

# AKOMA's 2005 Church Roll

**Aeon Baptist Church**  
*Pastor: James L. Cherry*  
 Debra Bell

**Bethel Christian Fellowship**  
*Pastor: Rev. Ron A. Domina*  
 Georgia Ann Prescott

**Breath of Life SDA**  
*Pastor: Elder Wayne Kittleburger*  
 Deseree Bliss  
 Evelyn Greenwade Boltwood  
 Carolyn Butts  
 Roxanne Richardson

**Bridge Builder Ministry**  
*Pastors: Phil & Ruby Harlow*  
 Phyllis Griffin

**Church of Love Faith Center**  
*Pastor: Bishop Gregory L. Parris*  
 Dr. Arlette Miller Smith

**Faith Covenant National Church of God**  
*Pastor: Bishop Lewis Brown, Jr.*  
 Nona Patterson Chambers  
 Esther Pinkston

**Faith, Hope & Charity Worship Center**  
*Pastor: Elders John and Theresa Crocker*  
 Rosa L. Taylor-Payne

**First Church of God**  
*Pastor: Rev. Dr. Dwight Fowler*  
 Myrtle Day  
 Regina Fowler

**Grace Episcopal**  
*Pastor: The Rev. Louise Johnson-Toth*  
 Nina Whitlow Johnson

**Graves Institutional C.M.E.**  
*Pastor: Rev. Robert Byrd*  
 Nancy Walters  
 Eunice White  
 Gloria Wilson

**Immaculate Conception**  
*Pastor: Father Michael Upson*  
 Musette Castle  
 Joanne Gordon  
 Ramona Moore  
 Rose Stokes  
 Mary Wingo

**Jefferson Ave. SDA**  
*Pastor: Brian Carter*  
 Dorothy Wilson  
 Sharon Hurst Williams

**Living Word Full Gospel**  
*Pastor: Rev. Nathan McGill*  
 W. Louise Walker-McBride

**Memorial AME Zion**  
*Pastor: Rev. Errol Hunt*  
 June Johnson  
 Ruth Scott

**Mt. Vernon Baptist**  
*Pastor: Dr. Harmon E. Stockdale*  
 Cheryl Holloway  
 Karen Summers

**New Bethel CME**  
*Pastor: Rev. Raymond Graves*  
 Julia Lawson  
 Anita Simpson

**New Life Fellowship**  
*Pastor: Rev. Reginald & Dr. Cynthia McGill*  
 Martha Wilcox

**Rochester Christian Church**  
*Pastor: Alphonso Galvano*  
 Thella Louis

**Second Baptist - Mumford**  
*Pastor: Rev. Dr. Charles A. Thurman*  
 Marilyn Johnson  
 Marguerite Lucas  
 Catherine Parker  
 Shelley Lucas-Rice  
 Brenda Robinson  
 Hattie Welch  
 Arlene Williams

**Simple Truth Ministries**  
*Pastor: Pastor Rev. Terry Holley*  
 Maggie Moore-Holley

**Spreading The Good News Ministries**  
*Pastors: Ivor & Henrietta Rollock*  
 Myla Wright

**St. Luke/St. Simon's Cyrene**  
*Pastor: Rev. Michael Hopkins*  
 Ruth Anderson

**St. Paul Holiness**  
*Pastor: Rev. Abraham Parker*  
 Kristy Jackson

**Zion Hill Missionary Baptist**  
*Pastor: Rev. Dr. Richard Douglass*  
 Dolores Trimiew

# AKOMA

The African American Women's Gospel Choir

## Tenth Anniversary Scholarship Recognition Concert

“...and with my song will I praise Him”

Psalm 28:7



Saturday – June 11, 2005 – 6:30 PM

Mt. Vernon Baptist Church  
 351 Joseph Avenue  
 Rochester, New York

# AKOMA: A HERSTORJCAL CHRONOLOGY

AKOMA is Rochester's African American Women's Gospel Choir whose Akan name means patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness. AKOMA's Andinkra symbol is the heart which indicates compassion, tenderness and charity.

