

The Write News

THE WRITE ATTITUDE
NEWSLETTER
FOR SSU STUDENTS,
FACULTY, AND STAFF
FALL 2016/Issue 7

Education Matters,
by SSU White House
HBCU All-Star
Alicia Montgomery &
the Office of the QEP

I WRITE because
#EducationMatters...

What about you?

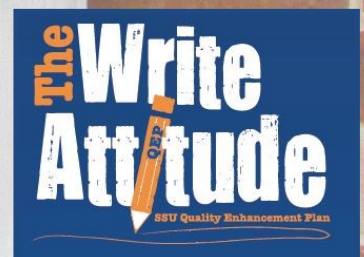
Write
Attitude



Poets Tim Seibles &
Frank X Walker
visit SSU

QEP Contest Winners

Dr. Desmond Delk, Mr. Jason Etheridge,
and Mr. Jason Miccolo Johnson present
at the QEP Lunch & Learn events



The Write News

**THE WRITE ATTITUDE NEWSLETTER
FOR SSU STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF
FALL 2016/Issue 7**

The Write News keeps students, faculty, and staff aware of important information and events related to writing, demonstrates how strong writing skills are necessary in the professions, and showcases our SSU authors.

The Write News is the newsletter of **The Write Attitude, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Savannah State University**, a campus-wide initiative to enhance student learning by improving attitudes about writing.

Please share your articles, essays, poems, and other writing samples and experiences with us.

Visit us:
qep.savannahstate.edu

Contact us:
qep@savannahstate.edu

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Education Matters at Savannah State University

By Melvina Sykes, SSU Student and QEP Communications Intern

During the week of September 12-16, 2016, Savannah State University White House HBCU All-Star Alicia Montgomery teamed up with the Office of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to host *Education Matters Week*.

Alicia Montgomery shared her goal for the campaign: to advocate for the importance of education among SSU students. "Education changed my life and I want them to be aware that education can change [their] life as well," she said. Growing up, Montgomery had never thought of attending college. Her goal was to conclude high school and work so she could help her family. And she did it. She joined the U.S. Army and has worked as a signal support specialist for two years. When working in the military, Montgomery was encouraged to continue her studies. Alicia Montgomery, the first in her family to attend college, decided to study at Savannah State University.

On the very first day of the campaign, we launched the *Education Matters* essay contest for students. The essays were analyzed and selected by the SSU Writing Center, the QEP, and Alicia Montgomery herself. The winners, who received cash prizes, were Itunu Ilesanmi, Shaniqua Brown, and Raveen Lewis.

Tuesday, September 13, at the Student Union, students were invited to write on a poster about why, what, or for whom they write. Many students showed up to participate and gave their reason for writing. A few examples are: "I WRITE because my ancestors couldn't," "I WRITE because society wants to keep me silent," and "I WRITE to make others laugh. A smile is worth a million words." All participants were then

asked to take a photo with their posters which can be found on the Office of the QEP's Instagram @write_ssu.

Wednesday, September 14, *Education Matters Week* moved to the King Frazier Cafeteria. On individual cards, SSU students, faculty, and staff were asked to provide inspirational words to fellow Tigers, explain why education matters to them, and what role education plays in their lives. Prizes were given away to the students who gave the best answers. Coming in first place was Chelsea Parker, followed by Jordan Smith in second, and Anthony Stewart in third.

Thursday, September 15, Jason D. Etheridge also known as Mr. E! The Motivator was the QEP Lunch and Learn guest speaker. Alicia Montgomery introduced the presenter, shared her personal story with the audience, and highlighted that students should appreciate the opportunity of pursuing a college degree. Etheridge's presentation consisted of the importance of writing in the fields of Education and Public Speaking, his inspiring journey from

someone who did not enjoy writing to someone who became an author, and tips for students to identify their personal reading and writing styles. Etheridge brought high energy and charisma as he spoke to Savannah State University students. He kept the attention of everyone in the room throughout his entire presentation. At the end of the event, student attendees ate lunch offered by the QEP and networked with the speaker.

