THE
ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY
FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED

FOUNDERS DAY SCHOLARSHIP

Gala XVII

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024 | 6 PM

K.E. WHITE GRADUATE CENTER | ELIZABETH CITY, NC
Table of Contents

Program ........................................... 2
A Message from the Chairman ................. 3
Dignitary Greetings ............................... 4
Mistress of Ceremonies ......................... 7
Chancellor’s Legacy Award Honorees .......... 8
Our Donors ........................................ 14
Past Honorees .................................... 16
ECSU Chief Executive Officers .............. 17
Board Listing ..................................... 18
Acknowledgments ............................... 27
Dear Viking Family,

As we come together to celebrate the Elizabeth City State University Founder’s Day Scholarship Gala XVII, I am filled with gratitude for each and every one of you who has contributed to the success of this momentous event.

Our Founder’s Day Gala serves as a poignant reminder of the rich history and enduring legacy of our beloved institution. It is a time to reflect on the vision and dedication of our founders, whose unwavering commitment laid the foundation upon which we now stand. Their legacy continues to inspire us as we strive to build upon their vision and propel ECSU towards an even brighter future.

I am deeply proud of the accomplishments we have achieved together. The remarkable generosity of our Viking family, as evidenced by the $2.8 million raised in private gifts during the fiscal year 2022, demonstrates the profound impact we can make when we join forces in support of our university.

But let us not become complacent in our achievements. There is still much work to be done. Let us continue to forge meaningful connections, cultivate new partnerships, and share the remarkable story of Elizabeth City State University with the world.

As we gather tonight to celebrate our past, let us also look forward with hope and determination towards the future. Together, we can ensure that ECSU remains a beacon of excellence, empowering future generations of Vikings to achieve their dreams and make a lasting impact on the world.

Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to Elizabeth City State University. Together, we are forging a legacy that will endure for generations to come.

With deepest gratitude,

Kimrey W. Rhinehardt
Chairman
The Elizabeth City State University Foundation Board
Dear ECSU Alumni, Faculty, Staff, Students, and Esteemed Guests,

I am thrilled to welcome each of you to Elizabeth City State University’s Scholarship Gala XVII with a heart full of “Viking Pride.” It is a joy to gather together in person to celebrate this 133-year-old institution and the incredible individuals who support it.

I am especially delighted to extend my congratulations to our esteemed honorees, a remarkable group that includes ECSU trailblazers and supporters: Senator Warren Daniel; Ms. Phyllis C. Elmore (Class of 1982); Dr. Lenora Jarvis-Mackey (Class of 1966); Senator Gladys Robinson; Ms. Gwendolyn Sanders (Class of 1977); and Mr. James E. Swimpson (Class of 1962). Your professional achievements and unwavering commitment to ECSU are truly commendable.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our sponsors and supporters for your generosity and contributions, which empower ECSU to support students from North Carolina and beyond in their journey to “Come to Discover” and “Leave to Conquer.” Your dedication and support play a vital role in the success of our university.

To Mrs. Kimrey Rhinehardt, Chairman of the ECSU Foundation Board of Directors, and the members of the Foundation Board: Your steadfast service to Elizabeth City State University is greatly appreciated. Dr. Sadie Johnson Carter (Class of 1972) and Mrs. Diana Gardner, Gala co-chairs, and the entire Gala Committee: Your hard work and dedication over the past months have been instrumental in ensuring the success of this signature event for ECSU.

I invite you to enjoy this unforgettable evening as we honor our past, celebrate our present, and pave the way for a bright future.

Sincerely,

Karrie G. Dixon, Ed.D.
Chancellor

GREETINGS

THE CHANCELLOR

Greetings Friends,

On behalf of the Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) Board of Trustees, I welcome you to our annual Scholarship Gala which is our premier fundraising event. It provides an opportunity to network with the who’s who of the business community, alumni and friends. Your attendance this evening and strong support reflects our shared commitment to the success of ECSU.

Every year, several awards are presented at our gala for their achievement, leadership and community service. The Chancellor’s Award is presented to an alumnus/a for his or her contributions to ECSU, professional achievements and philanthropy. We will award alumnus for their exceptional achievement in any field. The recipient must have attained and maintained extremely high standards in their chosen fields and in their service to society.

A special welcome to our distinguished honorees who have made a tremendous impact on this university, the region, and beyond. We celebrate your success this evening and congratulate each of you for your dedication and service!