After a debut performance in August of 1995 for WomenFest - a day-long celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Right to vote-the group of thirty-five women decided to embrace a musical ministry that encompassed both their collective faith and their love for gospel music. Under the direction of Janet Rugless Poles, executive music director; Cheryl Holloway, conductor/soloist; and Dr. Arlette Miller Smith, founder/executive director, the group adopted the name AKOMA because it symbolizes their African heritage while highlighting their strong spiritual roots, along with their desire to serve the Rochester community. In fact, more than 20 Rochester area churches are represented on AKOMA's current roster of members.

In her first year, AKOMA was featured at numerous local programs and concerts. On June 22, 1996, AKOMA made her debut concert and established the Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship in honor of their elder member and adopted choir mother. In that first year, Mother Nona's Scholarship was awarded to three recipients.

Since its inception year, AKOMA has been privileged to sing as the backup vocal group for Grammy Award winner Larnelle Harris; to appear on several radio and television programs including "Many Voices, Many Visions" and "City Wise;" and to provide music for a program featuring Seattle poet laureate Mona Lake Jones who wrote the poem "A Room full of Sisters," which AKOMA has used as her poetic anthem. AKOMA also has been blessed to present a specially commissioned docudrama, "Stirring the Waters, Tending the Pots: Preaching, Speaking, Teaching, and Singing a Black Suffrage Song," at GeVa Theatre; to provide special music at programs honoring Bishop Desmond Tutu and Bishop Violet Fisher; to sing with the Penfield Symphony at two of their holiday concerts; to be the featured guest at SUNY Plattsburg's Annual Gospel Concert; sing at the Clarissa Street Festival; and to create a commissioned work called "Hats Off! Hats Worn: 19th Century African American Women's Work, Worth, and Wisdom" for the Genesee Valley Girl Scouts' National Summer Experience called the Wider Opportunity Freedom Rites Program.

Most recently AKOMA created and presented "From Struggle to Strength: Gospel Then and Now," a major musical/spoken word production at the Strong Museum in which the group chronicled the evolution of gospel music as a means of strength through the struggle for freedom. This piece was written and arranged by AKOMA's executive director, Dr. Arlette Miller Smith, as a part of Strong Museum's, "Making American Music," series. The group also participated in the Baha'i Community's salute to cultural groups in the Rochester area.

Most importantly, since that first concert, AKOMA has awarded more than forty students the Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship. These young women are all exceptional and gifted young vessels advancing God's work while also pursuing educational excellence.

AKOMA desires to continue its ministry of sacred music, orality, and service to God and community. Please call AKOMA's voice mail at 234-6860 or email us at [akomagc@hotmail.com](mailto:akomagc@hotmail.com) if you wish to have our group as part of your program. You may also visit our website at: [www.akoma.org](http://www.akoma.org).

## AKOMA's Tenth Anniversary Scholarship Concert

"...and with my song will I praise Him"

Psalm 28:7

### A Room Full of Sisters

A room full of sisters, like jewels in a crown  
Vanilla, cinnamon and dark chocolate brown...

They were smart, articulate and well-read  
With all kinds of Black history stored in their heads.

Jugglers of professions managers of lives  
Mothers of children, lovers and wives...

A sisterhood of modern Sojourners today  
Still out in front blazing the way.

A room full of sisters like jewels in a crown  
Vanilla, cinnamon and dark chocolate brown.

...Mona Lake Jones in *The Color of Culture*, 1993

### Special Thanks

Ben Pinkston is the husband of our AKOMA Sister Esther Pinkston. He is the son-in-law of Mother Nona. He has been videographer for AKOMA since its debut. He is a devoted husband of Esther for 29 years. Ben and Esther have one son Marshall and one granddaughter, Sabrina. A host of god-children. Whenever you see AKOMA, you are almost sure to see Ben.

