



Dr. Arlette Miller Smith
Founder and
Artistic Director

Ms. Gloria Brooks
Executive Music Director

**African American
Women's Gospel Choir**

**RISE UP:
Lift Every Voice**

Isaiah 60:1

**23rd ANNUAL
SCHOLARSHIP CONCERT**

Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
141 Adams Street - Rochester, NY 14608

Saturday, June 9, 2018
6:30 p.m.

AKOMA: A HERSTORJCAL CHRONOLOGY

AKOMA HERSTORY 2017-2018

We cannot change the past, but we can change our attitude toward it. Uproot guilt & plant forgiveness. Tear out arrogance & seed humility. Exchange LOVE for hate; [thereby, making the present comfortable & the future promising.] -Maya Angelou

OVERVIEW

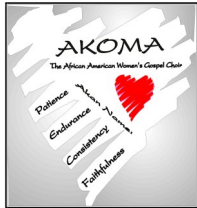
AKOMA is Rochester's African American Women's Gospel Choir whose West African Akan name means patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness. AKOMA's Adinkra symbol, the heart, indicates compassion, tenderness and charity. AKOMA's vocal and spoken word ministry is rooted in the African American sacred song and oral traditions.

After a debut performance in August of 1995 for Woman Fest-a day-long celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Women's Right to vote-the group of thirty-five women decided to embrace a musical ministry that reflects their diverse faith traditions and love for gospel music. The group adopted the name AKOMA because it symbolizes their African heritage, spiritual roots and desire to serve the Rochester community. Dr. David A. Anderson/Sankofa recommended the name AKOMA, based on research and knowledge of the group's mission. Twenty-six Rochester area churches currently are represented on AKOMA's 2018 roster of forty seven active sister-members.

On June 22, 1996, AKOMA made her debut concert and established the Nona Patterson Chambers (NPC) Scholarship in honor of her elder member and adopted mother. Three recipients received the Mother Nona Scholarship in its first year. Since that time and including the eleven 2018 recipients, AKOMA has awarded one hundred and twenty-five college-bound young African American women, a portion of the more than \$149,594 collected as a part of the NPC Scholarship fund.

2017-2018 AKOMA Concert Year

Under the dedicated leadership of Founder/Executive Director, Dr. Arlette Miller Smith and Executive Music Director, Gloria Brooks, AKOMA began her twenty-third program year singing on the Gospel Exchange stage at the Clarissa Street Reunion on August 19,



2017. The following week she sang for the funeral of Rev. Verniece Warfield. AKOMA again participated in the Fringe Festival Gospel Concert in Kilborn Hall on September 17. In November, AKOMA sang during a special recognition program for our sister, Cheryl Johnson. Additionally AKOMA participated in the Two Hundredth Birthday Celebration honoring Frederick Douglass in February. She again shared praises with the Voices of Thunder during the City of Rochester's Annual Heritage Concert on February 17, 2018. It was a special honor for AKOMA to sing during the funeral services for Congresswoman Louise Slaughter and also for our beloved AKOMA man, Abraham Butts. In April, AKOMA was a featured participant in the MLK50 "Rise Up, Know Justice, Know Peace" program sponsored by St. John Fisher College. We look forward to presenting our 23rd

annual scholarship on June 9, 2018 at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church when we will recognize eleven young ladies with our Nona Patterson Chambers scholarship.

ADDITIONAL CHRONOLOGY (See AKOMA.org for complete herstory)

Since her 1995 inception year, AKOMA has been privileged to sing with Grammy Award winner Larnelle Harris; to appear on a number of local television shows; to provide music for a program featuring Seattle poet laureate Mona Lake Jones who wrote the poem, "A Room Full of Sisters" which AKOMA uses as her spoken word anthem; to provide the music for programs honoring Bishop Desmond Tutu; to sing with the Penfield Symphony at several of their annual holiday concerts; and to be featured at the National Black Catholic Congress Conference in Buffalo, New York. Early in her spiritual life, AKOMA also was blessed to present a commissioned docudrama, "Stirring the Waters, Tending the Pots," written by her founder, Arlette Miller Smith. "Stirring," a suffrage-related drama, was performed at Geva Theatre as a part of the 150th anniversary of the women's rights convention at Seneca Falls.

