



Media Release Public Relations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Riva Brown

Date: February 19, 2007

Administration Tower, Second Floor
Post Office Box 17490
Jackson, MS 39217
Fax: (601) 979-5833
Phone: (601) 979-1571
Web: www.jsums.edu
E-mail: riva.brown@jsums.edu

JSU ESTABLISHES SCHOLARSHIP TO HONOR PHYSICS GRADS

(JACKSON, Miss.) – Jackson State University has officially established a scholarship in honor of two outstanding physics graduates who died in November.

The Kristy and Trista Physics Scholarship is named for Kristy Lorraine Murray, 23, of Hazlehurst, Miss., and Trista Danielle Martin, 22, of Magnolia, Miss.

They were killed Nov. 17, 2006, in Pennsylvania when, en route to an airport to return home for Thanksgiving, their vehicle swerved to avoid hitting a deer. The high-school salutatorians graduated with honors from Jackson State in May 2006 and were pursuing doctorates in materials science and engineering at Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Quinton L. Williams, chair of JSU's Department of Physics, Atmospheric Sciences and Geoscience, said the scholarship honors their hard work, commitment and achievements.

"It will offer deserving minority female students with similar backgrounds the opportunity to continue the journey that they were unable to complete due to their deaths," Williams said.

"It is extremely important that we support this scholarship because scholarships played an integral part in them being able to accomplish what they did," added Williams, president of the National Society of Black Physicists.

Murray had served as president of JSU's Society of Physics Students and also was Miss Sophomore. Martin was active in the society and her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta.

-more-

Martin's mother, Sara Martin of Fernwood, Miss., said establishing the scholarship is sort of like a "permanent landmark" in their honor.

"For this scholarship to be established for another or some other deserving African-American female, I couldn't think of any better tribute that the university or the physics department could establish," Sara Martin said.

"I believe it was just destiny that things happened the way they did and that they were both happy in what they were doing and the accomplishments they had made," said the 1977 and 1997 JSU graduate.

Murray's mother, Carol Neal of Hazlehurst, said the scholarship honors their memory and motivates other young ladies to attend college and major in physics.

"Although they attended Jackson State – and there are a lot of students who attended Jackson State – this shows that they were not just a number, that they were persons who were highly thought of," said Neal, a 1976 JSU graduate.

"Kristy stated that Jackson State is the best university in the world. I thank Jackson State for letting the memory of my daughter continue to go on, that everyday, somehow, Kristy will always be thought about."

How to contribute to the Kristy and Trista Scholarship:

Make checks payable to: JSU Development Foundation

Memo line: Krista and Trista Physics Scholarship

Mail tax-deductible contributions to:

JSU Development Foundation

P.O. Box 17144

Jackson, MS 39212

Photo of Kristy Lorraine Murray and Trista Danielle Martin:

<http://www.jsums.edu/%7Eannouncements/MurrayandMartin.jpg>