Lincoln Kicks off Sesquicentennial Celebration at Honors Convocation

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As academic ceremonies go, Lincoln University’s Sesquicentennial Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation on April 10, 2003 at Manuel Rivero Hall had the kind of pomp and circumstance few students, faculty or staff will ever forget.

There were flashing camera bulbs, performances by two concert choirs, balloons, bright lights and television cameras, that provided an historic backdrop to the event. It was also a day in which the University’s rich history and distinguished graduates were showcased in a 14-minute video that featured interviews with President Ivory V. Nelson, Ph.D., faculty, students and alumni, as well as various classroom and campus scenes. Lincoln and the U.S. Postal Service also set up a postal station that allowed attendees to have their programs and other event-related materials “stamped” with a commemorative Sesquicentennial seal.

Most of all, it was a day the University saluted its highest achieving students. Present to congratulate and inspire Honor students, was the event’s keynote speaker, Tony Brown, host of the PBS series, Tony Brown’s Journal. The theme of Brown’s speech was, “The Significance of Academic Achievement in the Global Society.” However, before Brown and the Board of Trustees and Sesquicentennial Committee chairs were introduced, President Nelson, took a few moments to put the historical occasion into perspective.

“On April 29, 1854, a fire was kindled on the altar of learning that has never been extinguished,” President Nelson said. “And now, we daily warm ourselves by that fire which grows ever brighter as we shape and mold the lives of young people who choose to enroll and take the journey so well defined. It is indeed an honor and a privilege to raise the curtain and start the celebration and the count down to our 150th anniversary, a celebration paying tribute by honoring our brightest and best—the Honor students of Lincoln University (see page 2 for the President’s full speech).”

After President Nelson’s opening remarks, freshman Honor student Marcus A. Cobham ’06 introduced Brown, a native of Charleston, West Virginia who had early memories of the University from a high school literature teacher who was a Lincoln alumnus. Brown encouraged students to look into themselves and to be who they really are.

“As you move forward, learn to look inward,” said Brown. “The good that you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. It’s what you have inside. The moment you accept yourself is the moment you become happy.”

PBS Host and educator Tony Brown was the keynote speaker for the 150th anniversary kickoff and Honors Convocation on April 10.

Lincoln Trustee and Former Director of Alumni Relations Tracey J. Hunter Hayes ’87, helps PBS commentator Tony Brown with his robe before the ceremony.
President’s Sesquicentennial Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation Address

Here are the opening and closing remarks delivered by Lincoln University President Ivory V. Nelson, Ph.D. at the Sesquicentennial Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation on April 10, 2003 at Manuel Rivero Hall.

The Occasion

Now, as you will note on your programs, I have been given the monumental task of expounding upon this grand occasion, which I will attempt to do, while according it the prominence and importance it holds in the history of this great institution, the oldest Historically Black University in the nation.

It is a special honor and pleasure to be a participant in the opening of this Sesquicentennial observance. I can’t help wondering what (founder) John Miller Dickey would feel if he were here with us this morning. Would he recognize the splendor of this gathering—and the expanse of this campus—as extensions of ideas he conceived 149 years ago, when Ashmun Institute was granted its charter to deliver courses of instruction in science, literature, the liberal arts, classics and theology?

An Eternal Flame

On April 29, 1854, a fire was kindled on the altar of learning that has never been extinguished. And now, we daily warm ourselves by that fire which grows ever brighter as we shape and mold the lives of young people who choose to enroll and take the journey so well defined. It is indeed an honor and a privilege to raise the curtain and start the celebration and the countdown to our 150th Anniversary, a celebration paying tribute by honoring our brightest and best — the Honor students of Lincoln University.

Different and very personal voyages of discovery have brought each of us to this opening celebration today. But we all have at least two things in common. Each of us has a share and knowledge of the rich and storied successes of the graduates of this university. And our knowledge of these successes brings to us the personal history of a small but decisive moment when education had a transforming effect on our lives. Everyone here has experienced the thrill of that “aha’ moment.

How priceless is Lincoln University. In itself what a rich legacy. The University has not been impaired by age and the University’s value has increased with its use. More than 14,000 young men and women have graduated and enjoyed the rewards of a Lincoln education. Ours is an ancient enterprise committed to being an ever more inclusive expression of what we set out to be — a place of opportunity for all those with determination and ability. The idea of Lincoln University has been tested and refined over the course of 149 years. And today, I tell you with all certainty that Lincoln’s days of greatest triumph and glory lie not in the past, but in the future. Certainty derived for my belief and confidence in the potential of the many outstanding students who will grace this stage today; young men and women who have exhibited the determination and ability that was apparent to many of us at Lincoln University; young men and women whose determination and ability have earned them the privilege of special recognition on this special and grand occasion.

Renewed Commitment

Today, with a solid foundation, unprecedented support from our graduates, and great aspirations, we begin a yearlong celebration recognizing the contributions of those who have made this day possible. If our future looks bright, it is because of the dedication and hard work of so many who are with us today and so many who have come before - educators, alumni, and friends of this university.