AKOMA's current Executive Music Director is Gloria Brooks; the Scholarship Commission Chair is Donna M. Jones; the Director of Bookings and Concert Confirmation is Ruth Anderson. The Founder, Executive & Artistic Director is Dr. Arlette Miller Smith.

The herstory of AKOMA's evolution as an organization is the title of the unpublished dissertation: *Speaking the Song, Spreading the Word, Lifting the People---The Reimagination of Community Through Vocal Music Activism* (2005) by Dr. Arlette Miller Smith. Allison Thorp's 2016 dissertation, *Testify, Heal, Empower: A Phenomenological Investigation of Three Urban, socially Identified, Community Choirs*, includes the music, message, and ministry of AKOMA.

For AKOMA concert bookings, please email akomagc@gmail.com; visit our website at www.akoma.org; "like" us on Facebook; and Twitter.

And with my song... will I praise Him. (Ps. 28:7)



Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
~ Nelson Mandela

Knowledge is like a garden; if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested.
~ African Proverb

Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship (June 30, 1910—December 24, 2011)

The Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship was named in honor of our AKOMA mother, Nona Patterson Chambers. Mother Nona’s life exemplified the meaning of the word AKOMA because she demonstrated patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness. As a revered elder of Faith Covenant National Church of God in Christ, Mother Nona encouraged all youth. She served as an example of what it means to be a dedicated and humble Christian. Mother Nona received a third grade education but returned to school as an adult to complete her education. Her quiet manner, Christian beliefs, and steadfast loyalty to her family and choir make it fitting that AKOMA’s scholarship is named in her honor.

2017-2018 AKOMA SCHOLARSHIP COMMISSION

Donna M. Jones - Chairperson

Ruth Anderson
Emma “Cheri” Miller
Rose Stokes

Gloria McCullough
Esther Pinkston
Wynndy Turner

2018 AKOMA NPC Scholarship Recipients

Diamond V. Carter

Diamond Carter is the daughter of Pastors Darryl and Viatta Carter. She will graduate from Eastridge High School as an Urban League Black Scholar and attend State University of New York at Purchase, majoring in Journalism. She aspires to become a Travel Journalist. Her activities include Varsity Tennis, Show Choir and the National Honor Society. Diamond attends Joint Heirs Kingdom Ministries where she is active as a Praise Team Leader and a Youth Leader serving in the Youth Outreach Ministry, JHKM Clothing and Food Drives, and the Open Door Mission Ministry.

Nubia I. Cromartie

Nubia Cromartie’s mother is Takisha Times. Nubia is an Urban League Black Scholar attending Pittsford Sutherland High School and plans to attend Nazareth College with Physical Therapy as her major. She intends to become a doctor of Physical Therapy. Nubia’s activities include Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field, Diversity Club, and Sources of Strength. She also works part-time at Freedom School as a Junior Servant Leader and at a local retailer as a cashier. She attends New Life Fellowship where she is active as a Choir Member, a Teacher’s Assistant, a Flag Ministry member, and as a Missionary to Haiti.

2017 AKOMA Scholarship Recipients (cont'd)

Abena Essah

Abena Essah is the daughter of Victor and Evelyn Essah. She will graduate from Rush Henrietta Senior High School as an Urban League Black Scholar. She will attend Vanderbilt University where she will major in Biomedical Engineering. She hopes to continue her education in medical school as a Physician with a concentration in Medical Imaging. Abena's activities include Junior Varsity Basketball, Modified A Soccer, Chamber Orchestra, Celtic Music Ensemble, Tri-M Honor Society and the National Honor Society.

Danitra T. Dixon

Danitra Dixon's parents are Rita Gaston and Jeffery Dixon. She is an Urban League Black Scholar at Rochester Early College International High School and plans to attend Buffalo State where she will major in Nursing. She hopes to obtain a BSN degree with a focus on pediatrics. Danitra's activities include Upward Bound, the University of Rochester Healthcare Technology Youth Apprenticeship and the National Honor Society. She attends First Genesis Baptist Church where she serves in the Youth Choir, Dance Ministry and the Straight from the Heart Community Outreach Ministry.

