Joyful Memories of Livingston College from a 1972 Alumna

By Patricia Graham, LC’72

It is a pleasure to share my favorite memories of my college years at Livingston. Below is my list of joyful memories:

1) “The Black Woman” class (parts I and II) taught by Professor Sonia Sanchez. Professor Sanchez taught the class in a room that had a kitchen, because she often cooked for us! The setting was cozy and intimate. The guest speakers were accomplished women: poets, authors, politicians.

2) “Black Revolutionary Drama” class, taught by Professor Sanchez. Often the class would act-out the short plays that we were assigned. A favorite memory is when we performed, in class, “In the Wine Time,” for the author Ed Bullins.

3) “Forgotten Black Heroes” class. The professor was excellent, of Caribbean descent. I wish I could remember his name. A memory that sticks with me is my class research topic: Kwame Nkrumah, former president of Ghana. My verbal presentation was very emotional, because Nkrumah died shortly before I completed my research.

4) The class trip, for “Research Techniques African American History” to Harlem, to do our research in the Schomburg Library, which was located in the old historic building at the time. Afterwards, the professor took the class to his apartment for dinner!

5) The first Women’s History Month conference, on campus. I believe it was held in 1971. It was exciting, with lots of speakers, and workshops.

6) I enjoyed the fabulous speakers, poets, writers, jazz musicians, and artists that we were exposed to, as college students. Many of these artists were our professors, such as: Nikki Giovanni, Nathan Heard, Sonia Sanchez, and Toni Cade-Bambara, to name a few. It was a cultural mecca!

Livingston provided me with the basis of a lifetime of cultural and professional interests. As a recently retired college professor, I had the opportunity to develop and teach classes that directly reflected my experiences as a student at Livingston (“Women of the African Diaspora”; and “Frederick Douglass: Social Justice”).

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