The ECSU Board of Trustees also recognizes the outstanding work of the ECSU Foundation Board, Mrs. Kimrey Rhinehardt, Chairman, and the Scholarship Planning Committee, co-chaired by Dr. Sadie Carter and Mrs. Diana Gardner. We appreciate your efforts towards ensuring a fantastic and memorable event.

Finally, we would like to recognize Chancellor Karrie Dixon and her leadership team for raising ECSU to a higher standard of excellence over the past five years. We are soaring to new heights under her leadership as we move forward on our campus highlighting new buildings and academic programs.

So, let’s enjoy the friends, food, fellowship and fun while realizing that we are all difference makers!

With Viking Pride,

Dr. Stephanie D.B. Johnson
Chair, ECSU Board of Trustees
1974 Graduate of ECSU

CHAIR, THE ECSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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With Viking Pride,

Dr. Stephanie D.B. Johnson
Chair, ECSU Board of Trustees
1974 Graduate of ECSU
Greetings!

It is indeed my pleasure and honor to offer greetings to those attending the ECSU Foundation Scholarship Gala XVII being held on Saturday, March 9, 2024. On behalf of the City Councilors, our citizens and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to you as you participate in this wonderful occasion.

As a proud 1996 graduate of the esteemed ECSU, I am so honored to welcome attendees back to this prestigious in-person event. The City Councilors and I take great pride in this fine institution, and know that the continued success of ECSU will play a significant role in the growth and vitality of our city. We salute Elizabeth City State University, and extend our very best wishes for your gala and future!

Again, it is my great pleasure to welcome each of you to this special event. I, Kirk Rivers, Class of ’96, and First Lady, Nina Griffin Rivers, Class of ’92, are proud to say, “Viking Pride, Viking Pride, Viking Pride!”

E. Kirk Rivers
Mayor, Elizabeth City
1996 Graduate of ECSU

Kyra Purvis joined the ABC 33/40 News team in September 2022 as a Multimedia Journalist. In 2023 she was promoted to a General Assignment Reporter position for the station’s morning show, “Good Morning Alabama.” There she tells informative stories to thousands of viewers watching while they get ready for their day. Before coming to Birmingham, Kyra worked at WFXL Fox 31 station in Albany, Ga as a Multimedia Journalist. There she had the opportunity to tell impactful stories to a community healing from the harsh effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kyra is a graduate of Elizabeth City State University. She received her bachelor’s degree in Mass Communications. During her undergraduate career Kyra became a contributor to the chapter “Media’s Historical and Contemporary Influence on How Black Social Movements are viewed in the United States.” in the book Critical Race Media Literacy. Kyra is passionate about creating a path for black and brown journalists to excel in the broadcast journalism field. Her goal is to one day inspire young girls with her story.

Kyra is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. When Kyra is not working she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, dancing, and trying out new restaurants.
Warren Daniel represents North Carolina Senate District 46 – Burke, McDowell and Buncombe counties. Warren was raised in Burke County and graduated from Freedom High School in Morganton. He received a Congressional appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he graduated in 1991 with a degree in National Security and Public Affairs. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Field Artillery where he served for six years. In 1997, he left active duty to attend law school at UNC Chapel Hill, where he graduated in 2000.

After his graduation from law school, Warren returned to Morganton to practice law with his father in the Daniel Law Firm, where he has worked for the past 23 years representing hundreds of clients in a wide area of legal matters ranging from real estate and business transactions, estate planning and probate, disability, adoptions, and more. He has argued cases at every level of the North Carolina court system, including the North Carolina Court of Appeals and Supreme Court. In 2007, Warren was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Warren and his wife Lydia were married 30 years ago at the West Point Cadet Chapel and are the parents of three daughters, ages 23 to 27. Their middle daughter, Brenna, is a 2020 graduate of the ECSU Aviation Science program and has served as a flight instructor at the University for the past 3 years. It was during Brenna’s time here that Warren and Lydia became strong Viking supporters, and since then they have always strived to help ECSU continue their upward trajectory of success.

At home, Warren and Lydia are active members of Burkemont Baptist Church where they serve in the youth Sunday school ministry. Warren was elected to the North Carolina Senate in 2010 and is currently serving in his seventh term. He serves as the Vice-Chair of the Senate Rules and Operations Committee, and is co-chair of the Senate Judiciary committee, the Justice and Public Safety Appropriations Committee, and the Redistricting and Elections Committees.
Lenora Jarvis-Mackey has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of River City Community Development Corporation since it was founded over 30 years ago. Under Lenora’s leadership, RCCDC has adopted a multifaceted vision empowering the residents of Northeastern North Carolina, as well as the nation, by providing them with the necessary tools, resources, and support systems to improve their quality of life.

