

# THE OBSIDIAN

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**BECAUSE DIVERSITY MATTERS**

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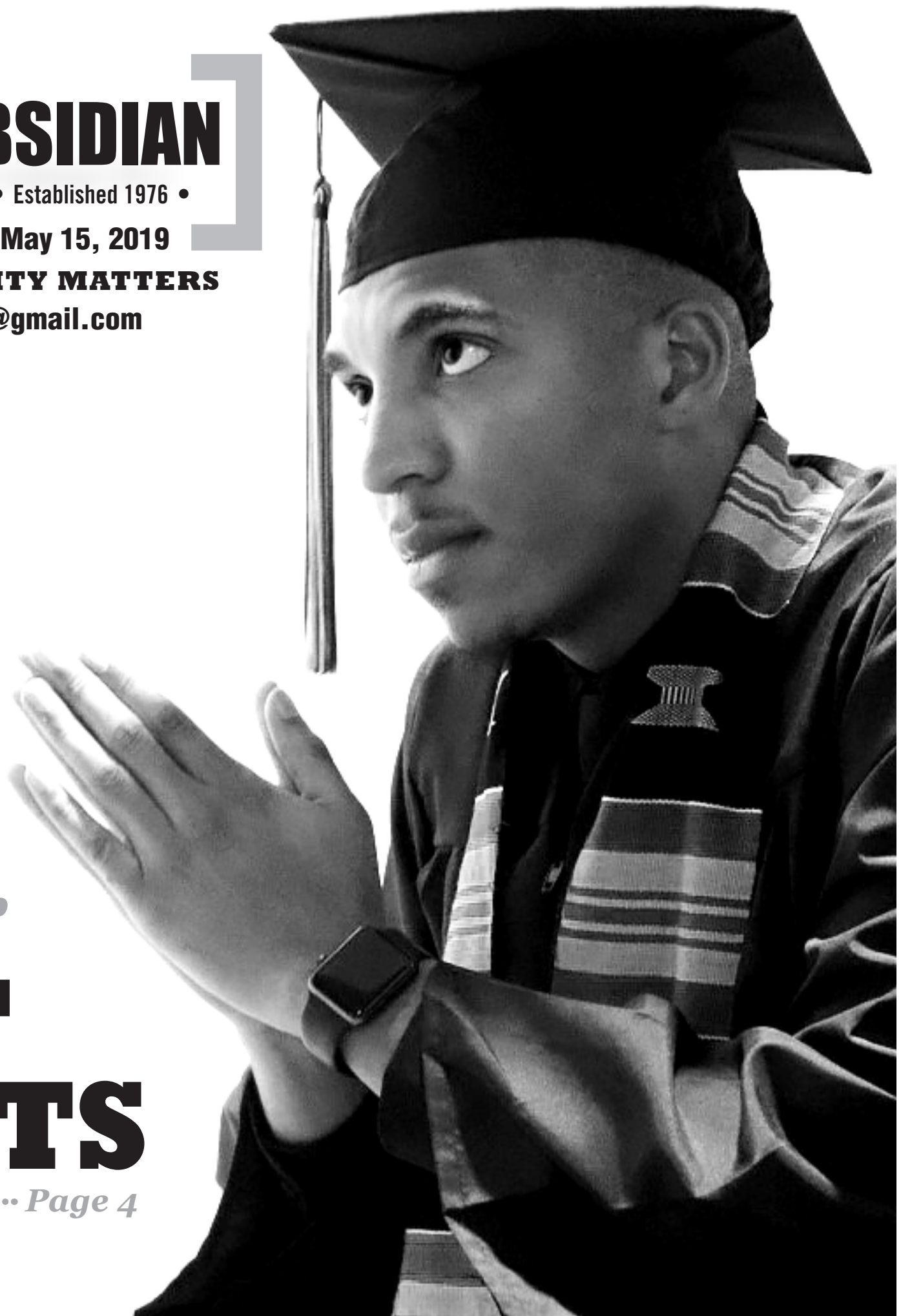
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## Mission Statement

The Obsidian was founded in 1976 on Bowling Green State University's campus and is a news outlet for students of African descent. We are here to provide a voice for the black community. We value the validity of the black experience and the power of the black voice.



