



# ALPHA KAPPA MU NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

"The scholar....in the right state,  
is MAN THINKING."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson  
"The American Scholar"

## The Alpha Iota Chapter at Albany State Welcomes 19 New Scholars

The Alpha Iota Chapter at Albany State University (Albany, GA) virtually inducted 19 high-achieving scholars into our beloved Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society. The ceremony included congratulatory remarks from the AKMu National President, Dr. Veronica Yon and the Executive National Secretary, Dr. Mollie Brown. The ceremony also featured numerous Alpha Iota alumni members including Dr. John Williams, Prof. Brandon Henry (Co-advisor), Ms. Kaleena Gee, Ms. Emma Walker, Rev. Dr. James Keeton, Dr. Candace Porter, Ms. Melody Keeton, Dr. Kenya Lemon (Advisor), and Dr. Phaedra Thomas.



AKMu members are Ahloni Gray, President; Taron Henton, Vice President; Aleksis Wiggins, Secretary/Treasurer; Justice Weston, Public Relations Director; Christian Slacks, Community Service Director, Keni Anthony, Zibiah Arline, Elijah Brown, Kayla Cooper, Bailey Dennard, Lefaren Donaldson, Jadia Flood, Maleah Gilliard, Asia Hollinger, Destiny Jackson, Savion Knight, Danielle Prier, Shannon Ramsay-Jackson, and Jordyn Terrell.



Submitted by Dr. Kenya Lemon, co-advisor



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## Consider Renewing Your Membership Today!

While our inductees will always be considered AKMuans, the renewal signifies a stronger level of commitment, affords members an updated card (noting them as "active"), and assists the Society in funding its efforts.

The Cost:

\$10 yearly for undergraduates

\$15 yearly for graduate students and alumni

\$300 for life members (which can be paid in three annual installments of \$100)

To remit payment, currently enrolled students should contact their advisors, and alumni should pay online at <https://portal.icheckgateway.com/AlphaKappaMuHonor/>. Please include your induction year and institution.

time to renew

## Meet Our National Officers



**Dr. Veronica Adams Yon, President and  
Public Relations Director**

Associate Professor of English and Advisor, Florida A&M University



**Mrs. Joy Jefferson-Yager – Vice President**

Doctoral Candidate, Florida A&M University



**Dr. Mollie B. Brown - Executive Secretary-Treasurer**

Retired Regional Director and Advisor, Albany State University



**Dr. Titus Brown – Historian**

Professor of History, Florida A&M University



**Ms. Ayanna Campbell - Social Media Coordinator**

Alumna, Theatre, Bennett College

## In The Spotlight

### Jada Hoyle-Gardner Receives Doctorate

Submitted by Dr. Veronica Yon, advisor,  
Florida A&M University

Congratulations to Jada Hoyle-Gardner on receiving her Ph.D. in Environmental Science, fall 2021. She was inducted into the Kappa Iota (FAMU) Chapter of AKMu in the spring of 2020 and served faithfully as its 2020-2021 Public Relations Director.

At the 2021 national convention, she was awarded first place in the research contest category and was commended for her contributions to the FAMU chapter's showcase presentation.

Dr. Hoyle Gardner's future plans include a postdoctoral fellowship at Emory University.



### Alexis Vanzandt Named Top 10 STEM Queen

Submitted by Dr. Quincy Moore, advisor,  
Prairie View A&M University

Alpha Kappa Mu member Alexis Vanzandt (Senior Biology major) has been announced as one of the Top 10 2021 OLAY x EBONY HBCU STEM Queens. She traveled to Los Angeles from October 21-24 and attended the EBONY Power 100 Gala on October 23rd.

“Since 1975, EBONY has celebrated Black collegiate women – poised to make a positive change in the African American community – through the Campus Queens competition at HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities). EBONY is proud to continue its longest-running editorial franchise. And this year, we're excited to be partnering with OLAY... [The] competition highlights brilliant students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs” (Ebony.com).



Congratulations, Ms. Vanzandt!

