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Leadership Conference Held at GSU

by Jean Forche

By joining creative forces to develop a professional leadership conference, three Governors State University (GSU) campus organizations, *Students in Communication*, Kappa Kappa Chapter of Lambda Pi Eta *Communication Honor Society*, and the Student Life Division, hosted "Leadership on the Verge: A Conference on Professional and Personal Communication" on Saturday, October 21, 2000 in the Hall of Honors at GSU.

"We all wanted to find a way to raise awareness about the importance of good communication skills and get students, the community, and faculty members working and thinking together," said conference committee public relations representative and second-year communications graduate student, Amy Chmuras. Chmuras and the planning committee worked for nearly six months organizing presentation themes into a day-long

program of events, and on contacting community leaders with substantive backgrounds and practical experience in communication theories, techniques, and applications. Keynote speaker, Phil Zepeda, from the American Red Cross' national headquarters in Washington D.C., kicked-off the event.

The conference breakout sessions tackled such communication concerns as listening, conflict management, cultural communication, and the role of media in conjunction with leadership. "This (conference) was an opportunity to brush up one's skills and network with experienced professionals," said Dr. Ana Kong, professor in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) at GSU, and academic advisor to the conference organizers.

GSU students, community members, area community college students, and a small group from the Netherlands were among the budding leaders in attendance. Students from various fields were asked to participate. The conference's central message was executed through modeling how intergenerational, cultural/ethnic, sexual orientation, and even difference in one's field of study can impact perspective (cont. on p.5)

Is Dr. Muhammad Failing Her Students?

by M.L. Hosty

Dr. Raashidah Jaaniri Muhammad, instructor and coordinator of the English department here at Governors State University (GSU) has certainly been receiving a lion's share of negative commentary from students enrolled in that discipline regarding her propriety and ability as a member of the university's academic community. Previous issues of the student newspaper have witnessed letters-to-the-editor about suspicious granting of scholarly awards, negligible course offerings, and negligent instructors in that department, and recently, even more disturbing information has made its way to the student press about program decisions made by Muhammad. (cont. on p.12)



Co-organizer Sherree Y. Sanderson (L.) talks with conference presenter Debra Mubashahrhd, visiting from Beloit College

De Laforcade's Contract Dispute Reaches 3rd Phase Arbitration

by M. L. Hosty

On this, the tenth day past the allocated due date for personnel matters to enter into arbitration, Dr. Geoffrey de Laforcade, formerly employed by Governors State University (GSU) in its College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) as a Unit-B lecturer, is being forced to consider outside legal recourse in an attempt to resolve his grievance against the administration and the dean of the college for which he worked, Dr. Roger Oden. The decision to move towards external legislation is being mitigated by the university's failure to adhere to union contract guidelines for personnel matters.

De Laforcade, a Yale graduate specializing in Latin American, Caribbean, and African history, and who also taught courses on Europe and comparative world civilizations, came to GSU to help develop the Integrative Studies program, and contends that the university has violated its own contractual agreements per his employment, and that he has yet to receive either fair or satisfactory treatment in his dealings with the GSU administration as regards his official grievance for wrongful dismissal. De Laforcade states that neither he nor the union received official notice that his services would no longer be retained, despite having brought to the attention of the administration that the union-administrative contract stipulates that "the university administration shall provide the Union with a report on changes in status" of Unit-B employees. De Laforcade claims that he first had an indication that he was to be released from employment following the receipt of a copy of a missive indicating such from the division chair of CAS, Dr. Joyce Kennedy, which was addressed to Oden and which noted that de Laforcade's services were not recommended for retention due to shifts in (cont. on p. 6)

New Members Appointed to GSU Board of Trustees

Governors State University (GSU) President, Stuart Fagan, announced last week that Governor George H. Ryan has appointed two new trustees — Kathleen Field Orr and Lorine Skulack Samuels — to serve on the GSU Board of Trustees.

Orr, principal, *Kathleen Field Orr and Associates*, is a practicing attorney with a wealth of experience in municipal law and municipal finance. She has served as chairperson of the *Local Government Section Council of the Illinois Bar Association*, and is a member of the *Home Rule Attorneys Committee of the Illinois Municipal League*.

Orr's community involvement is extensive, and includes serving as one-time president of the *Abby Foundation*, a woman's organization with funding of more than \$50,000 annually in grants and scholarships for young women. Orr's new appointment builds upon an established relationship with the GSU community as she currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Center for Performing Arts at GSU, a position she has held since the Center opened in 1995.

Additionally, Orr was a member of the Board of Directors of the GSU Foundation from 1993 until 1998. She is a resident of Flossmoor, Ill.

"I've been involved with GSU for many years. I am honored to serve as a trustee. Governors State University is a vital part of the far south suburban community. It provides educational opportunity for thousands of people who might not otherwise be able to advance their education," Orr said.

Samuels is the president/owner of *Strategic Business Services* in Homewood, Ill. She serves on the *Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce* in Homewood, Ill, and on the *New Lenox Chamber of Commerce* in that region. Samuels has served as a consultant with the

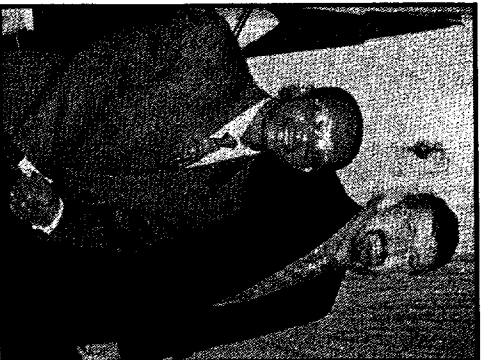
GSU to Host Open House

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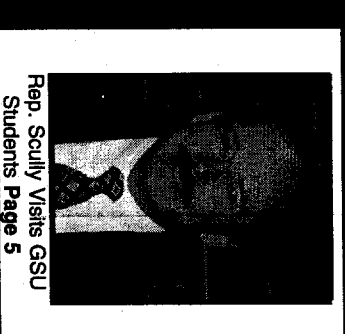
On Saturday, November 4, 2000, Governors State University (GSU) will hold its annual "Discovery Day" open house to give prospective students an opportunity to discover the possibilities that come with a quality college education. GSU will be opening its doors to prospective undergraduate and graduate students from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

All of the colleges within the university — Education, Arts and Sciences, Health Professions, and Business and Public Administration — will be on hand to answer any questions about the respective programs. Tours of the facilities will also be available. Additionally, individuals will have a chance to learn more about GSU's adult and continuing education programs, student life, and student development opportunities.

GSU is accredited by the *North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools*. GSU is also a member of the *Illinois Council of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs* and nearly all eligible programs are accredited or in accreditation candidacy (for new programs) by their respective professional accrediting agencies. Individuals seeking more information about "Discovery Day" should call (708) 534-4490.



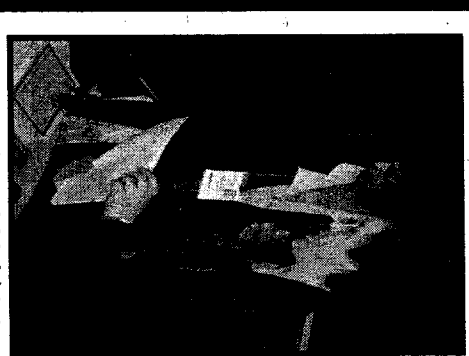
De Laforcade stands beside former Haitian President Aristide at a luncheon held in Aristide's honor at Chicago's Union League Club in 1999.



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