw after hanging out with his crew. Her mother told her not to worry, just replace him with God, and that's the man she looked up to. You see, she was not just an achiever and a believer; she was also a receiver. She knew that words were the tools that divide us from fools. After only three years she finished school; did I mention that this girl was cool? She also knew that two plus two was four and that sleeping around made you a whore. Therefore she always kept her mind on her books.

She was sweet all the way to the core. My intuition told me that Beauty was not worth forgetting. That's how refined she made me feel. To see Beauty more often, I started taking pills. Went to sleep in the afternoon, woke up the next day, and still I was not fulfilled. For more time I would kill. Until one day I met another female who fit the same description as Beauty. Déjà vu began to occur. But it was something about this girl that was different. I closed my eyes and reopened them. She was still there. I then pinched myself; pain I began to feel. I paused for a moment. Suddenly, a great burst of excitement and energy rushed through my body. I felt joy. My long days of sleeping were now over. Out went the pills. Beauty and I were finally able to chill without me having to dream, because Beauty was now *real*.

GEORGE WEBB

The Semester

in pictures



- A Last Fridays
- B Last Fridays
- C Circle City trip
- D Circle City trip
- E Roots Heritage Festival
- F Community Social

■ PROFILES: TODAY'S STUDENTS, TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Ashonti Davis

Nahville, Tennessee.

Sophomore, Speech Communication



Why did you come to Berea?

I came to Berea because it seemed to be a good deal for the education I would be receiving. For the line of work I am looking to pursue in the future, I need a solid foundation in my undergraduate work.

Do you feel you are a good leader and why?

Someone once told me "a leader stands out amongst a crowd."

A leader makes their own path and leads by example. I make my own choices, and avoid making decisions because it is popular at a particular time, so in that respect I am a leader.

What are your short-term goals?

My short-term goals are to finish my degree at Berea in a year and a half, get an excellent internship with either the Washington Institute or a national broadcasting network, and to be involved in volunteer work. For example, right now, I am beginning to work with Oxfam, an organization that promotes free trade worldwide.

What are your long-term goals?

My long-term goals are to finish graduate school with a joint-degree in law and media and public affairs with an emphasis on broadcasting. Then, I would like to begin work with either a non-profit organization and become involved with political journalism.

How do you plan to accomplish your goals?

I plan to accomplish my goals through education beyond Berea and related work experience. I like to be involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities and volunteer work. Every work experience offers a new skill, and I hope to combine all of my experiences to help me reach my goals.

Where do you see yourself in ten years as a leader?

Ten years from now, I hopefully will be well established in my career, and continue evolving as a person. Hopefully, I will have accomplished most of my

COV

STO

Tomorrow LEAD



goals and have set new goals for myself. I make sure I am actively involved in some way that the world around me can change for

How do you contribute to the community?