KaNesha McDavid / Editor

## Letter from the Editors

Obsidian is not just a paper, but a way for expanding a voice to the minority students here at BGSU. This issue is different from any issue we have created from the Obsidian. It is a Senior Issue shining the light on many great, accomplished and inspirational student leaders on campus. I and Co-editor Tiara Miller have worked very hard on this issue and want to thank our great seniors for their contributions, a great publication team, and our advisor. **CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2019!**

If you would like to join our staff, comment on the publication or suggest story ideas, send us an e-mail at [theobsidianbgsu@gmail.com](mailto:theobsidianbgsu@gmail.com) / follow us on social media @ [obsidian\\_bg](https://www.instagram.com/obsidian_bg)

# GRADUATION

A Poem By  
**MYLES JOHNSON**

Beginning of a new chapter  
Flip the page and see what comes after  
The real world couldn't have come any faster

Early, on-time, or late  
You're here! To Graduate  
No need to stress when that clock says 11:58

Through all of the bull, you are here right now  
Gone head my kings and queens, flex yo new crown  
Yea I'm talking bout that cap, and while you at it straighten that gown  
Because we reflect excellence when we reppin that orange and brown

This wasn't given, it was earned through hard work and dedication  
Lord knows them public schools didn't provide a good education  
We came to college and had to set a new foundation

So yes Congratulations  
To all of the lovely faces who won against society's stipulations  
You are here for graduation. 🌍



# SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



## ELAYSIA PARKS

When I first arrived at Bowling Green State University, I was very unsure of what I would find. I knew I had a lot of things in mind and wanted to make the next 3 years as successful as possible. My main focus was my academics however, I learned that college is much more than that. Over the past 3 years, I have been able to exceed the academic and professional goals I have set for myself, but I have also made lifelong friends, memories, and set a foundation for a successful future. As a first generation, low income, African American woman it was sometimes very difficult navigating through this PWI but I will say BGSU is truly what you make of it. There are recourses to utilize and people here who really want to see you succeed but it is up to YOU to make those connections, seek help, and find a community within this University. Be willing to work, to go hard, and to put yourself out there you never know who you'll evolve into if you give yourself space and opportunity to grow. Graduating at such a young age with so many opportunities at my feet has put a lot into perspective for me. I would not be the woman I am today without God, my family/friends and TRiO. I'm so grateful to have been a part of many organizations/programs such as being a Ronald E. McNair scholar, being apart of XAE national honor society, interning at ICS, and founding my own organization Curly Connection here on campus. I can proudly say I will be graduating on May 18th with honors, interning at Marcus Thomas advertising agency over the summer and also starting my Master's program with finical help from BGSU. I am not the same person I arrived here as and I am so grateful for that.

Thank you BGSU.

Cleveland, Ohio

Major: Communications

## ... DERRICK RODGERS

To the class of 2019 I want to send my deepest congratulations! I know my journey to this point has not been easy so we deserve all the blessings that may come our way. I am standing here after 7 years and 3 different schools to say, with persistence you can accomplish anything you put your mind to.

Columbus, Ohio

Major: Individualized Studies

Minor: Entrepreneurship





# QU TWILLEY .....

**Quote:** "The future rewards those who press on. I don't have time to feel sorry for myself. I don't have time to complain. I'm going to press on." -Barack Obama

**Detroit, Michigan**

**Major:** Social Work



# ..... OPEOLUWA AWE

**M**y time here at Bowling Green has shaped me into the woman I am becoming, from the good times to the bad times they have all molded me and taught me something I never knew I needed. It's crazy to think that my cohort and I are all getting ready to graduate because it feels like we all were just running across the fields to get to the stadium opening weekend our freshman year. I can't thank BG enough for the life lessons it's taught me. Oh... and it's always Green white green until the day I die.

