



INAUGURAL  
Honorable Barry C. Black  
**United States Senate Chaplain**



ORATORICAL CONTEST

**Saturday, April 16, 2016, 8:00 p.m.**

Virginia Beach Convention Center  
1000 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

## The Honorable Barry C. Black



On June 27, 2003, Rear Admiral Barry C. Black (Ret.) was elected the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate. He began working in the Senate on July 7, 2003. Prior to coming to Capitol Hill, Chaplain Black served in the U.S. Navy for over twenty-seven years, ending his distinguished career as the Chief of Navy Chaplains. The Senate elected its first chaplain in 1789.

Commissioned as a Navy Chaplain in 1976, Chaplain Black's first duty station was the Fleet Religious Support Activity in Norfolk, Virginia. Subsequent assignments include Naval Support Activity, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland; First Marine Aircraft Wing, Okinawa, Japan; Naval Training Center, San Diego, California; USS BELLEAU WOOD (LHA 3) Long Beach, California; Naval Chaplains School Advanced Course, Newport, Rhode Island; Marine Aircraft Group THIRTY-ONE, Beaufort, South Carolina; Assistant Staff Chaplain, Chief of Naval Education and Training, Pensacola, Florida; and Fleet Chaplain, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Norfolk, Virginia.

As Rear Admiral, his personal decorations included the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal (two medals), Meritorious Service Medals (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals (two awards), and numerous unit awards, campaign, and service medals.

Chaplain Black is a native of Baltimore, Maryland and an alumnus of Pine Forge Academy, Oakwood College, Andrews University, North Carolina Central University, Eastern Baptist Seminary, Salve Regina University, and United States International University. In addition to earning Master of Arts degrees in Divinity, Counseling, and Management, he has received a Doctorate degree in Ministry and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Psychology.

Chaplain Black has been selected for many outstanding achievements. Of particular note, he was chosen from 127 nominees for the 1995 NAACP Renowned Service Award for his contribution to equal opportunity and civil rights. He also received the 2002 Benjamin Elijah Mays Distinguished Leadership Award from The Morehouse School of Religion. In 2004, the Old Dominion University chapter of the NAACP conferred on him the Image Award, "Reaffirming the Dream -- Realizing the Vision" for military excellence.

Chaplain Barry C. Black is married to the former Brenda Pearsall of St. Petersburg, Florida. They have three sons: Barry II, Brendan, and Bradford.



# PROGRAMME

Opening Prayer	Chaplain Barry C. Black United States Senate
Acknowledgements	Pastor Wayne Hewlett Assistant Youth Direction South Central Conference
Event Significance & Introduction of Judges	Ms. Cynthia Poole Associate Superintendent, Allegheny East Conference PFA Foundation Board Member
Introduction of Speeches	Mr. Paul Nixon Assistant Principal, Oakwood Adventist Academy
Contestants 1 & 2	Ms. Marquita Richardson, Emcee Ms. Madison Gamble Ms. Alex'Us Roberson
Musical Selection	Ms. Marquita Richardson
Contestants 3, 4 & 5	Ms. Marquita Richardson Ms. Makya Davis Mr. Jamir Gates Mr. Joseph Smittick
Musical Selection	Mrs. Margaret E. Richardson & Ms. Marquita Richardson
Poet	Mr. Marqwan Sirls English Teacher PFA
Speech	Mr. Paul Nixon
Oration	Chaplain Barry C. Black
Acknowledgement of Sponsors	Dr. Edward Pelote COO Pine Forge Academy Foundation
Presentation of Awards	Chaplain Barry C. Black Pastor Vandeon Griffin Dr. Edward Pelote
Closing Prayer	Pastor Patrick Carter Youth Director of South Central Conference & Treasurer of BAYDA