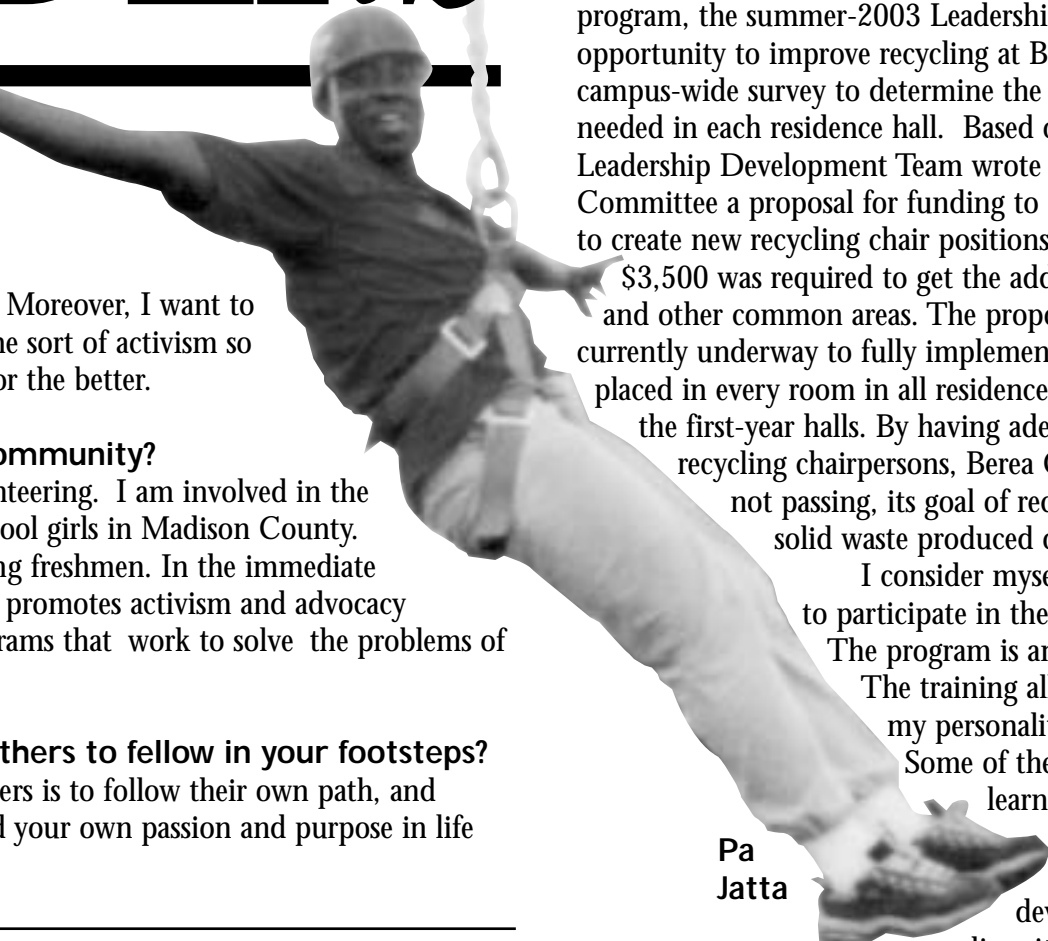
I contribute to the community by volunteering in a peer mentoring program for middle school students. Also, I am a student advisor to incoming students. In the future, I hope to get an internship that promotes international trade, such as Oxfam America and other programs that promote international trade and the FTAA.

What advice would you give to other students?

Honestly, the only advice I can give other students is to avoid following a crowd. Moreover, find your own path and work hard to achieve your goals.

VER
ORY

row's DERS



■ EXPERIENCES: SUMMER LEADERSHIP TRAINING

My Journey into Excellence

By PA JATTA

The Leadership Training Program *Journey to Excellence* is a twelve-week labor position in which participants explore leadership styles as well as develop their own. Jessica Gerassimides headed this summer's program with assistance from Connie Briggs and Chris Lakes of Student Life.

This year, an ecological learning component was included in the Leadership Development Training program to increase the understanding by student leaders of ecological sustainability. At the end of the eco-learning program, the summer-2003 Leadership Development Team identified an opportunity to improve recycling at Berea College. The team conducted a campus-wide survey to determine the number of additional recycling bins needed in each residence hall. Based on the results of the survey, the Leadership Development Team wrote and sent to the Administrative Committee a proposal for funding to purchase additional recycling bins, and to create new recycling chair positions in each residence hall. A total of

\$3,500 was required to get the additional bins in the rooms, hallways, and other common areas. The proposal was approved and efforts are currently underway to fully implement the project. Recycling bins will be placed in every room in all residence halls at Berea College starting with the first-year halls. By having adequate recycling bins and active recycling chairpersons, Berea College will be closer to achieving, if not passing, its goal of recycling 50% of the gross operational solid waste produced on campus.

I consider myself lucky to have had the opportunity to participate in the Summer 2003 Leadership Program.

The program is among my best experiences in college.

The training allowed me to learn a lot about myself: my personality type, my strengths and limitations.

Some of the areas covered, apart from eco-learning, included public speaking, time management, mission statement development, personal fitness plan development, conflict resolution, diversity and guided learning.