**Lagos, Nigeria; Lima, Ohio**

**Major:** SPMI Psychology



# LEO GOLDMAN .....



**I**enjoyed my time at BGSU very much and learned so many new things that I'll cherish with me the rest of my life. One of the big things I learned was that no matter how you treat people, there are some that will always try to make sure you don't succeed. But as long as you work harder at succeeding than those people work at making you fail, you will never fall short.

**West Bloomfield, Michigan**

**Major:** Communications



# ..... KANESHA MCDAVID

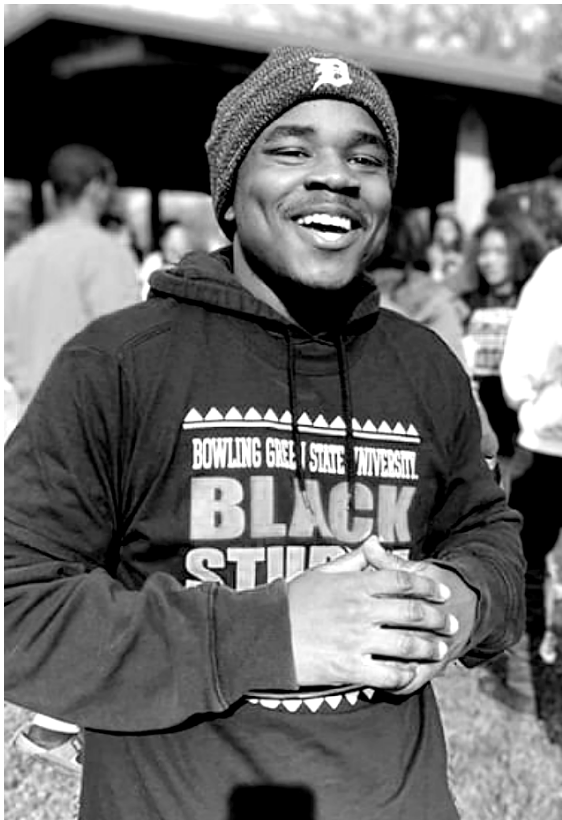
**I**did not know what to expect transferring to Bowling Green State University my sophomore year of college. I will say attending BGSU has been an experience that I will always remember and cherish. I have met so many great friends, professors, and advisors that have contributed to the success I am able to celebrate. As a first-generation college student, I am happy to say I have accomplished a lot with more to come. Congrats to all the 2019 Graduates and thanks BGSU for evolving me into the women I am and will continue to be.

**Springfield, Ohio**

**Major:** Political Science

**Minor:** Psychology





# KYRON SMITH .....

I could not help but make the most of my time here at Bowling Green State University, because I wasn't supposed to be here. It took seemingly divine intervention to allow me to not only go away to school, not only go to school out of state, and not only to be able to stay here for 3 years, but to do so while growing, leading, and evolving into a person who will walk faithfully into the bright and purposeful future he has.

I wasn't supposed to be here. I have a twin that during this first week of May graduated from Baker College, getting through a program far more difficult than mine. She did not get to go away to school, she worked hard from home and succeeded. So with me getting a last minute opportunity to leave home and go away to school, something none of my four siblings or parents were able to do, how could I have not made the most of my time here.

When I applied to BGSU it was because the recruiters that came to my high school did a fabulous job of promoting the University. I applied, was accepted, and got a lot of scholarship money. However, going to this institution with the financial situation my family was in, and a twin sister who equally as bad wants to go away to school, was not feasible, even with the scholarship money I got. BGSU's PLA program was my only hope to being able to come here, but I did not get accepted into the program, maybe I wasn't the leader they were looking for.

