

SOBA Royalty

By Deborah Afolabi '21

During Black History Month, the Society of Black Alumni (SOBA), in partnership with the Council for an Inclusive, Thriving, and Equitable Community (CITE-C), hosted a virtual talent show where contestants could submit a 90 second or less video that reflected the black experience, history, culture, and excellence. Once all submissions were in, the Albright community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni voted on who they thought should be the winner! The month ended with a networking event with the Society of Black Alumni where students and alumni could connect and witness the unveiling of their 2021 SOBA King, Queen, or Royalty!

Without further ado....

Meet your 2021 SOBA Queen, Kelly-Anne Wilson '24



Kelly-Anne is an Arts Administration and Business co-major on a Pre-Law track, while working for the Fund for Albright. She is an active member of several student organizations – Student Government Association (SGA), African American Society (AAS), Albright Arts Magazine (AM), and Albright Visual Arts Organization (AVAO) – as well as serves on the Executive Board of one of Albright's newest working organizations, the Black Women Leadership Association (BWLA), as their social media chair.

On her piece, "Black Child," Kelly-Anne says, "The audio in this video is from the poem "Hey Black Child" by Useni Eugene Perkins, Bryan Collier and read by P. R. Jackson. This inspired the name of my submission as well.

Graffiti has been around since prehistoric times and is used to express direct and indirect thoughts, images, and emotions. Growing up in predominately African American neighborhoods, it's common to see graffiti on everything from streets signs, to sidewalks, and buildings alike.

My lively city was tagged with murals and markings to serve as a reminder of the people's existence here on Earth, at all times and places. In a way, this video is my own personal graffiti painted onto the canvas of Albright's diverse history. My graffiti is to encourage black men and women here to live on despite life's hardships and keep pressing on. I know that together we can accomplish anything that we are disciplined enough to do.

Today, we face a pandemic that will go down in history

We would also like to shoutout our runner-up's, Gabriella Rene '23 and Trinity Peters '22!



Gabriella is a double major in Political Science and History with a minor in Legal Studies, working for the Fund for Albright and as a student Ambassador. She competes on Albright's Womens Track and Field team, is a CITE-C Student Representative, serves as the Triangle Correspondent and Historian of Albright's Sigma Kappa chapter, and is also serving on the Executive Board of BWLA as the SOBA Liaison.

Her piece was "Unbox the Black Woman," to which she said, "To me Rico Nasty just shows how a Black Woman can be more than one thing. She makes me feel seen and heard. She reminds me that I don't have to fit into the box that society has set for me and I can express myself however I want to, this is my life, and I should love it how I want to without fear."

and marches for racial equality and justice across the world. But we also lived through some amazing things as well, like seeing America's first black President and Vice President! We got to witness so much firsthand, so imagine how heavy the textbooks for our lifetime could be. We take on the responsibility to share this history down through the next generations to inspire and encourage the youth."

Remember,

Black
From the skin, to hair,
to the way we dress,
to our art,
and even the way we speak
is all beautiful.
Black. Is. Beautiful!
You. Are. Beautiful!



Trinity is a Fashion Design and Merchandising major, also working for the Fund for Albright. She is the president of the Students of Caribbean-African Association (SOCAA) and she too serves on the Executive Board of BWLA as the Recruitment Chair.

She wanted to shed some insight on her submission, "to the dreamers," which she wrote three years ago, but is sad that it is still relevant today: "I wanted to submit my poem about Black dreams in response to the prompt about excellence because I thought that there are many accomplishments many black people have made and continue to make – such as Beyonce having the most Grammy's as a female artist – but there are some dreams that cannot be realized because they die with those whose lives have been taken too early. It's also harder for black people to go about their dreams because of the systematic barriers that are against them, myself included. I wanted to write a poem to bring awareness to the dying of black people and their dreams, especially black women."

You can watch all of the 2021 submissions on the [Society of Black Alumni page](#) on the Albright College website!
Stay tuned for next year's competition!