Education Matters Week was a great success. More than two hundred students actively participated in the events dedicated to the noble cause of the importance of education and how it can change your life.

Montgomery stated that *Education Matters Week* was important to open up the conversation to other students and learn why education is important to them as well. She concluded by thanking the support of her fellow Tigers as well as the QEP Office in helping bring her vision to life.



From left to right: Jason D. Etheridge, QEP guest speaker, LaChrista Nelson and Melvina Sykes, SSU Students and QEP Interns, and William Martin, WSSU Tiger's Roar TV Program Director.

WHITE HOUSE HBCU ALL-STAR: ALICIA MONTGOMERY

White House HBCU All-Star Students Program

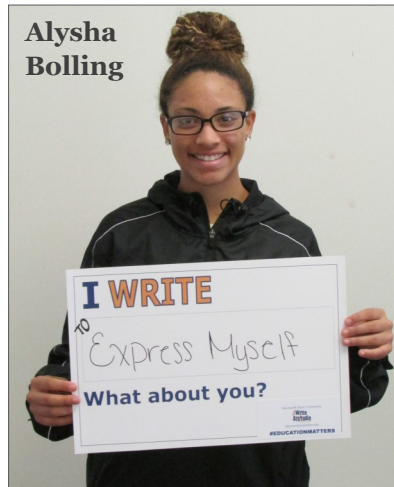
“Students will serve as ambassadors of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities by providing outreach opportunities and communications to their fellow students about the value of education and the Initiative as a networking resource. Through social media, personal and professional relationships with community-based organizations, students will share promising and proven practices that support opportunities for all young people to realize their educational and career potential. The program will provide an opportunity to participate in regional and national events, along with, web chats with Initiative staff and other professionals from a wide range of disciplines that support a spirit of engagement and personal and professional development.”

More about the White House HBCU All-Star Students Program: sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/resources/hbcu-all-star-students/

Ayanna Holt



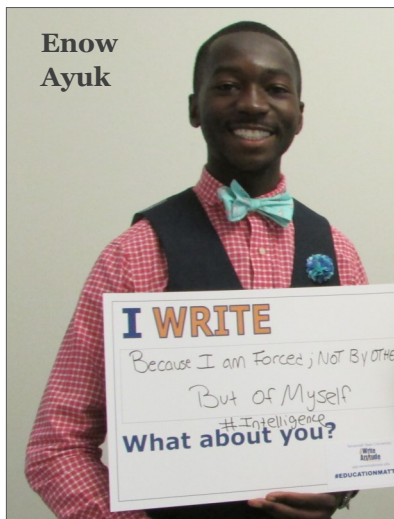
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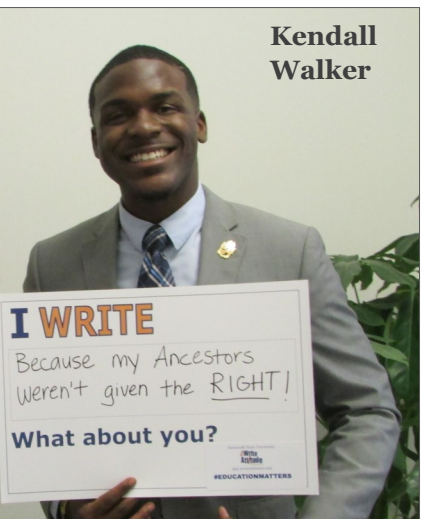
Teresa Fabin



Enow Ayuk



Kendall Walker



A Talk with Jason Miccolo Johnson about Photojournalism and Writing

Jason M. Johnson is a photographer, author, and visiting professor of Journalism and Mass Communications at Savannah State University

By Sierra Walton, SSU Student

In April 2016, Jason Miccolo Johnson, photographer, author, and visiting professor of Journalism and Mass Communications at Savannah State University, was the guest speaker for a QEP Lunch and Learn. Johnson shared his expertise and background in photography and photojournalism and how both intertwine with writing.

