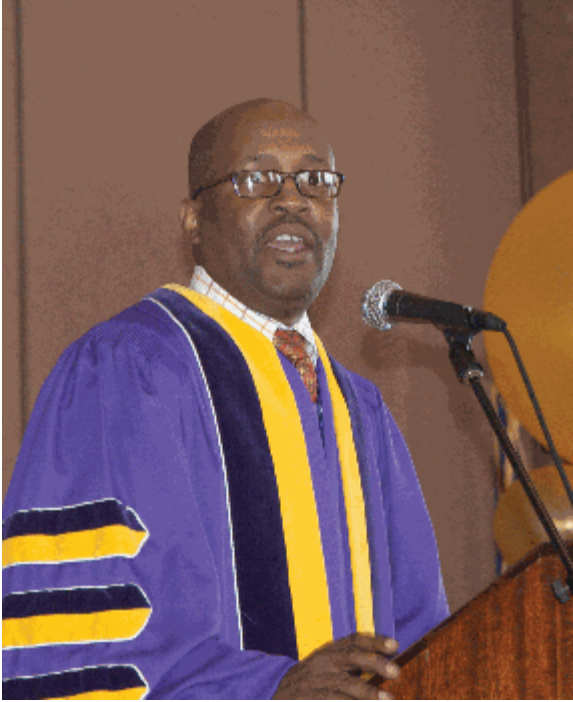


Assemblyman Towns addresses downstate program graduates

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Darryl C. Towns

"What now?" Assemblyman Darryl C. Towns (D-54th, Brooklyn) asked the 90 graduates who received master's degrees during Alfred University's commencement ceremony June 19 for those in its downstate program. Their new degrees - in counseling and literacy - give them "a real key" to effect change, Towns said, urging them to use their degrees as "tools to make a difference" in their communities, and in the lives of the students they touch as counselors and teachers. He touched upon the history of King Alfred, for whom the University is said to be named and who ruled in southern England during the ninth century. (See <http://www.alfred.edu/gla...>). Quoting from the inscription on the base of a statue in memory of King Alfred in Winchester, England, Towns said "'Alfred found learning dead, and he restored it. Education neglected, and he revived it. The laws powerless, and he gave them force. The Church debased, and he raised it. The land ravaged by a fearful enemy, from which he delivered it. Alfred's name will live as long as mankind shall respect the past.'" "Alfred was the Obama of his time," said Towns, reminding the new graduates that as difficult as things may be today, there have been difficult times in the past, and leaders willing to correct the ills. "Now is not the time to sit around and talk about the perilous situation we are in, but to get moving, to find solutions," Towns said. "Your degree is a vital tool. Use your tools, your energy and your vision." Alfred University President Charles M. Edmondson bestowed a Presidential Order of Merit on Towns, honoring him "for his exemplary commitment to and support of education for the residents of his district." A Presidential Order of Merit was also bestowed upon Dr. James Dougherty, director of the Center for Integrated Teacher Education (CITE), through which Alfred University operates its master's level programs in the New York City area. Edmondson cited Dougherty for his "commitment to improving the teaching profession, and those who practice it, and for his dedication to providing young people with the best possible classroom experience." Recipients of the James F. Dougherty Award for Excellence in Professional Counseling were: Charmaine E. Burton, Valerie J. Kokelaar, Susan A. Lang, Stacy D. Lyles, Jessica N. O'Connell and Katherine Silva. The award recognizes counseling students who consistently demonstrate excellence and a high level of professionalism in both the academic and applied aspects of developing a professional counselor identity. Student speakers were Allan Raymondo, Brenda Glasse, Makeeda Carter and Kimberly Ludwig. Field supervisors recognized for their contributions to the success of the counseling program were: Yoland Hendley-Bagley, Washington Irving High School; Lionel Labadia, M.S. 61, the Dr. Gladstone H. Atwell Middle School; and Myrna Lewis, Downtown Young Adult Borough Centers Program. The ceremony, held in the rotund at

Kingsborough Community College, was Alfred University's third graduation for students who complete their master's degrees by attending classes weekends throughout the school year, and also spend a week during the summer on the AU main campus in Western New York. Sixty-five received their degrees in counseling, and 25 received their degrees in literacy education. More than 300 people have now earned their advanced degrees through the program, with another 99 currently taking classes and more to enter in the fall. This academic year, Alfred University will launch two additional master's degree programs through CITE. A program in Community Services Administration (public administration) and one in Business Administration will be offered at locations in Brooklyn. For additional information, see <http://www.alfred.edu/gra...>