## **Oratorical Contestants**

Alexi'Us Roberson – Peterson-Warren Academy

Joseph Smittick – Central States Conference

Madison Gamble – Allegheny East Conference

Jamir Gates – Greater Atlanta Adventist Academy

Makya Davis – Pine Forge Academy

## **Judges**

Dr. Larita Alford

Mr. Oral John

Elder Stephen Richardson

Mrs. Yvonne Wagner

Mr. Jeffery Thomas

## **Emcee**

Ms. Marquita Richardson

## **Organizers**

Black Adventist Youth Directors Association

Pine Forge Academy Foundation

## **Official Timekeeper**

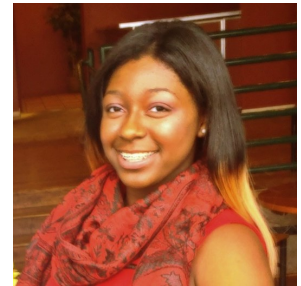
Elder Patrick Carter

# The Contestants



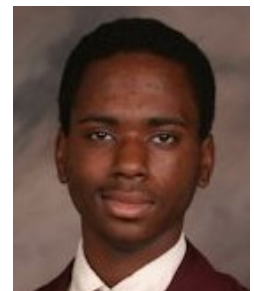
**Madison Anslee Gamble** currently resides with her mother, uncle and two cousins in Atlanta Ga. She is a freshman in high school and attends the School of The Arts. She enjoys school but Spanish III has been a doozie!! Madison loves children and is considering going to college to become a Psychiatrist or maybe a Doctor like her uncle. First she has to figure out college! Madison participates in community, school and church related activities such as Youth Soccer, Student Council, Pathfinder Club, New Earth Beauties, Children's Church and AYS Department. She enjoys listening to music, learning to play piano, all things fashion and making new friends. At this moment she is nervous but excited to attend United Youth Congress 2016 with all of you!

**Alex'Us Roberson** is currently completing the 11th grade at Peterson-Warren Academy in Inkster, MI. A member of the National Honor Society, Alex'Us has been groomed by Christian Education since the age of 3. Alex'Us is an active member of Ypsilanti Seventh Day Adventist Church. She serves in the Ypsilanti Navigator Pathfinder Club as a Teen Leader in Training. She loves serving God by being a witness to others, using her voice in the youth choir and being an aid to her infant and aging family members. Mary McLeod Bethune's, "What Democracy Means to Me" is the perfect speech to exhibit Alex'Us' passion for advocating for what's right and social justice for all.



**Makya Genevia Ann Davis** is a junior at Pine Forge Academy where she serves as a member of the National Honor Society, the Pine Forge Academy Choir, and an officer for the class of 2017. Because of her gift and passion for swimming, she has participated in local and private club swim teams, serves as a lifeguard for Pine Forge Academy, the Allegheny East Conference of Seventh Day Adventists, and other private organizations, and is a member of the Collegeville Lifeguard Association. She is also a baptized member of the Pine Forge SDA church where she also serves as a pathfinder. While Makya's ultimate goal is to become a pediatric anesthesiologist, she also aspires to magnify Jesus in her daily life and to live each day being the woman whom God desires her to be. Thus, in light of her dreams, she prays that God will use her mind and talents to provide hope, healing, and comfort to those individuals whom she will be privileged to serve.

**Jamir Gates** currently attends Greater Atlanta Adventist Academy as a sophomore. His interests include reading and technology. Jamir's plans for the future are to attend Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama and major in theology. His current accomplishments include: performing live at the 5th annual Pathfinder Reunion in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, achieving honor roll for both halves of freshman year, and achieving 2nd place in the 2nd annual Leola Wade Oratorical Contest.



**Joseph Smittick** is a Colorado Native. He was home schooled until the 4th grade and since then has been attending Mile High Adventist Academy. Not only will Joseph be graduating next month ranked number one in his class, but he holds the distinction of being the first African American male class president of this 100-year-old school. He is excited about pursuing a degree in Biomedical Science at Oakwood University this fall. Joseph has been public speaking since he was 10 years old and preached his first sermon at 10 years old. His article "The Toll of Everyday Stress" was published in Body Of Christ News in 2011. In his spare time, Joseph enjoys singing, outdoor recreation and traveling.



# The Judges

## Dr. Larita J. Alford



is a retired community college executive administrator and associate professor of English. She has worked in Bermuda, Tennessee and Massachusetts. Her last position was the Vice-President and Chief Academic Officer at Bermuda College in Bermuda. She held the position of Dean of Instruction and Associate Professor of English at Columbia State Community College in Columbia Tennessee and Associate Professor of English at Volunteer State Community College, also in Tennessee. She taught Spanish at Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts and at St. George's Secondary in Bermuda.

In her retirement she has taught part-time for Columbia State Community College, Bermuda College and has served as an external examiner for doctoral candidates at Northern Caribbean University in Jamaica, West Indies. She has served on the doctoral defense committee for six students who successfully defended their dissertations.

Dr. Alford received her B. A. degree from Atlantic Union College, in Massachusetts, her M. Ed. in English from Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts and her Ed. D. from Tennessee State University in Tennessee. She studied Spanish in Bermuda, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Argentina, South America and Guadalajara, Mexico.