Martin (Marty) Kaufman has been principal videographer for WXXI news programs for the past 10 years. Before that, he worked 18 years as a videographer in the Buffalo area. He was the primary videographer for the award-winning "Make Us Safe" documentary, for many award winning episodes of WXXI-Reports and won the videographers awards "Award of Distinction 2001" Marty is a native of Brooklyn NY and graduated cum laude from the State University at Buffalo. He is married to Cindy.

"Just For You Too" Photographers Marilyn J. Power & Queenie H. Allison — 648 Clarissa Street — Rochester, NY 14608 — Capturing The Moment, "Just For You".

Janet Rugless Poles, AKOMA's founding Executive Music director & current resident of Huntsville, AL.

Art Smith, AKOMA Program layout & design and member of Men of AKOMA. Art retires at the end of this month from Electronic Data Systems (EDS).

# "...and with my song will I praise Him" Supporters

Psalm 28:7

(Continued from page 9)

Don Toyer  
James & Alice Walters  
Tracey & Sandra Williams  
Mr. & Mrs. Williams  
Carolyn A. White  
Prudence Wilson  
Harriet Vasciannie

## SPONSORS \$10.00

Queenie Allison  
Anita Barley  
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Henry H. Beason  
Pauletta Beacoats & Marchet  
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Mr. & Mrs. R. Burgess  
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Mrs. Joesetta Jackson  
Martin Kaufman  
Mr. William Royal & Penny Jones  
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## SPONSORS \$5.00

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Barbara Weaver  
Sharon & Nolen Barber  
Terrell Wynn

## The Beginning Herstory & the Founders

### Dr. Arlette Miller Smith

Dr. Arlette Miller Smith, along with the support of musician Janet R. Poles, founded **AKOMA** in the fall of 1995 after the original group of thirty-five African American women singers from various churches throughout Rochester closed the all-day celebration called WomenFest with a gospel concert that incorporated poetry and prose about herstorical and contemporary Black women. WomenFest, held on the grounds of the Memorial Art Gallery on Saturday, August 26, 1995, was designed as an all-female/all cultures tribute within the 95/75 commemoration which recognized the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's right to vote (1920).

From her work with **AKOMA**, Miller Smith became fascinated with the development, transmittal, and reimagination of community as a form of resistance in African American women's vocal traditions. In April of 2005, Miller Smith finished her doctorate in American Studies with a concentration in Women's Studies. In her Dedication, she pays tribute to her **AKOMA** sisters as the catalyst and foundation for her dissertation, "Speaking the Song, Spreading the Word, Lifting the People: The Reimagination of Community Through Vocal Music Activism." While Part 1 establishes the herstorical tenets of resistance as community, Part 2 examines resistance as vocal activism in the contemporary African American women's singing groups, **AKOMA** and Sweet Honey in the Rock. Dr Miller Smith is Dean of Multicultural Affairs & Diversity Programs at St. John Fisher College where she also co-directs the African American Studies minor.



*Dr. Arlette Miller Smith (left) & Janet Rugless Poles (right) with Mother Nona Patterson Chambers (seated).*

### Janet Rugless Poles

Janet Poles, founding Executive Music Director of **AKOMA**, is our visiting musician. Janet is a native Rochesterian and is the mother of three children. She attended Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama where she is presently employed and pursuing a counseling degree. She is an accomplished musician and director of numerous choirs. **AKOMA** is delighted that she is here to join us for our 10th Anniversary Scholarship Concert.



*If you plan for a year, sow a seed;  
If you plan for a decade, plant a tree;  
If you plan for a century, educate the people.*  
— Dr. Addie Mitchell

## Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship

The Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship was named in honor of our **AKOMA** mother, Nona Patterson Chambers. Mother Nona is our eldest and most beloved member. She has served as an example of what it really means to be a dedicated and humble Christian mother. Mother Nona is a faithful member whose quiet manner and beautiful smile make it very fitting that this scholarship be named in her honor. **AKOMA** member Esther Pinkston is Mother Nona's daughter.

### 2005 Scholarship Recipients



**Ashley Brass**

School of the Arts,  
Drama Major.  
Will attend D'Youville College  
with plans to major in  
Occupational Therapy.  
Ashley is in the youth choir and  
an altar server at Immaculate  
Conception Catholic Church.