Time passed and in essence the Lord provided and I got some last minute funding to afford a year here and it was up to me to develop the creativity and problem solving skills to come up with three more years worth of funds to stay here as my parents assisted where they could. Now in my 3rd year here and graduating in the Fall Semester of the year. I can only be amazed at the provision and the growth God has placed in my life through BGSU.

Since a freshman year of determination, mentor-ship, and heavy campus involvement including Hall Council, Resident Student Association, being a BSU Gold-Member, SMART, and the Falcon Success Initiative, I was able to in my sophomore year become a Resident Adviser, Black Student Union Historian, and an inducted member of the National Society of Leadership and Success. In this Junior/Senior year I was able to become the President of the Black Student Union and implement/build on new programs such as the Black Family Reunion and our Gold-Membership, and along with my executive board create a spirit of activism and engagement that resulted in a reanalysis of how Fraternities on campus are held accountable, community service, and the removal of the Gish Theater name on campus after over 40 years.

I deeply love black community here at BGSU, and I love my school as a whole. They have moved forward in ways I am pleased with, and have allowed me to stand here in my last year far better than when I came. I will be closing out this semester with as a winner of the Ray Marvin Leadership Award, an honor only three student leaders within the entire campus receive! So thinking back, it's okay that PLA did not except me; it is okay that I had to grind it out all my years at school to stay here; I was not supposed to be here. So how could I not do everything I can to show I should be here; I appreciate being here, and everyone else should have an opportunity to do the same.

When I leave here I will attend grad school pursuing either Public Administration or Public Policy, with a goal of helping communities around the country like Detroit or Southfield from which I am both from through government policy and administration.

**Favorite Quote:** "How could I not do everything I can."

**Columbus, Ohio**

**Major:** Political Science

**Minor:** Entrepreneurship and Recreation

# ..... JASMINE JOHNSON

Jasmine Johnson is a rising senior studying Pre-Law Social Work. She has put forth many efforts to be a leader on her campus. Jasmine is now the President of BGSU Law Society, Mentor Liaison for Pretty Brown Girls, a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and an Intern at Community Christian Legal Services. Jasmine takes part in a host of Res Life outreach. Being a former Resident Advisor, she still makes it her duty to ensure incoming freshman feel welcomed on campus. With the hopes of graduating Fall 2019 Jasmine plans to create a program that sheds light on the importance of staying in touch with your religion while being in college. Her favorite all-time quote is "Your mind will believe what you continuously tell it. So, tell it you are smart, ambitious, beautiful, and not afraid to go for it!" You can find Jasmine on YouTube at JasmineTamera where she gives insight on her day-to-day life.

**Detroit, Michigan**  
**Major: Pre-Law Social Work**



# TIARA C. NEAL .....

As a first-generation college student and a black woman, I take pride in receiving my degree on May 18th, 2019 at 2pm. BGSU has taught me many lessons about life, love, highs, and lows. The most important of these lessons being: 1. Life is composed of many singular choices. 2. Being reactive is more important than being proactive cause sometimes you just can't see the future. and 3. Everything works exactly as it should in the end because God doesn't make mistakes. You are exactly where you should be in this moment.

Coming here at 18 and graduating at 23 I see the many different versions of myself I've cycled through during my time here, and the woman I am today because of it is someone I can definitely be proud of.

To those who graduated before me: Thank you for the motivation, the encouragement, the leadership, and the blueprint.

To those who will graduate after me: You got this, don't ever doubt that you do. Run your race at your own pace. Comparison is the thief of joy.

Lastly here's something I think everyone should hear:

Jer. 29:11-13 "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me."

My family, friends, and the Lord. That's how I made it here. It was a wild ride but it was worth it. Congratulations Class of 2019!