Arielle B. Mahoney

Arielle Mahoney is the daughter of Susan M. Brown. She will graduate from Young Women's College Prep Charter School as an Urban League Black Scholar and then attend Nazareth College, majoring in Education. She aspires to become a teacher. Her activities include Bible Club Founder and Vice President of the National Honor Society. Arielle attends Lakeshore Community Church where she is active as a Student Shepard, a Youth Leader for the Flower City Work Camp and as a member of the Ignite Student Ministries Café.

Jazmine C. Saunders

Jazmine Saunders' mother is Nyla Saunders. Jazmine is an Urban League Black Scholar attending Greece Odyssey Academy where she is the class valedictorian. She will attend The Eastman School of Music, majoring in Vocal Performance. Jazmine's goal is to become an Opera Singer. Her activities include Student Council, Odyssey Music and Drama, Symphonic Band, and the National Honor Society. Jazmine attends Faith Temple in Brighton, where she is active as a Praise and Worship Leader, FT Dance Team member and a Nursery team member.

Makalah S. Sizer

Makalah Sizer's parents are Kevin and Marcy Sizer. She will graduate from Brighton High School as an Urban League Black Scholar and attend Nazareth College majoring in Business. She hopes to obtain a Master's Degree in Sports Management. Makalah's activities include Varsity Basketball, Senior Class Representative and is a Scholar Athlete. She attends Peace Missionary Baptist Church where she serves as a Youth Dance Ministry Choreographer / Dancer, a Sound Booth member and as a Photographer.

Miyah S. Sizer

Miyah Sizer is the daughter of Kevin and Marcy Sizer. She is an Urban League Black Scholar who will graduate from Brighton High School and attend Nazareth College pursuing a major in Physical Therapy. Her activities include Varsity Basketball, Varsity Outdoor Track and Field, Student Senate. She is also a Scholar Athlete. Miyah attends Peace Missionary Baptist where she heads the Youth Dance Ministry and also serves as a Photographer and a member of the Sound Booth.

2017 AKOMA Scholarship Recipients (cont'd)

Shaneice D. Suckoo

Shaneice Suckoo's spiritual mother is Phillipa Wynter-Stuart. Shaneice will graduate from Edison Career and Technology High School as an Urban League Black Scholar and attend Buffalo State University majoring in Biology. Her goal is to become an Obstetrician/Gynecologist. Shaneice is the Track and Field Student Manager, a Peer Mediator, Choir Member and Edison Step Team member. She attends Glory House International where she is a Choir Member and Praise Team Leader.

Jaylah J. Wilson

Jaylah Wilson's parents are Eugene and Melinda Wilson. She will graduate from Churchville Chili High School and attend Cazenovia College, majoring in Biology. She aspires to become a Physician. Her activities include Varsity Golf Captain, Choral Vice President and the Foreign Language Honor Society. Jaylah attends Higher Ground Ministries Church of God where she is active as a Praise and Worship Leader, Praise Dance Ministry member and as the Audio and Visual Ministry Director.

Jordan S. Wynn

Jordan Wynn is the daughter of Jeff and Jill Wynn. Jordan is an Urban League Black Scholar attending Allendale Columbia School and will be attending NY University (NYU) pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree in Dance and Performance. Jordan desires to become a Professional Contemporary Dancer. Her activities include Student Council President, Community Service Club, the Draper Center for Dance Professional Training Program, and the Rochester City Ballet. She attends New Life Fellowship where she serves in the Choir, Flag Ministry and Dance Ministry.



The 2018 NPC Recipients have been awarded scholarships based on their grade point average; written essay; school, church and community activities; letters of recommendation; and personal interview. The recipients' biographical information is provided by Commissioner Donna M. Jones.