**Angelica Davis**

Wilson Magnet High School.  
Will attend St. John Fisher  
College and plans to major in  
Psychology. Angelica is a  
member of the nursing guild  
and the youth choir at United  
Missionary Baptist Church.



**Tiffany Ellis**

Rochester Seventh Day  
Adventist Junior Academy,  
Jefferson Ave. Will attend La  
Sierra College and plans to  
major in Clinical Psychology.  
Tiffany is involved in  
Pathfinders and the youth choir  
at the Jefferson Ave. Seventh  
Day Adventist Church.

## "...and with my song will I praise Him" Supporters

Psalm 28:7

### BENEFACTORS - \$50.00 & Up

Breath of Life SDA \$100.00  
First Church Of God \$100.00  
David Alan Rugless \$100.00  
Art & Dr. Arlette Miller Smith \$100.00  
Daniel & Nancy Walters Jr. \$75.00  
Kristy Jackson \$70.00  
Dr. David & Ruth Anderson \$50.00  
Nerlande Anselme \$50.00  
Mr. Matthew Augustine & Family \$50.00  
John & Toni Burr \$50.00  
Estella Coley \$50.00  
Immaculate Conception \$50.00  
Rodric & Jacquelyn Cox-Cooper \$50.00  
Maggie Holley-Moore \$50.00  
Laura McCree \$50.00  
Russell & Patricia Marino \$50.00  
Robin Nowell \$50.00  
EBO & Martina Ocran \$50.00  
St. John Fisher College \$50.00  
(Office of MultiCultural Affairs/Diversity)  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Pough \$50.00  
Stephen H. Shaw & Family \$50.00  
Spreading The Good News Ministries \$50.00  
Rose Stokes \$50.00  
Trimiew Family \$50.00  
Mr. Robert Turner \$50.00

(In memory of Delores Johnson and her commitment  
to the education of our next generation)

Eunice White \$50.00  
Mr. Booker T. Williams \$50.00  
Clyde & Gloria Wilson Sr. \$50.00

### SPONSORS - \$40.00

Graves Inst. CME Church - Pastor Robert Byrd  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Toyer

### SPONSORS \$35.00

Mr. & Mrs. Alton Burns  
Myra Cuff (State Farm Agency)

### SPONSORS \$30.00

Sherard Cox

### SPONSORS \$25.00

Rachel A. Adonis  
Sweet Life Bakery  
Tom Boltwood  
Mrs. Jacqueline R. Bryant  
Mrs. Shirley Catalan  
Chicky (Marilyn) Tisa  
Ogden & Linda Dumas  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Edwards  
Net Fodiaba  
Kenneth & Jennifer Ferguson  
Faith Hope & Charity Worship Center  
(Pastors, Rev. John & Theresa Crocker)  
Mrs. Betty J. Garner  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Glover  
Griffin Barber Shop  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Edwards

Gloria Huddleston  
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Marty Hall Floral Boutique  
Mr. & Mrs. Tallam I. Nguti  
Gloria Read  
Southwest Area Development Corp.  
Corinthia Sims  
Lucy Sprouts  
Sandy & Rich Stein  
Edoraldo Temple  
Rev. & Mrs. Charles Thurman  
Thelma Uter  
Wayne Uter  
Mr. & Mrs. James Walker Jr.  
Vern & Frances Warfield  
Shirley Webb  
Mr. J. Ronald & Mrs. Roxana Weber  
Bobbie West  
Robert & Arlene Williams  
Nina Whitlow Johnson  
Elder Myla & Bro. Tchumsy Wright

### SPONSORS \$20.00

Justine Allen  
Christine Brass & Family  
Christeen Bullard & Family  
(In Memory of Herbert J. Bullard)  
Delores Jones  
Mrs. Denise M. McGowan  
Georgia Prescott  
Jonathan Stokes  
Willard Walters  
Lee Wingo  
Mrs. Frances H. Wright