Dr. Alford enjoys reading, singing, word games and sharing what she has learned. Her motto in life has been and continues to be "to learn all that I can so that I can give it away." She has sung with professional groups in Tennessee and in Bermuda and has toured with the Bermuda group to Japan and Barbados, West Indies.

She has travelled extensively and is currently happy to remain at her home in Tennessee with her husband of forty-two years, Dr. George Alford, a dentist.

## Mr. Oral John



currently serves as a Program Manager for the Naval Air Systems Command and leads the United States Marine Corps' H-1 Light Attack Helicopter Air Vehicle and Engines Integrated Product Team. In this capacity he oversees the cost, schedule and performance of an annual budget exceeding 20 Million Dollars.

A former United States Marine, Oral is currently a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy Reserves. He is a veteran of the Persian Gulf War and the Global War on Terrorism, with deployments to Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Oral is a 1996 graduate of Louisiana Tech University with a B.S. Degree in Professional Aviation. As a Certificated Flight Instructor (CFII), he has taught aviation flight and ground school for over 18 years at local airport flight schools, Community College and on the University levels. He holds a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in Management (1998), also from Louisiana Tech University. His current academic pursuit is legal education, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, leading to the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree at the DAVID A. CLARKE SCHOOL OF LAW, Washington, DC.

Mr. John is a devout member of the First Seventh-day Adventist Church in Washington, DC and a member of the Executive Committee of the Allegheny East Conference Corporation.

He is married to the former Patricia Watts and is father to: sons, DeSean and Likhi; and daughter, Lanai.

## Elder Stephen A.L. Richardson



is the current Ministerial Director of the Allegheny East Conference. At the age of 14, while attending Pine Forge Academy (Pine Forge, PA), Stephen came under conviction that God had called him to be a minister. He earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama, with a double major in Theology and Business Administration coupled with a minor in Biblical Languages. At the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI) in 1984, he completed a Master of Divinity degree. He also acquired a Master of Arts in Religion from Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN) and presently is a Ph.D. candidate at Vanderbilt University in the field of biblical studies, specializing in the Hebrew Bible.

Pastor Richardson's official pastoral ministry spans from 1983 – 2012 serving several churches and regions of the conference. Within those years, he returned to Pine Forge Academy as pastor and teacher from 1988-1992 and served as headmaster of the academy from 1991-1993.

Pastor Richardson is happily married for over 30 years to his college sweetheart, the former Margaret Humphrey of New York. Stephen and Margaret are blessed with three adult children: daughter Marquita and twin sons Shelton & Shelbourne.

## Mr. Jeffery Thomas



is employed with the Virginia Department of Social Services and serves as a special projects director within the agency's Workforce Development Unit. His extensive experience in the human services field also includes periods of employment with the local departments of human services in Newport News and Hampton, Virginia. From 1999 to 2006, he oversaw the daily operations of the Regional Job Support Network (RJSN), a non-profit agency serving Newport News and Hampton, Virginia. RJSN helped individuals overcome substance abuse and/or mental health problems and assisted them in gaining employment. Mr. Thomas proudly served the United States of America by serving in the US Navy for twenty-five years. He retired from the Navy in 1993 as a Master Chief Petty Officer. He is a

graduate of the University of Maryland – European Division. He currently serves as Head Elder of the Calvary Seventh-day Adventist Church, Newport News, Virginia.

## Mrs. Yvonne Wagner

is a graduate of the University of South Alabama, Alabama A & M University, and Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Her professional experience includes being an Elementary and Special Education Teacher in Norfolk, Virginia. Her professional experience includes being an Elementary and Special Education Teacher in the Norfolk and Portsmouth Public Schools; she has been a school principal; Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Edward Water College; Director of University Relations at Elizabeth City State University; Assistant Director of Sponsored Programs and Grants at Miles College and Elizabeth City State University; the Director of Bridge Program for At Risk Students in the Hoover School System; the Director of Grants/ PR Marketing in the Norfolk Community Hospital as well as Consultant. At present, she serves as a Political Consultant.

# THE SPONSORS

Black Adventist Youth Directors Association  
(BAYDA)

Pine Forge Academy Foundation

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## THE COMMITTEE

Dr. Larita Alford  
Mr. Delmas Campbell  
Pastor Wayne Hewlett  
Mr. Paul Nixon  
Dr. Edward Pelote  
Ms. Cynthia Poole  
Mrs. Margaret Richardson  
Mr. Marqwan Sirls

## A Special Thank You to:

Mr. LaDoverick Huggins  
Mr. Delmas Campbell  
Mr. Paul Nixon  
Elder Patrick Carter  
Miss Marquita Richardson  
Mr. Karl Ford