Pa
Jatta

Moreover, I want to
the sort of activism so
or the better.

community?

mentoring. I am involved in the
ool girls in Madison County.
ng freshmen. In the immediate
promotes activism and advocacy
rams that work to solve the problems of

others to follow in your footsteps?

ers is to follow their own path, and
d your own passion and purpose in life

NEWS
BITES

**Martin Luther King Day
Feeding the Dream
schedule of events**

January 19, 2004

Classes Calcelled

- 9:00am Fellowship Breakfast at Berea Baptist Church
- 10:00am Video Presentation: *At the River I Stand*, Phelps-Stokes
- 11:00am Chapel Service at Union Church. Speaker: Michelle Tooley. Lunch follows.
- 12:15pm March to City Hall, begins at Union Church (program with Child Dev. Lab)
- 1:15pm Video Presentation: *The Night Tulsa Burned*, Frost 218
- 3:00pm Convocation: Nikky Finney
- 4:15pm Candlelight Reception, Danforth Chapel

2003 Homecoming Court announced
Congratulations to the following individuals for placing in the Homecoming Court!

- Mary Trumbo**
- Hussen Youssouf**
- Carl Settles**
- Ronnie Farmer**

BSU Executive Council for 2003-04

This year's officers for the Black Student Union are:

- DeJuana Thompson** President
- Brandon Daniel** Vice President
- Bessie Ward** Historian
- Jamal Williams** Recruiting Chair
- Amber Davis** Public Relations
- Dena Burress** Secretary
- Melanie Harvey** Business Manager
- Ronnie Farmer** Chaplain
- Danielle Saunders** Pageant Coordinator

Profiles

Continued from p. 7

Jason Saunders

Cincinnati, Ohio
Sophomore, Finance



Why did you come to Berea?

To continue my education without having a huge obligation to pay after graduation.

Do you feel you are a good leader and why?

Yes, because I'm smart, a hard worker, I have a solution to most of my problems, and I am a role model to younger African American males whether I am acknowledged for it or not.

What are your short-term goals?

Pass all my classes this semester with a C or better.

What are your long-term goals?

To graduate from Berea with at least a 3.0 and to receive a degree in finance that will help me get a career in corporate america.

How do you plan to accomplish your goals?

By staying on my Ps and Qs and adding more and more effort into my everyday tasks.

Where do you see yourself in ten years as a leader?

Operating my own car dealership and taking care of my family.

What is a good leader?

A good leader is someone who sets good examples of being ethical and has morals. A good leader sets goals that are reasonable to accomplish and makes an effort to accomplish them. A good leader is not a slacker, a quitter, or an underachiever. A good leader knows what he/she wants and gets it by any means possible.

How do you benefit your community?

By mentoring children from Madison Elementary School. This gives the younger African American kids a chance to see campus life and know there is a positive future for African American males.

What advice would you give to others?

Keep setting and achieving yours goals; the sky is the limit. Never give up on your dreams.

Leah Johnson

Birmingham, Alabama. Senior, Psychology



Why did you come to Berea?

In all honesty, it was never in my personal plans to attend Berea. I stepped out on faith and faith alone and moved six hours away from home and everything I knew and I have not looked back since. So yes, I moved to Berea to further my education, but along the way I have learned valuable life lessons and met life-long friends.

What are your short term goals?

My main goal for now is to graduate from Berea College. After that, I plan to attend grad school in Alabama or Georgia in clinical, social, or counseling psychology. My backup plan is to gain experience in the psychology field.

What are your long-term goals?

I want to earn my Ph.D. and open a center for pregnant teens or physical and substance-abused women. I also hope to get married and have children.

How do you plan to accomplish your goals?

Aside from my education, with perseverance, prayer, and faith I will reach my goals and exceed my expectations. As long as I stay steadfast and headstrong I should have no problem reaching my goals despite obstacles, situations, and circumstances that may attempt to deter me.

What is a good leader?

A good leader is an effective leader. In order to be an effective leader, one must first have a vision. In order to lead, you must know where you are going and an idea of how to get there. A leader must learn to think in terms of "we," not "I". A leader must always think in terms of what is most effective for the team. A good leader is open-minded. A leader knows how to lead as well as follow. A leader takes people where they want to go, but a *great* leader takes people where they don't essentially *want* to go but *ought* to be.

Do you feel you are a good leader?

Yes. I feel that if I have made even a small difference in the life of someone else through my leadership roles on campus, that I have accomplished the task I set out to do. Even if it was just my being able to put a smile on someone's face.

How do you contribute to your community?

For the first three years of my college experience, I was involved in the Black Student Union with my first year as the queen and my last two years serving on the Executive Council. Now that I no longer hold a position on the Executive Council, I try to make myself accessible to others in case they need help, advice, a laugh, or just someone to listen. I am also the Hall Coordinator at Anna Smith where I try to build open relationships with each of the residents.