Mrs. Mackey has grown RCCDC’s programs and services to include Housing Counseling, Community Development, and Homelessness Services, Youth Development, Business and Economic Development, and Social and Cultural Awareness. She has led RCCDC to invest over $25 million in the community through each of these program areas. She has been the principal developer of a 17-unit single-family affordable housing subdivision and a 48-unit senior housing community successfully leveraged by both public and private funding in excess of $5 million. As a leader and entrepreneur in Northeastern North Carolina, Lenora led the community revitalization project “Renaissance Square”, formerly the heart of the black business district in Elizabeth City, NC. Part of this effort includes a 7,000 square foot Business Incubator, which currently houses six small businesses. She has and continues to serve on numerous boards and committees at a local, state, and national level, such as the National Council of Negro Women, Reinvestment Partners, North Carolina Rural Center, Elizabeth City Rotary Club Board of Directors, the Elizabeth City University Foundation Board of Directors, the NC Land of Water Board of Directors, YouthBuild USA Board of Directors, graduate of Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) and lifetime member of the ECSU Alumni Association.

Lenora was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Public Service degree by Elizabeth City State University in December 2020, in recognition of her many years of service and contribution to her community. Lenora’s unwavering dedication to Elizabeth City and surrounding communities has also afforded her the honor of receiving numerous awards and recognition, including the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a citizen of North Carolina by a sitting governor.

Other awards and recognition include: the Women of Excellence Award, sponsored by Shackle & the Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce; the Woman of the Year Award, sponsored by the National Association of University Women; the Witherspoon-Harris Community Service Award, presented by the City of Elizabeth City; the Outstanding Alumnus Award, presented by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO); and the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Beta Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

These accolades represent the level of commitment, dedication, and love for the work that she does to support the communities that she serves, as she advocates for underserved populations in Northeastern North Carolina.

Lenora and her husband, Dr. Claudie Mackey, have been married for 55 years. Together they are the proud parents of two sons, Calvin and Jabari, and delighted grandparents of five: Ariana, CJ, Isaac, Ashani, and Kristopher.
GWENDOLYN SANDERS ’77

Gwendolyn Sanders is a 1977 graduate of Elizabeth City State University. She successfully completed her bachelor’s degree in English, with a concentration in Speech Pathology. In addition to her academic pursuits, Gwen was a member of the Marching Band and was initiated into the Delta Chi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

Upon graduation, she returned to her home in Rocky Mount, North Carolina. Her career path, however, led her to Washington, D.C. There she worked for her beloved Sorority at National Headquarters. Her professional pursuit and expertise in conference and event planning led her to opportunities at the Washington DC Board of Realtors and later with IQ Solutions, located in Rockville, Maryland.

After spending over 20 years in the DMV, Ms. Sanders decided to return to North Carolina and to her beloved alma mater, where she was offered the role of Alumni Director by then Chancellor, Dr. Mickey Burnim. After spending a few years in that role, Gwen was asked to join the Office of the Chancellor as the Senior Executive Assistant to Dr. Willie Gilchrist.

Ms. Sanders was instrumental in the leadership change over the next few years and continued to support Interim Chancellor, the Honorable Charles Benton. In 2013, Dr. Stacey Franklin Jones was at the helm of ECSU and Ms. Sanders served in the role of Secretary to the University. Dr. Jones was followed in leadership by Chancellor Thomas Conway, whose vision Ms. Sanders continued to support.

Dr. Karrie G. Dixon was named Chancellor in 2018 and Ms. Sanders remained in the Office of the Chancellor, serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff. Ms. Sanders served on several university committees during her tenure and supported the installation activities of four Chancellors.

Gwen continued in this capacity until her retirement in 2023. While she remains a committed Viking, her professional endeavors led her to her current role as Director, Office of the Bishop/Site Pastor Relations for Bishop Kim W. Brown.

In addition to her commitment to ECSU, Ms. Sanders serves as the president of the Elizabeth City (NC) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and Parliamentarian of the Elizabeth City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She is also a member of the Board, Elizabeth City, Committee of 100.

In addition to her community service, Ms. Sanders enjoys serving at her church, St. Stephen Missionary Baptist, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Ricky Banks.

While she has much professional success, Gwen’s heart is rooted in God and family. She is the proud mother of her legacy, Chariss Sanders Riddick, mother in love to Patrick, and Gigi to her only grandson, Isaac Emmanuel.