After the event, I sat down with Johnson to learn more details about his passion for photography, the correlation between photography and writing, and his book *Soul Sanctuary: Images of the African American Worship Experience*.

A national award-winning independent photojournalist, Johnson has loved photography since the age of 11, when he played with his toy cameras. In the photography world, Johnson is known for adopting a visual call-and-response shooting technique. “The visual call-and-response is action and reaction. I look at the action of the main subject and then I turn around at the audience to see their reaction,” he explains. This technique has allowed him to capture emotions of a same scenario, but from different angles and perspectives. Also it has perfected the art he chose for his life, photography.

Johnson states that photography and writing actually do work very well together. How else would photojournalism have come about? “Just like writers try to think of words to give you visual pictures, photographers try to come up with different pictures that are worth a thousand words,” says Johnson. That is why with pictures, we often see captions below them to describe what the picture shows. “You cannot separate words from pictures,” he adds. Pictures need to be described and contextualized. Visiting Professor Johnson shares that



Jason Miccolo Johnson, Visiting Professor of Photojournalism, shows his books to Tina Brown, Assistant to the Chair of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications (left), and Dr. Rose Metts, Professor of English (right).

his students practice caption writing in his photojournalism course. “A caption is a brief description of what the picture is. It leaves no doubt,” Johnson concludes.

“Photography and writing actually do work very well together.” J.M.J.

When asked about the story behind the birth of the name of his bestselling book *Soul Sanctuary: Images of the African American Worship Experience*, Johnson commented, “I knew I had to have a riveting, captivating, instantly-recognizable title.” After doing a lot of research on the theme, he came up with a title that could express what he would like to communicate and shoot regarding the African-American worship experience: “soul”, which is the embodiment of a person’s spirit, but in this case it also represents the soulful music one hears in a church; then “sanctuary”, the space inside the church where people worship. Soul Sanctuary. The name slides smoothly off of the tongue. A title that makes one pivot mid stride.

Johnson finished our interview by declaring that students did not read as much as they should. He believes in the power of reading and writing. The more students read, then the stronger students will become at writing and critical thinking, essential skills for any career choice.

Doubt not, Jason Miccolo Johnson’s photographs and book have gotten much recognition. Johnson has taken exclusive photos of some of the world’s most distinguishable persons including President Barack Obama, Nelson Mandela, Muhammad Ali, Princess Diana, Fidel Castro, and Oprah Winfrey. His photographs are in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the St. Louis Art Museum, and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Besides his own book, his photography is featured in *Songs of My People* and *Million Man March*.

**More about
Jason Miccolo Johnson &
his work:**

jasonmiccolojohnson.com

Writing for Service

By Dr. Desmond Delk, Scholar and the Author of the Book *“I Love My SSU!”*

There are a plethora of avenues an individual can take to make a significant impact on the lives of many. As a professor, I strive to positively influence each of my students as well as equip them with the skills necessary for success within the field of kinesiology, physical education, health, and recreation. As the author of *I Love My SSU!*, I knew that the 24-page book about a Savannah State University (SSU) homecoming would touch at least one life.

However, I am astonished how my desire to introduce children to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) has allowed me to use my pen to support, advocate for, and educate both children and college scholars.

“... use your pen to help solidify things you believe in.”

In addition to the academic rigor of college, tuition is a hurdle that all collegiate scholars must hurdle to

ensure they attain their degrees. Writing a book has allowed me to invest in students who continually seek excellence on a daily basis. Through the *I Love My SSU!* book scholarship, students at SSU have been awarded scholarships that have

“I have used my pen to educate youth and adults about the importance of education.”

helped defray the cost of attending college. My belief is that students who are fully engaged in their studies will ultimately perform well academically. Hence, fewer external obligations (working to pay tuition) will afford opportunities for that total immersion. Therefore, I encourage you to use your words to be a source of support for your readers. Whether it generates money—as in the case of *I Love My SSU!*—or reinforces the impetus of investing in HBCUs, use your pen to help solidify things you believe in.