What advice would you give to others?

Be willing to help and go that extra mile for someone else. Speak and think positive. Pray to stay centered. Make yourself available to those who may seek your help. If you cannot assist them, point them in the direction of someone who can. If we all help each other and help ourselves, no one will get left behind.

Where do you see yourself in ten years as one of tomorrow's leaders?

I will be the head of my center for pregnant teens or physical and substance abused women. I will be a good wife and mother. I think my role as a mother will be my most important role since at home is where we receive most of our cultivation to be great leaders and upstanding citizens.

Living the Leadership Life

Continued from p. 2

Often omitted, but just as important, is the preceding line, “Even those who have lived a sheltered life can be daring; because all serious daring starts from within.” Similarly, I hear myself repeating the tenet that you can’t lead others unless you can lead yourself, meaning, people must reckon with themselves (their own history, patterns, choices) before, alongside, and after their endeavor to mobilize and inspire others. Looking inward is where the daring begins. The *Journey to Excellence*, more than just the name of a program, has been my personal and continuing journey towards being a leader who is able to respond to the principle that my organization is a product of how I think and interact. The process of personal innovation for me is struggling, listening, debating, supporting, leading, being led by, watching, and learning from my students and colleagues toward shared aspirations with change being implicit. I have learned, first with myself, that most people don’t resist change; they resist **being** changed. And we often times overlook the value of small but deep change we are able to affect and waste our time looking for earthquakes. The leadership development process can be transformational if self-understanding is the prelude. But, that’s not all. Leadership is more than character. All the integrity, energy and good intentions in the world will not hide poor performance. Without clear and visible results imbedded deep within the system of a community, leadership can’t endure. Ask yourself every day, what is the evidence of my life lived well? What is the measure of my leadership success?

Leadership is also liturgy. This term has become absorbed over time into church language but its roots bring us to the leadership partner of intramural. The world liturgy was born from the Greek, *leitourgia*, meaning public service. Besides its intramural aspect, leadership lived well is also liturgical, or, the work of the people. Any leadership program worth its salt can’t be a panacea, a formula, or a blueprint. It can and should be a foundation for a way of life and is often times just plain hard work—work that belongs to all of us and is for the good of the other.

“Without clear and visible results imbedded deep within the system of a community, leadership can’t endure.”

Sometimes this calls us to find ways to facilitate someone else’s leadership journey instead of always competing to keep our individual objectives out in front. Doing this kind of work well means turning what we know into what we do—in our labor position, with our classmates, on the basketball court, as a son, sister, as a teacher and a learner. It means learning how to balance personal integrity with the common good—searching out and acting on what is necessary for the growth and vitality of a community. I am constantly amazed at the level of willingness and commitment I see in this campus community for liturgy. I have observed a gradual change in the nature of relationships between professional staff and students—less hierarchical bureaucracy and more collegial thinking, less leadership by title and more delegation according to knowledge and skill. I see a campus culture slowly progressing from one of distinct divides between teachers and learners to one of

shared teaching and learning roles. I see students who are more confident in their ability to make connections between learning and doing, create relationships that are transformational rather than transactional, make connections between their in-classroom and out-of-classroom learning, and see the broader meaning of leadership to include being an excellent community participant. Naïve you say? Idealistic? Perhaps. However, my picture of the future is one in which all of us have the opportunity to re-invent ourselves, to become the people of excellence we all are capable of becoming. The work of closing the gap between our actual and our potential is one that we all have a stake in and a journey that resonates with all of us. Are you dreaming, you say? I hope so. When was the last time you were inspired to your core by “I have a business proposal” instead of “I have a dream?”

So, the leadership life is both intramural and liturgy, a journey to excellence that will last, presumably, for a lifetime. I’ll leave you with this challenge: If you build yourself, you will build your community and your community will build the world.

Jessica A. Gerassimides is a Labor Program associate at Berea College.

POET'S CORNER

Who Could Resist...

Some people say that I love too hard
But who could resist...
Your cocoa brown skin with a hint of mocha,
Soft as a baby's bottom
But firm enough to hold my attention.
You engulf me with the love of your strong arms.
Aaaah! My shelter.
I need not fear.