As quoted in the Executive Summary of the Mid-Year Report to the Middle States Association, "As Lincoln University begins its yearlong sesquicentennial celebration, it looks back on its rich and distinguished history with pride while looking ahead with confidence. The University is entering its 150th year having reaffirmed in new mission, vision, goals and philosophy statements, its commitment to those principles on which it was founded, principles of academic excellence and leadership development for descendants of those historically denied the liberation of learning. It began as, and remains, a place where dedicated teachers and inspired learners meet in an atmosphere of high expectations, intellectual openness and active inquiry."

Let every friend of Lincoln University whether student, alumna, neighbor or government leader, mark this as a day of renewed commitment to this university. Let every member of the administration mark this as a day of renewed commitment to better serve our students. Let every member of the faculty mark this day as a renewed commitment to creating intellectual excitement in the classroom. Let every student mark this as a day of renewed commitment to the quest for excellence. Let every trustee mark this as a day of renewed commitment to our most noble mission. Let us all mark this day as a day of renewed commitment to the traditions we have inherited. And
Lincoln Kicks Off 150th Anniversary at Honors Convocation

Tony Brown, host of the Public Broadcasting System’s (PBS) series, Tony Brown’s Journal, addresses the audience at the Sesquicentennial Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation. The topic of Brown’s speech was “The Significance of Academic Achievement in the Global Society.” Brown also touched on the relevance of race in society, the important role Black women have played in family stability and how students should be preparing themselves for life after Lincoln.

Lincoln’s Sesquicentennial Committee Co-Chair Donn Scott ’70, presents fellow co-chair Patricia A. Nelson, Ed.D, with congratulatory flowers for Dr. Nelson’s successful leadership of the 26-member Sesquicentennial Committee in the planning of the kickoff and upcoming schedule of yearlong activities commemorating the University’s 150th anniversary.

Sesquicentennial Committee Co-Chair Donn Scott ’70 (third from left) congratulates keynote speaker Tony Brown at the close of his speech. Board of Trustee Chair Adrienne Rhone ’76 is second from left. Dr. Patricia A. Nelson (second from right) and freshman Honor student Marcus A. Cobham ’06 (first from right), look on.

Lincoln University Board of Trustee Chair Adrienne G. Rhone ’76 brings greetings from the Board.

President’s Sesquicentennial Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation Address

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let us begin today to create tomorrow through advancing the Lincoln legacy.

As the 12th president of Lincoln University, I assure all of those who care about this institution, and all of those who love this institution, that we will nurture the values for which we have always stood even as we seek new forms of contribution and extended levels of recognition in the century that lies ahead.

Happy Sesquicentennial Celebration Lincoln University. I cannot think of a more fitting way to begin this celebration than to recognize and honor our most accomplished students. The future looks bright as we approach our 150th year. And just as our founders looked to the 19th and 20th Centuries with anticipation, we too can look to the 21st Century with optimism and pride as we advance the legacy of Lincoln University.

New Chapter in Lincoln’s History

My last task of the afternoon is to give the closing remarks. But before I do that, I must acknowledge and thank all those who have made this day possible: our staff who continue to pull these grand occasions together and who provide essential services for our students during the year; our faculty who challenge the students in the classroom; the parents of these bright students who provided the foundation upon which we continue to build; and the members of the community who have supported the University throughout the years. Thank you for all you do.

Now, what a spectacular occasion: To honor so many brilliant young men and women and at the same time celebrate the legacy that has given rise to untold triumph and glory spanning 149 years. Lincoln University will continue to write history, producing leaders and learners who will shape this new millennium. Today we begin another chapter, one that will further support Lincoln’s place in history as a premiere institution of higher learning. One hundred and fifty years of producing leaders is a noble reason for celebration. Young men and women who exhibit the qualities of excellence and who continue to uphold the Lincoln legacy are the products of this grand institution.

And, the promise of the potential for even greater triumph and achievement in the years to come is definitely cause for celebration. We thank you for your presence today as we remember and celebrate our past, honor our present and look forward with great expectation to our future. What an illustrious day to mark the beginning of Lincoln University’s Sesquicentennial. We ask that you join us throughout this year and next, as we celebrate our 150th birthday through all of our University activities. Thank you.
PRESIDENTIAL AWARD WINNERS
Students’ Cumulative GPA of 4.00 and Above

SENIOR
Kathleen L. April
Cha- Reece L. Burton
Ralph L. Curry
Stephen T. Ovadje

FRESHMAN
Chevonne T. Edwards
Otis W. Freeman
Erin R. Harper
Tonnia M. Haynes
Coslyn Jacobs
Richard U. Kalu
Adedoyin O. Oshin
Oyekanmi J. Oyeyemi
Carolyn Simon
Lakell A. Spencer
Godfrey I. Thuku
Jane O. Ullah
Megan Veale
Tara M. Ziegler