Unfortunately, HBCUs are at risk when legislative agendas aim to dismantle these historical institutions of higher education. Therefore, we must use our pen to fervently advocate for what we believe to be pillars of academic excellence and character preeminence. Presenting the counter-narrative to the pervasive negative press about HBCUs will not only overshadow faulty claims, but will strengthen the argument for why our institutions must be supported by our legislatures. Writing about SSU has evolved into me becoming an advocate for all HBCUs; using conference opportunities to uplift our schools, and to encourage others to write about their own historic institutions. Can you image every HBCU with its very own children’s book? Not only would these books encourage future generations of HBCU alumni, but it would create a

“I could have never imagined how writing for children would allow me to become an educator and advocate for HBCUs, nor a financial supporter of students in higher education.”

permanent collection of words and images that present the very best of our revered institutions. Use your pen to advocate for what you believe in.

Moreover, I have used my pen to educate youth and adults about the importance of education. I hope to not only inspire children to attend SSU, but to desire to engress



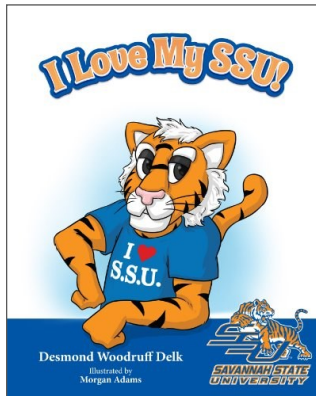
SSU Students work on a writing activity at the QEP Lunch & Learn led by Dr. Desmond Delk on October 20, 2016.

(cont.)

themselves in their academic pursuits from grade-school through their doctoral program journey. Early education about college gives youth a clearer vision as to how they can align their efforts towards success. Early exposure also assures that these young scholars can actually fulfill the endeavors they pursue.

“Writing about SSU has evolved into me becoming an advocate for all HBCUs.”

I could have never imagined how writing for children would allow me to become an educator and advocate for HBCUs, nor a financial supporter of students in higher education. Whatever you do, use your pen purposefully; and when writer’s block arises, just write!



“I Love My SSU!” is a children’s book and was written by Dr. Desmond Delk and illustrated by Morgan Adams. The book was published by Mascot Books on September 14, 2012. The book is available online and at the SSU Bookstore.

“I Love My SSU!” \$250 Book Scholarship

In October 2016, Dr. Desmond Delk partnered with the Office of the QEP to develop an essay contest focused on SSU Students. Students wrote about how they planed to make their time at Savannah State University *Seriously Impressive*. The authors of the best three essays were awarded \$250 Book Scholarship.

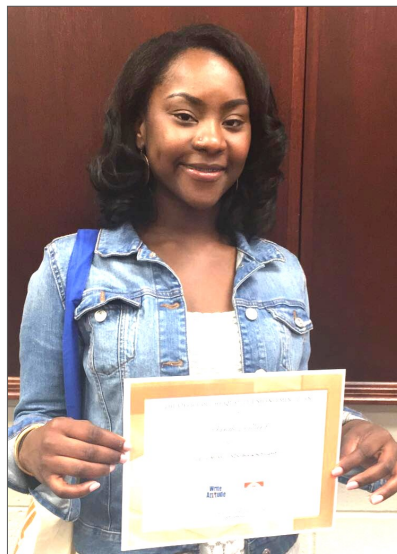
Recipients of the 2016 “I Love My SSU!” \$250 Book Scholarship

Akyra Wright



Pictured with Dr. Desmond Delk.

Sarah Dillard



Marcus Harper



A Poet Talk with Frank X Walker

On October 24, 2016, poet Frank X Walker gave a Poet Talk at Savannah State University, an event that was open and free to the public.