**Cleveland, Ohio**  
**Major: Human Development & Family Studies**  
**Minor: Child Development**

# ORGSPO



## *BLACK STUDENT UNION*

The Black Student Union is an organization on campus that advocates and serves the students of color on campus. We do so by hosting community events such as Black Graduation, or Black Family Reunion, as well as a scholarship, opportunities for leadership, and General Bodies typically every other Thursday. Most recently we brought attention to the Gish theater, lead the charge in putting together a task force, and successfully helped rename the Theatre. Also, we are celebrating 50 years of service here in 2019!

Our BSU Exec Board: Kyron Smith, Keyonte' Ashford, Kyle Thompson, JaLynn Livingston, Landen Bates, Bria Jennings, David Via, Jalin Brown, and Jonae Williams.



## *NCNW*

The National Council of Negro Women, Inc. Bowling Green State University Section, est. Spring 08', serves its National Purpose and mission and its collegiate mission which is to lead, develop, advocate, inform, and unify the African American women of Bowling Green State University's campus and its surrounding communities as they support their individual, family, and societal efforts and lifestyles.

NCNW BGSU section strives to sustain an environment that focuses to unite all of those concerned with the welfare of Negro Women. We look forward to seeing you at our general bodies, service, and events!



# TLIGHTS



## *PRETTY BROWN GIRLS*

Pretty Brown Girls is a group of women on BGSU's campus who strive to educate girls of color and encourage self-acceptance by cultivating social, emotional, and intellectual well-being. They also aim to celebrate all shades of brown all over the world. They are a national organization and have to meet many requirements every year in order to stay active. Most of their work is done off of BGSU's campus. The mentoring sessions take place biweekly in the Toledo area. Some popular discussion topics are self-love, academics, relationships, and more! They would like everyone to come together and strive to "Empower a girl, Empower the world". You can find them on Instagram at [pbg\\_bgsu](#).



## *WEBELIEVE*

The WEBelieve Chapter of BGSU offers all students on campus a chance to be a part of our leadership pipeline.

WEBelieve covers a vast array of subjects which include; practicing the five pillars of leadership, learning about natural hair care for WOC, learning about financial literacy, designing business plans, expressing themselves through the arts, and more prominently building sisterhood.

Through general body meetings and events, we have serviced the black community of BGSU by providing a space of comfort through conversations of self-love, in addition to providing valuable information that will accelerate the personal and professional futures' of our members.

Additionally, members receive scholarships to attend the two day Her Legacy Conference and Gala in NYC. Lastly, it's a great honor that the Office of Multicultural Affairs awarded WEBelieve with the Service Student Organization award. As our passion and dedication is to continue to give back and build something bigger than ourselves.

..... *A Warrior's* .....

# ***AFFIRMATION***

A Poem By

**BREANNA JONES**

Born from a Queen's wound, a blessing sent from above

That day was never a mistake

The heart and grace it took to birth a warrior was with unconditional love

A warrior's journey never ends

**PAIN, FAILURE, GRIEF, SACRIFICE, DOUBT, AND FEAR**

She begins to feel the end of the storm is nowhere near

Scars weeping bandages

Open wounds yearning for healing

Body, mind, and spirit is completely damaged

Depression arising, hollering, "I just want my life to be fixed and managed"

Battling day after day, her cries screeches for happiness and peace

A warrior's journey is never effortless

Look in the mirror, Block the spirit of doubt and just Believe

Believe that the journey is already written

.....

A poem to encourage any women who feel that their battles are more than they can handle. Take a moment to breathe and have faith the storm never lasts forever.



Believe that you're not defined by your storm

Fight to stay committed

Committed to keep beating the odds that are trying to break you down

RESILIENT, CONFIDENT, COURAGOUS, WORTHY, PURPOSEFUL

Wipe your tears, repeat these words and find your crown

You were born with an immeasurable soul

With the ability to name your destiny

Stay faithful and keep your eyes on the goal

Be proud of your story, head held high

The fearless, life giver, virtuous you were born to be will never die

As it shaped you to become the woman you are today

Remember Warrior, you are more than you see

Breathe, Take one day at a time

You are loved endlessly 🌍

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