

Joyful noise anticipated on Hampton U. Founder's Day

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By Shatika Rembert

Rylan A. Harris, a senior English Arts major from Philadelphia, said, "The Hampton Choirs has such a rich history, making the choir just as old as the University itself. The Hampton Choirs sings a variety of spirituals and hymn arrangements that were written by loyal Hamptonians for Hampton University." The Gospel Choir sings spirituals, but with a more contemporary feel.

Harris has been serving as Tenor I in the University Choir, Gospel Choir (His Chosen Sounds), and Concert Choir his entire time attending Hampton. Before he became student director for the choir, he said he "had to sign in, pick an audition time, show up, and sing the prepared piece of your choice. I learned very quickly that there was no time for nervousness; just stand up there and give it all you have."

Harris became inspired to join the choir when he first heard them senior year in high school.

"My fondest **Founder's Day** choir memory was my freshman year. We sang Moses Hogan's arrangement of '**Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho,**' and boy did we have fun. It must have been over 200 voices on that stage in Ogden, and I still remember the adrenaline rushing."

Harris feels that the choir is "a family and that will never change. Being a part of the choirs opened so many doors for me and there's not anything I wouldn't do for Hampton Choirs – not a thing I wouldn't do."

Taylor Robinson, a sophomore psychology major from Aurora, Ill., has also participated in choir since freshman year. She said, "I decided to join because music is a big part of my life, and I wanted to get involved with things that I love." Robinson, second soprano, serves as the secretary for His Chosen Sounds Gospel Choir and sang for Founder's Day last year. "It's always a great experience. University Choir and Gospel Choir get to come together to practice and perform," said Robinson.

One of the Founder's Day practices began with singing in Ogden Hall. The director motioned the choir to go up the balcony to sing in order to practice projecting their voices to all areas of the auditorium. As soon as they began to sing, the chairs began to vibrate with the tenors' base and the ladies' harmonies all in sync.

Deanna G. Walker, a senior five-year MBA from Richmond, Va., celebrates her birthday on Founder's Day. When she wakes up to go perform she appreciates the importance of Founder's Day, even though she would prefer not to wake up early on her birthday. Walker manages to balance her social life with choir by making a schedule of choir practice, which is always the same time unless it's Founder's Day or some other enormous event.

"We practice twice a week," said Walker, "and practice more since it's

Founder's Day, especially Saturday."

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