The Asa H. Gordon Library Art Gallery was packed with students, faculty, staff members, and representatives of the local community.

Besides talking about poetry and writing, the author read some of his powerful poems.

The event was sponsored by the Office of the QEP and CLASS.



Poet Frank X Walker talks about poetry and writing at Savannah State.

Li'l Kings

BY FRANK X WALKER

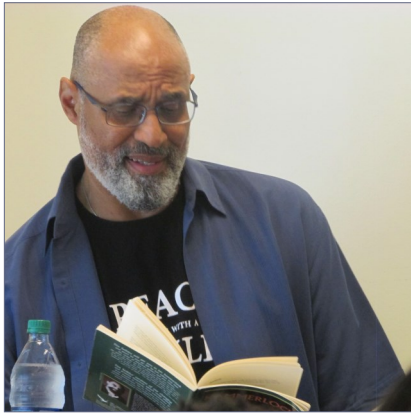
<p>what if the good reveren doctah mlk jr was just marty or li'l king not a pastor but a little faster from the streets quoting gangsta rap not Gandhi</p> <p>was not dr. king but king doctah or ice-k his peace sign on a gold tooth or gleaming 14 karat like from around his neck</p>	<p>what if somebody screaming 'nigger' hit 'im in the head with a brick and he pulled out a nine and squeezed off one or two rounds not tears</p> <p>praying only that he not miss sported mlk on phat brass knuckles and a left-handed diamond pinky ring walked the streets with his home boyz spray painting let freedom ring and I had a dream on bus stops and stop signs</p>	<p>got arrested for conspiring to incite riots disturbing the peace and resisting arrest</p> <p>didn't preach from no pulpit but on a microphone behind turntables mixin' and scratchin' listenin' to dr. dre wu tang and the notorious b.i.g.</p> <p>pants down to his hightops hat on backwards eyes on a prized new voice not no bel no peace of nothin' that just rings when it's hit a voice that hits back</p> <p>could he still be king?</p>
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More about Frank X Walker: www.frankxwalker.com

"Li'l Kings" is from the poet's first collection of poems
Affrilachia: Poems by Frank X Walker

Poet Tim Seibles Enlightens Savannah State University

By Sierra Walton, SSU Student



Tim Seibles reads to students during a Poetry Workshop at Savannah State.

Every semester the Office of the Quality Enhancement Plan partners with CLASS (College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences) and *Estuary*, SSU's Literary Magazine, to bring special poets to campus to lead workshops and share some of their work.

In April 2016, Tim Seibles visited our campus as part of Savannah State University events to honor African American poetry and storytelling.

First, Tim Seibles hosted a creative writing workshop with SSU Students, one of which I had the pleasure to attend. He explored how

to analyze poems through critical thinking and shared why it is important to write for yourself but to make sure that it is able to be understood by others. When reading and contextualizing his poem "Wound," the poet described in a very pedagogical way the depth of the messages within his poem and explained how a reader may contribute to his work. "All writers have ideas about what they are trying to communicate. Perhaps as a reader you would bring your own experience and intelligence to the poem," highlighted Seibles. Students were absorbed by that privileged learning experience.

Also, Seibles led a discussion on

African American Poetry with Drs. Kameelah Martin and Chad Faries, both faculty members at SSU, and gave a reading at the First African Baptist Church, a historic landmark located in downtown Savannah. Both events were free and open to the public.

Seibles is the author of *Body Moves* (1988), *Hurdy-Gurdy* (1992), *Hammerlock* (1999), *Buffalo Head Solos* (2004), and *Fast Animal* (2012), which won the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and was nominated for a 2012 National Book Award. His poems have also been published in the anthologies *In Search of Color Everywhere: A Collection of African American Poetry* (1994, edited by E. Ethelbert Miller and Terrance Cummings), *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry* (2009, edited by Camille Dungy), and *Best American Poetry* (2010, edited by Amy Gerstler).