JUNIOR
Maryanne O. Arienmughare

SOPHMORE
Ogugua T. Anene-Maidoh
JohnPaul C. Chizea
Velina L. Daleva
Afeez A. Hazzan

School of Humanities
Stephanie D. Keene – Communications
Judy L. Montgomery – Fine Arts
Brandi A. Washington – Music
Nancy E. Weigel – Religion
Tamir Tabourn – Philosophy

School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Maryanne O. Arienmughare – Biology
Laurelle K. Cheeseboro – Biology

School of Social Sciences and Behavioral Studies
Kathleen L. April – History
Sharon D. Bollers – Banking & Finance
Cha- Reece L. Burton – Elementary Education
Lateish L. Meachem – Elementary Education
Melissa J. Starks – International Relations

DEAN’S AWARD WINNERS
Outstanding Seniors’ cumulative GPA between 3.53 and 4.09

Tieasher K. Thompson – Biology
Otonye H. Braide – Chemistry
Tanisha M. Nedd – Computer Science

PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS
DEAN’S AWARDEES
Scenes from Lincoln's 150th Anniversary Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation

1 Lincoln faculty members (from left) Dr. Melvin Leaman (Religion), Dr. Benson Prigg (English) and lecturer Terrance Johnson (Sociology), stop by the special Sesquicentennial cancellation stamp station to have their program booklets, pennants and other event paraphernalia, “stamped” with the official 150th anniversary logo to commemorate the Sesquicentennial kickoff and Honors Convocation. Lincoln arranged for the U.S. Postal Service to staff the station for the event. Attendees could also purchase the special commemorative stamp honoring U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, a 1930 Lincoln alumnus. The U.S. Postal Service commissioned the Marshall stamp earlier this year.

2 Youngsters display the special Sesquicentennial pennants that guests received as part of a commemorative gift bag at the close of the kickoff ceremonies.

3 Honor students come to the stage as Dr. John O. Chickwem, dean of the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, announces their names.

4 President Nelson made special presentations to two former Lincoln Presidents, Niara Sudarkasa (1987-1999) and Marvin Wachman (1961-1969) during the ceremonies.

5 Lincoln Alumni greet guests at the reception that followed the kickoff and Honors Convocation in the auxiliary gym. From left: William C. King '73 Esquire, former Board of Trustees Vice Chair; Sharlene V. Roberson '80, Trustee; Board of Trustees Chair Adrienne G. Rhone '76; and William A. Robinson '42, Emeritus Trustee.

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Scenes from Lincoln’s 150th Anniversary Kickoff Celebration and Honors Convocation
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6 Dr. Frank “Tick” Coleman ’35, special assistant to the President for Alumni Giving, leads the audience in the singing of the Lincoln Alma Mater.

7 Dr. Judith A.W. Thomas, dean, School of Social Sciences and Behavioral Studies, announces Honor students from her school. Here, freshman Honor student Nathaniel Mathews ’06 walks to the stage.

8 Lincoln Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Grant D. Venerable II addresses the kickoff/Honors Convocation audience. Dr. Venerable is flanked by University Marshall and professor of Philosophy Dr. Dana Flint (left); and Lincoln President Ivory V. Nelson, Ph.D.

9 Lincoln faculty and Trustees enter Manuel Rivero Hall. From left: Dr. Leonard L. Bethel ’61, Trustee; Dr. William E. Bennett ’50, Trustee; Dr. Robert L. Albright ’66, Trustee; Denise Gaither-Hardy, assistant University Marshall and instructor of Psychology; Satoshi Hashimoto, assistant professor of Japanese; Dr. Daryl Poe, assistant professor, History; Dr. Levi Nwachuku, professor of History; and Dr. Alvin Amos, professor of Music.

10 Freshman Honor student Marcus A. Cobham ’06 had the pleasure of introducing the celebration’s keynote speaker, Tony Brown.
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FYI: Alumni
Please submit your alumni questionnaire to the Harris Publishing Company for inclusion in Lincoln University’s new alumni directory. You should have received the questionnaire in a recent alumni mailing. To submit your questionnaire on-line, please log onto www.alumniconnections.com/update, or contact customer service at (800)546-6411. Please submit your alumni questionnaire today!

President Nelson, members of the Lincoln faculty, administration and Board of Trustees start the program for the Sesquicentennial celebration and Honors Convocation.

Dr. William B. Garcia, professor of music and chair of the University’s Department of Visual and Performing Arts, directs the Lincoln Concert Choir during the kickoff and Honors Convocation.

Honor students are all smiles after receiving their awards at the kickoff ceremony and Honors Convocation program.

Lincoln University is a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs to meet the needs of those living in a highly technological and global society. For more information about Lincoln University, including directions to the campus, the University’s Vision, Mission, Philosophy, and Statement of Goals, see our Web site at www.lincoln.edu.