### SPONSORS \$15.00

Andrea Alexander  
John & Moire Bagale  
Mr. Paul E. Berry  
Pastor Robert & Alice Byrd  
Judith J. Dunbar  
Glenn & Carolyn Edwards  
Leslie C. Edwards  
FCOG Usher Board  
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Florence Jones  
Les Kilian  
Janet McElrath  
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Miller  
Johnnie Powell  
James & Sue Steward  
(In Loving Memory of Clara Lewis & Willie Sullivan)  
Carolyn Thomas  
Mr. & Mrs. William Thomas

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# AKOMA's Music Team



**Karen Summers**

Karen Summers is a retired educator. She taught in the Rochester City School District for 31 years. Karen is currently the Director of Music at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church. She enjoys reading, traveling and collecting bells and dolls. Karen is the Executive Music Director for AKOMA



**Cheryl Holloway**

Cheryl Holloway is currently employed by the City School District as Chief of School Development and Academics. She is married to Oscar Holloway and is the mother of one son Philip. She attends Mt. Vernon Baptist Church where she is the director of several choirs. Her interests include reading, sewing and movies. Mrs. Holloway is an original member of AKOMA and currently serves as the conductor.

## 2004-2005 SCHOLARSHIP COMMISSION

*Musette Castle - Chairperson*

**Ruth Anderson  
Ruth Scott  
W. Louise Walker-McBride**

**Marguerite Lucas  
Rose Stokes  
Nancy Walters**

### 2005 Scholarship Recipients

**Ashley Brass  
Angelica Davis  
Tiffany Ellis**

### 2000 Scholarship Recipients

Tyanisha Brown      Margaret Neal Enis  
Lindsey Green      Deidre Hill  
Brandy Rosier      Sherell Scott  
Leah Thompson      Re'shawna Turner  
Naomi Woffard

### 2004 Scholarship Recipients

Krystal Crawford  
Desiree Israel  
Leslie Pierre-Philippe

### 2003 Scholarship Recipients

Kierstyn Blair  
Kari McCree  
Lauryn Minter

### 1999 Scholarship Recipients

Johnique Ter'esa Billups  
Erica Michelle Bryant  
Kimberly Alecia Thurman  
Sonia Elizabeth Uter

### 2002 Scholarship Recipients

Kekeria Achola Bitek  
Porcia Nicole Hartzog  
Tiffany Nicole Jackson  
Tyra Victoria Kelly  
Starr Celeste Myers  
Nathalie Martin Pierre-Philippe  
Angela Yvonne Stockdale  
Yolanda Renee Uter

### 1998 Scholarship Recipients

La-Toya Dukes  
Katrina Louise Jones  
Tamisha N. Smith  
Melody Terese Williams



### 2001 Scholarship Recipients

Peta-Gae Andrade      Shemeka Davis  
LaTia Dukes      Takara Gray  
Aja Houston      Brandi Howard  
Shakira Nelson      Natasha Nichole Stevens  
Delora Nicole Turner      Kirkshinta Turnipseed  
Uwem Udofa

### 1997 Scholarship Recipients

Tameka Avant  
Danielle Gaston  
Yuressa Hubbard  
Rashida Moore

### 1996 Scholarship Recipients

April N. Anderson  
Donnye Graham  
Shalewa Hardaway

# AKOMA's Tenth Anniversary Scholarship Concert

"...and with my song will I praise Him"

Psalm 28:7

Saturday, June 11, 2005 - 6:30 pm

Mt. Vernon Baptist Church

Rochester, NY

## Invocation

Rev. Dr. Harmon Stockdale, Sr.