Tim Seibles discusses African American Poetry with SSU students.

Listen to the interview with Poet Tim Seibles at qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/Radio-Shows

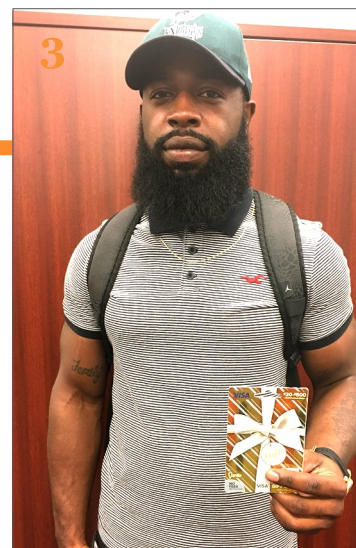
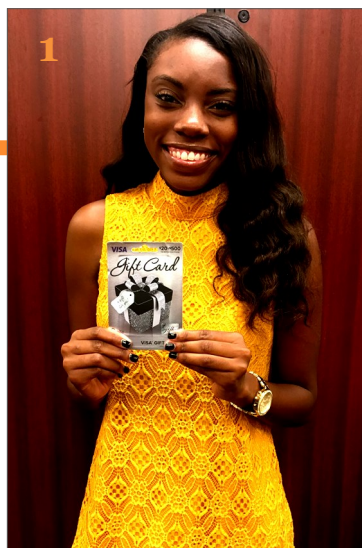


Dr. Chad Faries, Associate Professor of English (left), and Dr. Kameelah Martin, Associate Professor of African American Literature (right), interview Poet Tim Seibles (center) for a Write Attitude Radio Show.

AND THE WRITING CONTEST WINNERS ARE...

Write to Inspire!
#EducationMatters Week

1st Place: Chelsea Parker
2nd Place: Jordan Smith
3rd Place: Anthony Stewart



Write for Change:
2016 Presidential Election

1st Place: Nicole Harrison
2nd Place: Erika Adams
3rd Place: Donald Moore

Intellectual Freedom
Writing Contest

1st Place: Shaiane Cardoso
2nd Place: Sunsieah Davis

AND THE WRITING CONTEST WINNERS ARE...



Education Matters Essay Contest

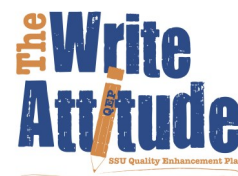
- 1st Place: Itunu Ilesanmi
- 2nd Place: Shaniqua Brown
- 3rd Place: Raveen Lewis



Freshman Special Prize

SSU Homecoming Student Essay Contest

- 1st Place:
Janae Jackson
- 2nd Place:
Caprisha Treadwell
- 3rd Place:
Nikia Mitchell
- Freshman Special Prize:
Jessica Statterwhite



THE WRITE ATTITUDE: ALL ABOUT YOU

Listen to
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and watch our videos on
The Write Attitude TV at
[qep.savannahstate.edu/About-
QEP/The-Write-Attitude-TV.aspx](http://qep.savannahstate.edu/About-QEP/The-Write-Attitude-TV.aspx)

*Participate in the
QEP writing workshops,
events, and contests!*
You will learn, may earn
extra credit, and could win
cash or other prizes!

CALLING ALL POETS!

*Would you like to participate in
Poetry in the Air, a
Write Attitude Radio Show?*

Send your name, poems, and
preferred contact information to
qep@savannahstate.edu

The Write Attitude & The QEP

The Write Attitude
is SSU's Quality
Enhancement Plan (QEP),
a campus-wide initiative to
enhance student learning
by *improving attitudes
about writing.*

Campus Writing Resources:

Asa H. Gordon Library

Career Services

Student Union, Room 115

Center for Academic Success

Whiting Hall, Room 253

Smarthinking.com

SSU Writing Center

Payne Hall, Room 201

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