ST. PHILIP’S COLLEGE STUDENTS REAP REWARDS, ATTENTION IN WASHINGTON, D.C., AS BEST-IN-NATION CHOIR MEMBERS

Students receive scholarship, soloist honors for work in national-level career enhancement program

SAN ANTONIO (Sept. 19, 2011)—The Sept. 18 Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts segment of an academic career enhancement program for three St. Philip’s College students selected as best-in-nation-for-2011 choir members was a triumph. One student received a $5,000 college scholarship, one student was featured with a solo, and a third participated with the choir.

Students Eric Copeland, Marquell Holland and Jessica Kemp are enjoying success as members of the 105 Voice of History Student Development Summit and Concert Performance program taking place on 105 college campuses nationwide, in Washington, D.C., and on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry® Jan. 22 in Nashville, Tenn. Holland left the 2011 conference as the recipient of a $5,000 college scholarship, and Copeland performed as a soloist. Copeland, Holland and Kemp attended a post-concert reception on the Kennedy Center Terrace with St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston and concert hosts TONY® and GRAMMY® awards recipient Jennifer Holliday and GRAMMY® AWARD recipient Kirk Whalum.

“This was a proud evening for St. Philip's,” Loston texted from Washington. “We had three students perform at a Kennedy Center event representing the 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in our nation. Best of all, Eric led a solo and Marquell won a $5,000 scholarship. This was our best season ever for student success in this program, and I want to congratulate our best-in-nation-for-2011 students, Eric, Marquell and Jessica, for participating in this outstanding academic career enhancement program.”

“When I first met our nationally-recognized students to hear them in rehearsal in August, I was just floored. Hearing small groups of 20-some nationally-ranked students in the regional rehearsals at campuses in Dallas, New Orleans and Houston was beautiful,” said travel sponsor and student success specialist Maria Botello. “The 105 students in performance were unbelievable, but the scholarship, soloing opportunity and overall networking that was extended to our students last week in D.C. and at all the campuses we visited this season was best of all.”

“Going in, I considered it great honor to be recognized on a national level, and my expectations were exceeded,” said Copeland, a culinary arts and restaurant management major. “As students, we proved we can stand together with 105 voices and not only be heard as a team, but we can excel individually to receive scholarships, visibility and experience, as representatives for our city and our college.”

“I registered for many online classes this year so I could work this honor around my travel schedule. I knew it would be hairy this semester,” Copeland said. “I am a chorus member in San Antonio Opera, and I am not performing in the next opera (Gounod’s Romeo et Juliet) because the Romeo et Juliet rehearsals occurred when I was performing with the 105 Voices in D.C. I love San Antonio Opera, with its open door policy and many good musicians. They instill professionalism, and many of the performance practices I used to great success on the Kennedy Center stage came from there,” said Copeland.

For more information on the 2011 season 105 Voices program at St. Philip’s College, contact Maria Botello at (210) 486-2199. (COURTESY IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST)

CAPTION: One highlight for St. Philip's College students in the 105 Voice of History Student Development Summit and Concert Performance program was a post-concert reception and photo opportunity on the terrace of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts with concert host TONY® and GRAMMY® awards recipient Jennifer Holliday (third from left). Joining Holliday are (from left)
About the 105 Voices Of History program: The program is a Historically Black Colleges and Universities national initiative managed by Partners Achieving Success, a nongovernmental charitable organization which provides methods, programs and strategies to strengthen these institutions. The choir, summit and performance program is the organization’s flagship activity.

About Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): America’s HBCUs are those founded/established before 1964 as postsecondary academic institutions whose educational mission has historically been to educate African-Americans. There are 105 of these institutions in the United States today, including public and private, two-year and four-year institutions, medical schools and community colleges. Though HBCU’s primary focus was, and still is, to educate African-Americans, they are inclusive to and highly sought out by members of all ethnicities. St. Philip's College is among a number of HBCUs with majority non-African-American populations who have benefitted academically from taking part in the HBCU experience since the 113-year-old college was ethnically desegregated in 1955.

About St. Philip's: Bishop James Steptoe Johnston of the St. Philip's Episcopal Church of the West Texas Diocese founded St. Philip’s College in 1898. Today, St. Philip’s College, a member of the Alamo Colleges, is a multi-campus institution and serves a semester enrollment of more than 11,000 credit and more than 8,000 continuing education students. St. Philip’s College is a Historically Black College and a Hispanic Serving Institution. As “A Point of Pride in the Community,” St. Philip’s College is among the oldest and most diverse community colleges in the United States.