## "Room Full of Sisters"

Mona Lake Jones, Author

Dr. Arlette Miller Smith

## Processional

Caribbean Praise 2002

## Welcome and Introduction

Dr. Arlette Miller Smith

<b>Selections</b>	<b>We Give You Praise</b>	<b>2000</b>
	<b>I Have A Testimony</b>	<b>1997</b>
	<b>When the Saints Go to Worship</b>	<b>2001</b>
	<b>I Will Sing Praises</b>	<b>1998</b>

**Soloist: Regina Fowler**  
**Soloist: W. Louise Walker-McBride**  
**Soloist: Cheryl Holloway**

## Scholarship Presentations

### Tribute to Mother Nona Patterson Chambers

Scholarship Committee

Poem  
Poem

Marguerite Lucas  
Donnye Graham

## Freewill Offering

### Selections

<b>The Joy of the Lord</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>With My Whole Heart</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Ain't That Good News</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>I Still Have Joy</b>	<b>2004</b>

**Soloist: Esther Pinkston**

**Soloist: Maggie Moore-Holley**

### Remarks and Acknowledgments

Nancy Walters, President of AKOMA

### Closing Selection

Order My Steps

Present and Former  
AKOMA Members  
**Soloist: Martha Davis Wilcox**

### Benediction

Rev. Dr. Harmon Stockdale, Sr.

### Recessional

Please join us in the fellowship hall for refreshments & to view AKOMA memorabilia

## Officers

Executive Director/Founder  
Executive Music Director  
President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Chaplain  
Parliamentarian  
Historian

- Dr. Arlette Miller Smith  
- Karen Summers  
- Nancy Walters  
- Dolores Trimiew  
- Ruth Anderson  
- Gloria Wilson  
- Phyllis Griffin  
- Georgia Prescott  
- Eunice White

## Musicians

Organ  
Drummer  
Guest Musician

- Karen Summers  
- Tony Payne  
- Janet Rugless Poles

## Conductor

- Cheryl Holloway

## Hospitality

Nina Johnson, Chair  
Magelene Moore-Holley  
Marilyn Johnson  
Ruth Scott  
Rose Stokes  
Rosa L. Taylor Payne  
Gloria Wilson  
Myrtle Day  
Arlene Williams

## Hostesses

Antionette Barrett  
Pat Dillard  
Tamisha Smith

## Technical Support

Esther Pinkston, Chair  
Julia Lawson  
Anita Simpson  
Dorothy Wilson

## Photography/Video

Benjamin Pinkston  
Martin Kaufman, WXXI-TV  
Just For You Too

## Ushers

Sharon Hamilton Barber  
Clara Bennett  
Clara Forbers  
Cheryl Johnson  
Valerie White Whittick

## Offering

Men of AKOMA

## Program Committee

Dolores Trimiew Co-Chair  
Rose Stokes Co-Chair  
Dr. Arlette Miller Smith  
Nancy Walters  
Karen Summers  
Ruth Anderson  
Anita Simpson  
Joanne Gordon, Media Coordinator  
Phyllis Griffin

## Greeters

Zula Bostic  
Cathy Garfield  
Olive Williams



## AKOMA Program Participants

**Anthony (Tony) Payne, Jr.** is a member of the New Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Buffalo, where Dr. John W. Williams is his pastor. He is an active member serving in the youth choir. Anthony is a fifth grade honor roll student at MLK #39. Anthony began playing the drums at a very young age and at the age of six, he began playing for his church. Anthony is fully aware that his talent is a gift from God and it is not to be taken lightly. It is his desire that all of you who believe in prayer, will pray for his dad and other parents who are serving over in Iraq.

**Donnye J. Graham** is the daughter of AKOMA member, Gloria Wilson. She has a B.A. degree in Sociology from SUNY Brockport and is the mother of a 5 year old son, Jadyne Xavier. Donnye is a member of New Born Fellowship Church and is the director and coordinator of the youth dance and praise team. Ms. Graham was one of AKOMA's first scholarship recipients.

**Marguerite Lucas** is one of AKOMA's original Sisters. She is a member of Second Baptist Church in Mumfordsville NY where she is in the choir and edits the church's newsletter. Marguerite is the mother of 5 including AKOMA Sister Shelly Lucas Rice. She is also the grandmother of 8 and great-grandmother of 10. She is a retiree from Lawyers Co-op after 25½ years and currently is a Para-professional in the City School District. Marguerite is also co-chair of AKOMA's Public Relations Committee.