Her goal in life is to serve with a smile, to love unconditionally, and to always exhibit Viking Pride.

JAMES E. SWIMPSON ’62

A proud native of Williamston, NC, Mr. James Earl Swimpson attended Martin County Public Schools and graduated from EJ Hayes High School in 1957 at 16 years old. From a young age, he has been a scholar and a leader having earned a scholarship from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T SU) based on his aptitude test score.

Although he was unable to attend NC A&T SU, he was committed to furthering his education and was accepted into Elizabeth City State Teachers College (ECSTC) in the winter of 1957. While there he was active in various organizations including the yearbook staff and of course, his beloved Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

His activism also led him beyond the campus as he helped organize and participated in the Giant Store sit-in in February 1960. Mr. Swimpson, along with four other students from ECSTC, changed history by defiantly sitting at a whites only lunch counter. On October 13, 2022, Mr. Swimpson was recognized with a historic marker as the only surviving member of the original five ECSTC student activists.

Elizabeth City State Teachers College not only sparked his activism but also awarded him a B.S. in Education degree in 1962 and blessed him with his college sweetheart, Ms. Cassie Bazemore Swimpson. The blessings continued with the birth of their two children, Mr. Trevor Swimpson and Dr. Inger Swimpson.

After graduation, Mr. Swimpson worked as a Social Investigator in New York City before returning to North Carolina. In 1971, he began a 30-year career at his beloved alma mater, Elizabeth City State University (previously College). Although he worked in several positions throughout the University, he truly loved his work as Director of Financial Aid. He believed in all of the students at ECSU and his goal was to ensure that a student’s ability to meet their financial obligations would not become a barrier to graduating.

Now Mr. Swimpson enjoys spending time with his family, and still the scholar, completing Sudoku puzzles. He especially enjoys his grandchildren: Kyra Banks, a third generation Viking, JaIyra Banks, an entrepreneur, Coleman Moore, an 11th grade student and basketball player, and Blake Moore, a 1st grade student and Mr. Swimpson’s 8:00 am wake up call. He also adores his three great grandchildren: Jai, Nash, and Kashi.

CHANCELLOR’S LEGACY AWARD HONOREE

GWENDOLYN SANDERS ’77

CHANCELLOR’S LEGACY AWARD HONOREE

JAMES E. SWIMPSON ’62
THE ECSU FOUNDATION, INC. extends heartfelt thanks to all donors who supported Founders Day Gala XVII. Every gift of every amount is appreciated and helps to advance our mission to provide financial assistance to Viking students. Thank you for partnering with us to forge a bright future for Elizabeth City State University.

SCHOLARSHIP GALA SPONSORS

John H. Bias Society Sponsor – $25,000
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Harold Trigg Society Sponsor Tier I: $15,000
Second Episcopal District AME Church

Harold Trigg Society Sponsor Tier II: $10,000
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Walter N. Ridley Society Sponsor: $2,500
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Chancellor’s Society Sponsor: $1,000
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Word Tabernacle Church, Inc.

Dean’s Gold Circle Society – $500
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Zeta Kappa Omega Chapter
Beta Zeta Alumni Association
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Mr. William Lewis
Mrs. Janetta M. Shannon and Mr. Glenz Shannon
Rev. Dr. Richard L. J. and Mrs. Sheila W. Banks
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Mrs. Cynthia W. Morris
Mrs. Kimrey Rhinehardt
LTC Tyrone W. Eason and Mrs. Joychlyn J. Powe Eason
Mr. Melvin Norman
2023 ECSU FOUNDERS DAY GALA XV
Dr. Stephanie Dance-Barnes, ’97
Commander Warren Judge, ’97
Congressman G. K. Butterfield
Elston Howell, ’88
Mike Chandler
Norris Earl Francis, ’64
Carroll Hurdle, ’66

2012 ECSU FOUNDERS DAY GALA X
Norman M. Cherry, Sr., ’64
Todd W. Tillery, ’89
Dennis Youngblood, ’84
Bishop Kim W. Brown
Roger McLean
Mark R. Brown, Jr., ’95
Dr. Linda L. White
Rashad M. Jones, ’96
Colonel Walter S. Richardson, ’90

2011 ECSU FOUNDERS DAY GALA IV
Reverend Vinson G. Horton
Colonel Darrell W. Harrell, Sr., ’38
Edna Gray Randolph, ’45
Billy B. Johnson
Dorothy and Carol Flowers
Dr. Roger Hardaway, ’72
Leonard Cameron, ’79
Matthew Lewis, Jr., ’64