*From: Dr. Ann W. Morris,  
National Executive Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus  
Mollie,*

*Thanks to you and AKMu for acknowledging my 90th birthday in your Newsletter. You can't know how much it warmed my heart and brought back some pleasant memories.*

*Please accept my initial contribution to the Scholarship Fund.*

*Ann*

*Thank you ...*



# Meet Our Regional Directors



**Mrs. Sandra Williamson - Region 1 (North Carolina)**  
Retired Assistant Director of the University Honors Program,  
North Carolina A&T State University



**Dr. Gerard McShepard - Region 2A (Delaware, Maryland) and Region 2B (Virginia)**  
Professor of Mathematics, Virginia Union University



**Dr. Shannon Clowney Johnson - Region 3A (Arkansas)**  
Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Director,  
McKinley Newton Honors Academy, Philander Smith College



**Dr. Monica Valentine - Region 3B (Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee)**  
Assistant Professor & MPA Program Coordinator, Kentucky State University



**Dr. Cynthia Smith - Region 4A (Alabama)**  
Retired Associate Professor, Alabama A&M University



**Ms. Tiffanie Morris - Region 4B (Florida)**  
Alumna, Criminal Justice, Florida A&M University

## Dr. Gerard McShepard Receives Tenure and Promotion to Full Professor at Virginia Union University

On May 7, 2021, the Board of Trustees of Virginia Union University voted to bestow tenure to Dr. Gerard McShepard, and during a second vote he was promoted to full Professor.

Dr. McShepard earned his Ph.D. in Biology with a cognate in Neuroscience from Tennessee State University. He also has a M.S. in Molecular Biology from Tennessee State University. He received his B.S. in Biology from Fisk University where he became a member of the Alpha Chi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



Dr. McShepard has served as a chapter president of Beta Kappa Chi National Scientific Honor Society and has taught the following courses: Microbiology, Natural Science, Writing in the Sciences Introduction to Biological Science, General Biology, Health, Introduction to Environmental Science, Ecology, Honors Biology, Cell Biology, Physiology, Pre-college Biology and for Spring 2021 he added a new course Health Disparities in the African American Community as well as Advanced Microbiology (Graduate Course) just to name a few. His research interests in the past have been the molecular mechanisms that regulate sodium-dependent, high affinity Choline Transport in order to demonstrate the involvement of GT-Pases (i.e. Dynamin) in the retrieval of the ChCoT from the plasma membrane. He also works with a new research concept of Geological Agriculture.

From 2012 to 2014, Dr. McShepard had an administrative role with the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, Planning and Special Programs and he had special duties with the university president. This office assists with campus decision-making and planning. From January 2, 2014 to June 2018 he was appointed Chairman of the Department of Natural and Physical Sciences at Virginia Union University. On May 10, 2014 during Virginia Union University's commencement exercises, he received the Scott & Stringfellow Outstanding Professor Award

for his outstanding teaching service to Virginia Union University. On May 14, 2014 during the University President's Annual Luncheon it was announced that Dr. McShepard was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. July 2019 Dr. McShepard was appointed the Interim Dean of the newly formed School of Arts & Sciences at Virginia Union University which comprises 85% of the student population that had 11 departments and over 70 full and part time faculty. In May of 2020 he was appointed Assistant Dean of Graduate Programs in the School of Arts and Sciences. He is also the President of the Faculty Senate of Virginia Union University (2019 - 2020 and re-elected for 2020). He also published his book "Invertebrate Zoology: An exploration of a vast and diverse group of Animals" with McGraw-Hill publishers and plans to publish another book in 2021 on African Americans in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Dr. McShepard served as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Beta Gamma Lambda Education Foundation of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. for almost 9 years where they still currently distribute a total of 12 scholarships at \$1,000 each.

Dr. McShepard is a member of the Prince Hall Masons. He is a Past Worshipful Master of his lodge (Blue House), is a Past Excellent High Priest of the Holy Royal Arch Masons (Red House), is a Past Thrice Illustrious Master of Royal & Select Masters (Purple House), is a Past Eminent Commander of the Knights Templar, is a Past Illustrious Potentate of Mocha Temple Shriners, is the Worthy Associate Patron of the Eastern Stars, and is a 32nd Degree Mason (Scottish Rite) and he currently holds the position of Illustrious Commander-In-Chief. All these positions are the equivalent to President. He is also a member of the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World and is a member of the Astoria Beneficial Club, Inc.

He serves as the Advisor for Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society at Virginia Union University and is the Regional Director of Region IIA and Region IIB.