“RISE UP: Lift Every Voice”

AKOMA's 23rd Annual Scholarship Concert Programme

Isaiah 60:1 “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

♥♥♥ Praise, Prayer, Preparation ♥♥♥

Director of Ceremonies

**Dr. Arlette Miller Smith,
Founder/Artistic Director**

Processional

Invocation

**Rev. Patrick Crumity
Youth Pastor Mt. Olivet Baptist Church**

AKOMA Introduction

Carmen Allen, Vice President

Welcome

Dr. Arlette Miller Smith

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

**Arranged by Roland M. Carter
Director: Julius Dicks
Music by Rosamond Johnson**

♥♥♥ Part I ♥♥♥

“Trust In You”

**Soloist: Sylvia Walker
Director: Kathy Damann
Music by Anthony Brown**

“High Praise”

**Soloist: Barbara Johnson
Director: Colette Hardaway
Music by Judith McAllister**

“He's A Wonder “

**Soloist: Patricia Cathey
Director: Kathy Damann
Arranged by Dr. Karry D. Wesley
and the Antioch Fellowship Church Voices**

♥♥♥ Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship Recognition ♥♥♥

Scholarship Presentations

**Donna M. Jones: Scholarship Commission Chair &
Commission Members**

♥♥♥ Part II ♥♥♥

Offering

Mt. Olivet Ushers & AKOMA Men

Offering Prayer

Sister Maggie Moore Holley

♥♥♥ **Part III** ♥♥♥

“Negro Spiritual Medley”

Soloist: Carmen Allen
Director: Gloria Brooks
Arranged by Paulo Rowlands

“Swing Low Sweet Chariot”

Soloist: Carmen Allen
Director: Gloria Brooks
Arranged by GMWA Men's Chorus

“He Steps In”

Soloist: Shelly Fowler
Director: Colette Hardway
Arranged by Wheeler Ave.
Baptist Church Mass Choir

“Rise Up”

Soloists: Barbara Johnson & Mary Kendt
Director: Gloria Brooks
Arranged by Andra Day

Special Prayer/Benediction

Rev. Frederick Dicks
Senior Pastor Baptist Temple

Recessional

♥♥♥ **GLORIA ANN BROOKS, Executive Music Director** ♥♥♥

Evangelist Gloria Ann Brooks is a native of Florida. She graduated from Stetson University in DeLand, Florida with a Bachelor of Music degree. She came to Rochester, NY to pursue a Master of Music degree from the prestigious Eastman School of Music. After completing the Teacher Certification Program, she became a Music Teacher for the Rochester City School District from which she retired in June 2017.

Evangelist Brooks has served as both musician and choir director for numerous churches in the Rochester Community. Currently, she serves as Minister of Music at her home Church, Joint Heirs Kingdom Ministries under the Leadership of Pastor Darryl Carter, and Immaculate Conception Church.

Ms. Brooks has received numerous honors and awards. She was selected to receive the South Lake Black Achiever's Award in Leesburg, FL. She has been honored by Rochester's distinguished "Links" Society and received the White Rose Friendship Community Service Award. MJS Productions presented her with the 2016 Artistry Award.

Evangelist Brooks became the Music Director for AKOMA in the Fall of 2012. She continues to serve as the Music Director for the Omega Select Chorus. Not only is she an accomplished musician and director of music, she is anointed by God. She is a woman of God who is dedicated and committed to ministering healing to the sick, deliverance to the captives and encouragement to the saints through her ministry of music as her primary mission in life.

Evangelist Brooks gives God all the glory for her many accomplishments and is looking for God to do even "GREATER" things in and through her.

“RISE UP: Lift Every Voice” Supporters

Isaiah 60:1

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(Continued on page 10)

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Isaiah 60:1

(Continued from page 9)

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Joyce Wilson
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**** AKOMA's scholarship is named after Nona Patterson Chambers**

Adinkra symbols legend: Sankofa (sang-ko-fah): wisdom “Go back and fetch it”; Nsoroma (n-soar-row-mah): faith & leadership; Tabono (tah-bow-no): strength and persistence; Hye-Wo-Nhye (she-wo-n-shee): forgiveness & durability; Nyame Nti (n-yah-may n-tee): by God’s grace; Eban: love, safety and security "fence".

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Gloria McCullough

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Pastor: Rev. Keith Patterson
Ruth Anderson
Irene Marrero

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Pastor: Pierre Duplessis
Loretta Armstrong

West Henrietta Baptist Church

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Peter Grinion
Patricia Floyd

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