Some people say I love too thick
But who could resist...
Your warm brown eyes.
These portals to your soul gleam with love every time you look at me.
Your lips...
Your thick, soft lips.
With just a mere peck of your sweet nectar
Can bring comfort and solitude to my sea of problems
Yet simultaneously arouse a fire that burns to the pit of my womanhood.

Some people say my love is too furious
But who could resist...
His mind,
An intelligent reflection of his masculinity.
His shoulders,
Broad and daring,
Making his stature the embodiment of
the great oak tree.

This man is my life.
He is my earth.
He is my love.
And I do love him.
I love him hard, thick, and furious.
I love him with the agapé love of Christ.
He is mine.
Besides...
Who could resist!!!

LEAH JOHNSON



THE WORD

Question: Do you think leaders are made or born in our society?



"I think leaders are both born *and* made in society... because of people like Dr. King who was born a leader and George W. Bush who was made a leader."

Nakisha Bennett
Sophomore
English Education



"Society usually determines the personality of people, therefore, leaders are made."

Brandon Daniel
Sophomore
Child and Family Studies



"I believe leaders are both born and made. Some leaders were once followers who became leaders."

George Webb
Senior
Educational Studies



"I believe a person can either learn to be a leader or it can very well be bred in them. However, good leaders know when to follow and lead by example."

Dena Bunniss
Senior
Finance

MISSION STATEMENT

The Black Cultural Center first opened its doors in July 1983. The Center was established and based on the premise that true integration and equality cannot be achieved without a general awareness and understanding of black culture. The Black Cultural Center provides programs and services that foster cross-cultural exchanges and intentional social intercourse.

The mission of the Black Cultural Center is to:

- assist Berea College in maintaining an environment that acknowledges, respects, and enhances diversity and promotes multicultural educational opportunities;
- assist the College in its effort to recruit, retain, and graduate students of color;
- assist students of color in developing a greater understanding of his/her own culture and heritage
- provide support services, program, and activities that promote the intellectual career, social, moral, and personal development of students of color and assist them in achieving their highest educational potential; and
- assist Berea College in recruiting and retaining faculty of color.

ANCESTOR HIGHLIGHT

Malcolm X
1925-1965

Malcolm X (actual name Malcolm Little, Muslim name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) was born in Omaha, Nebraska. He was a black militant leader who articulated concepts of race pride and Black nationalism in the early 1960s. Malcolm X spoke around the country and soon became the most effective speaker and organizer for the Nation of Islam, founding many new mosques and greatly increasing the movement's membership. In 1961, he founded *Muhammad Speaks*, the official publication of the movement. He was eventually assigned to be minister of the important Mosque #7 in Harlem. Speaking with bitter



Malcolm X

eloquence against white exploitation of black people, Malcolm X derided the civil-rights movement and rejected both integration and racial equality, calling instead for black separatism, pride, and self-dependence (views he later changed). Because he initially advocated the use of violence (for self-protection) and appeared to many to be a fanatic, his leadership was rejected by most civil-rights leaders, who emphasized nonviolent resistance to racial injustice. He was shot to death at a rally in Harlem. Three Black Muslims were convicted of the crime.

Jamal Williams

Tampa, Florida, Sophomore, Political Science



Why did you come to Berea?

I came to Berea because of the aid.

What is a good leader?

Someone who is in the midst of any storm can stand firm and give hope to others. A great example would be Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was not afraid to stand up and

stand out for what he believed in, and he gave hope to a lot of people and ultimately helped to end segregation in the 1960s.

What are your short term goals?

My short term goal is to graduate from college.

What are your long-term goals?

As far as my long term goals, I hope to become a successful lawyer and to buy my mother a mansion.

Do you feel you are a good leader?

All of my life it seems that I have been placed in positions to lead and so far I have risen to the challenge, which is a trend I hope to continue.

How do you contribute to your community?

In any way I can. Sometimes, different things are needed at different times—sometimes people just need someone to talk to or they need advice or even someone to look up to, and I just hope if people are looking for that then they can look to me.

What advice would you give to others?

I would tell people to remember to lean on God and let him work in your life, and never sell yourself short. Shoot high and when you reap the finished product, you will truly have something to be proud of.

Where do you see yourself in ten years as a leader?

Hopefully, in ten years I will be the President of the United States and owning my own law firm.