## Meet Our Regional Directors



**Mr. Brandon Henry - Region 5A (Georgia)**  
Assistant Professor of Biology, Albany State University



**Dr. Caroletta Shuler Ivey - Region 5B (South Carolina)**  
Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, Claffin University



**Mrs. Marlene Robinson - Region 6A (Louisiana)**  
Retiree, Xavier University



**Dr. Loria Brown Gordon - Region 6B (Mississippi)**  
Associate Dean, Du Bois-Harvey Honors College/PI/Project Director, McNair Scholars Program, Jackson State University



**Dr. Sonya Armstrong - Region 7 (Oklahoma, Texas)**  
Professor Department of Mathematics and Computer Science,  
West Virginia State University



**Dr. Francis Dorsey - Region 8 (Ohio, Pennsylvania,  
West Virginia, Michigan, Iowa)**  
Retired Associate Professor, Kent State University

## Information “About Certified Honor Societies” from the Association of College Honor Societies

<https://www.achshonor.org/about-certified-honor-societies>

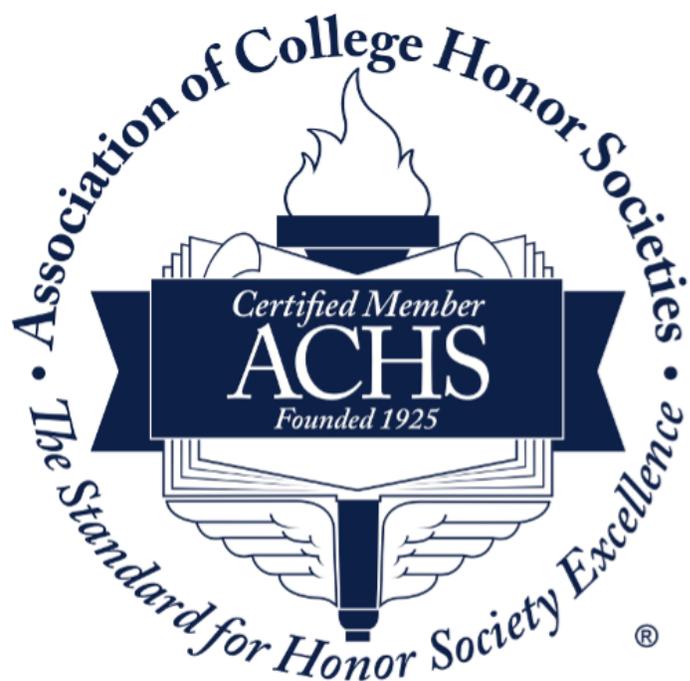
Founded in 1925, ACHS is the **only certifying agency** for college and university honor societies. ACHS sets **the standards** for organizational excellence and scholastic eligibility, as well as assuring member participation in governance so that the interests of individual members are advanced.

Why Joining an ACHS-Certified Honor Society Matters:

There are many honor societies that may invite you to join. Unfortunately, you may receive an invitation to join an organization that is an honor society in name only, meaning it is a for-profit company that is not an academic honor society at all. Those companies do not meet the strict standards of ACHS-certified honor societies.

Membership in ACHS guarantees that a society meets strict criteria designed to **ensure student growth and tangible, lifelong benefits** to belonging. Certification for membership is provided by the ACHS credentialing body and awarded only to organizations that complete a qualifying petition for membership.

ACHS **strongly encourages all students and their parents to carefully examine invitations to join a society.** Is it from an ACHS-certified honor society? If not, is it from a legitimate honor society, one that is a non-profit organization that bases acceptance on academic standards? ACHS recommends that you do not commit to a financial obligation until you **verify that membership in any non-certified organization is, in fact, an honor that confers real meaning.**



Federal Benefits of Membership in an ACHS Member Honor Society:

One tangible benefit of belonging to an ACHS-certified honor society is the potential for increased pay for federal jobs. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management states that “Membership in a national honor society meets one of the requirements for entrance at the GS-7 level in numerous professional and technical occupations in the Federal service.

*From: Elijah Brown, Albany State University, Alpha Iota Chapter, Class of 2021*

*Thank you for being a magnificent part of my college journey. Thank you for selecting me as the Winner of the Essay Contest.*

*Sincerely,*

*Elijah Brown*



# Come Through In 2022!!!

Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society needs you to come through by sending us your original poems, scholarly activities, chapter news, reflections, successes, etc. to [AKM@famuedu](mailto:AKM@famuedu).

Note: Please do not “lay out” your submissions (i.e., text boxes, special alignments, multiple font points, etc); this process will be handled by the newsletter staff.

Thank you!

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**ALPHA KAPPA MU HONOR SOCIETY, INCORPORATED**  
**MEMBER (ACHS) ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE HONOR SOCIETIES**

**324 Enterprise, Albany, GA 31705-5476**

**Website: [www.alphakappamu.org](http://www.alphakappamu.org)**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AKMNational](http://www.facebook.com/AKMNational)**

**Executive Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Mollie B. Brown**

**Email: [mbs03bs@mchsi.com](mailto:mbs03bs@mchsi.com)**

**President: Dr. Veronica Yon**

**Email: [veronica.yon@famuedu](mailto:veronica.yon@famuedu)**

