

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In celebration of Women's History Month, the School of Information Studies, along with other elite organizations and committees (BLISTS, CSTEP, ISTGO, NANBPWC, and the Africa Initiative Committee), hosted a presentation and panel discussion, on Wednesday, March 24, 2004, by exceptional women who have made significant contributions to the shaping and enrichment of our nation through the information field. The inaugural speaker of the event was Monique Boea, President and Founder of African-American Women in Technology (AAWIT). The panelists consisted of Vicki Dawson, Director of programs for the New York Software Industry Association (NYSIA), and Lena West, Founder and CEO of xynoMedia Technology, a subsidiary of xynoMedia Worldwide.

Two of our BLISTS members who attended the event, Yakima Cobb (Alumni Relations Committee Leader) and Jasmine Thompson (BLISTS Community Service Co-Committee Leader), share their reflections on their experiences at the affair.

Words by Jasmine Thompson - A Purposeful Meeting

With meeting innovative and inspirational women that have succeeded in the field of Information Technology, I have created a new appreciation for my reason to be within the School of Information Studies. By engaging in conversation over lunch, joined by the Dean of IST, members of B.L.I.S.T.S, and many academic advisors, they explained their difficulties and triumphs within the field and the struggles for women, especially of color, to be interested in technology. These three phenomenal women, Monique Boea, Vicki Dawson, and Lena West, provided useful information, which made every individual peak further interest about not only computer functionality, but also opportunities available to



Jasmine Thompson
2004 BLISTS Community Service
Co-Committee Leader

those who are willing to grasp hold. They spoke in detail about internships, organizations and experiences you will be able to gain if you have a destined path set for yourself.

Later in the evening, they held a forum that provided in depth conversation about their childhood lives and their "blueprint" for success. They gave all of who were in attendance, steps to take to change how they view success, and to have set goals and purpose throughout life. Each ensured us that being assertive, not aggressive, is the key to get your "foot in the door" for where you want to be. These women have showed me that my weaknesses will soon turn into strengths, but I should focus on improving my strengths first. Seems kind of ironic, but the logic is true. Now understanding that school is theory, I recognize that many of my obstacles that I thought were difficult are now only stepping-stones to my mountain of success. Lena, Vicki and Monique, thank you.

Words by Yakima Cobb - A Reflection

On the evening of March 24, I had the grand opportunity of being enlightened by a strong panel of insightful African-American women. One woman in particular whose name is Lena West really encouraged me not to allow my weaknesses to hinder me, but yet allows me to strive for nothing but greatness. "Don't work on your weaknesses because they will only then become strong weaknesses, but yet build your strengths and your weaknesses will no longer be weaknesses," says Lena West.

This quote has done nothing but inspire and motivate me as an African American woman to pursue a career in the IT field. Most importantly, my goal to pursue a career in IT has definitely been reassured through the wise words of these three powerful women.



Yakima Cobb
2004 BLISTS Alumni Relations
Committee Leader