2010 ECSU FOUNDERS DAY GALA III
Gala Chair
Dr. Helen Marshall Caldwell
The Honorable Melvin Daniels, Jr.
Colonel Michelle Hales, ’88
Wenda Hurt McCleod
John Pagel, ’65
Dr. Claude M. Odom
Frank H. Skidmore, Jr.
John Walker, Jr., ’80
Leroy Williams, ’69

2009 ECSU FOUNDERS DAY GALA II
Dr. Charles Cherry, ’63
Dr. Claude McKey, ’83
The Honorable A. Ernest Work Mobley, ’63
Dr. DeWynna K. Stallings
Captain Christopher E. Austin, ’99
Colonel Randy Brunson Bell (ret.), ’72
Captain Kenneth E. Wright Jr. (ret.), ’64
Donna Heyler, Sr., ’74
Dr. Johnny L. Houston
Mary H. Riley, ’50
Wenda Reed Ridley, ’65

2007 INAUGURAL GALA
(No Recognitions)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Hugh Cape
Founder and Member of the N.C. General Assembly

Chancellor Emeritus, 1995–

Jimmy Raymond Jenkins, Ph.D.
Chancellor, 1983–1995

Peter Weddick Moore, A.M., LL.D.
Principal, 1991–1928
President Emeritus, 1928–1934

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President, 1928–1939

Mickey Lynn Burnum, Ph.D.
Chancellor, 1995–2006

Harold Leonard Trigg, Ed.D.
President, 1939–1945

Edna Gray Randolph, ’45

Stacey Franklin Jones, Ph.D.
Chancellor, 2016–2018

Sidney David Williams, A.M., D.PED.
President, 1946–1958
President Emeritus 1969–1974

Thomas E. H. Conway, Jr., Ph.D.
Chancellor, 2007–2015

Walter Nathaniel Ridley, Ed.D.
President, 1958–1968
President Emeritus, 1988–1996

Jennie James, ’88

Charles L. Beeton, J.D.
Interim Chancellor, 2013–2014

Marion Dennis Thorpe, Ph.D.
President, 1968–1972
Chancellor, 1972–1983

Willie James Gilchrist, Ed.D.
Chancellor, 2007–2013

Karrie G. Dixon, Ed.D.
Chancellor, 2018–
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Mr. Raymond Weaver, ’98
Ms. Lisa Westbrooks’99

Congratulation on receiving this prestigious legacy award! This recognition is a testament to your outstanding contributions and the significant impact you have made in the Albemarle Region. For 34 years your steadfast dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to serve others has been a consistent catalyst for change that has shifted the trajectory of those inspired by your compassion. Your legacy will inspire future generations and serve as a shining example of excellence. We celebrate your remarkable achievements and the lasting impact you have made.

Outward & Upward!

River City Community Development Corporation Staff
Congratulations

Dr. Lenora Jarvis Mackey

For your selection of the Chancellor’s Legacy Award

With Love,
Dr. Claudie J. Mackey
Calvin & Stephanie Mackey
Jabari and Tanya Mackey
Christopher Mackey
Ashani Mackey
Arianna Mackey
CJ Mackey
Issac and Melissa Mackey
Darryl and Dana Mackey & Family
Azelea Mackey
Edith Mackey
Bill & Natalie Burell & Family
Stephen and Junae Padilla & Family

Class Of 1966

CONGRATULATIONS TO MY DEAR FRIEND

Dr. Lenora Jarvis Mackey

FOR YOUR SELECTION OF THE CHANCELLOR’S LEGACY AWARD

BARBARA JEAN LEE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
Congratulations

Dr. Lenora Jarvis Mackey
TMEC Partner and a recipient of the ECSU Chancellor’s Legacy Award

From Bishop K.W. Brown, Elder Valerie K. Brown and The Mount Global Fellowship of Churches

The North Carolina Coastal Federation works to protect and restore the North Carolina coast for future generations

We are a proud partner of the River City YouthBuild Program on youth environmental education

Scan the QR Code to Learn More or visit Nccoast.org/AccessibleEdu
~*~ CONGRATULATIONS ~*~

Gwendolyn Sanders
Elizabeth City State University
Chancellor’s Legacy Award

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Our legacy continues.
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On behalf of Richard, Jennifer, and Preston Lucas, congratulations Dr. Lenora Jarvis-Mackey on your well-deserved recognition at the ECSU 2024 Founders Day Celebration.

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