

Campus unites to plant, dedicate tree to Mr. Hill

By Lea Houston
Contributing Writer

A place for shade, a place for rest, a place to seek knowledge – this tree is in remembrance of professor Anthony Hill.

As students and faculty mourn and grieve over Hill, a mathematics professor who passed away in September, Langston University united as a family to dedicate a newly planted tree where Hill will never be forgotten.

Tilani Whitley, member of the Student Activities Board, decided it would be a great idea to open up all of the Homecoming 2019 celebrations by planting a tree in front of Jones Hall in dedication to Hill. The dedication ceremony kicked off the week Oct. 20.

"Everyone was affected by Professor Hill's passing in some way, so why not pay our respects with all he did for Langston," Whitley said. "This tree dedication was meant to be a celebration for him, so I believe starting out Homecoming with his remembrance really

set the tone."

Many faculty, staff and students gathered on the lawn between Sanford Hall and Jones Hall for the dedication ceremony.

"When this tree grows, eventually it's going to go in every direction of the university," said Dr. Alonzo Peterson, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. "That's what Hill was -- he had his branches, not only in every part of the university, but in people's personal lives."

Peterson and Hill met at Langston University and became close friends 14 years ago. They'd eat together and travel together while both teaching in the mathematics department.

"I realized this tree is a lasting representation of Mr. Hill on this campus," Peterson said. "He will never be forgotten because that tree will always be there, representing him. It's going to live, it's going to grow."

Not only was Hill close with his colleagues, but he also made a huge impact on students as well.

Hill was adamant that his students were always prepared for class. From getting over 200 calculators and several boxes of pencils, Hill made it a prerogative that students had the tools necessary to succeed.

As Peterson reflected on Hill's time at Langston, Peterson said Hill would continuously do whatever he could to make sure students had his support.

Hill became a huge help and mentor to so many people, such as sophomore broadcast journalism major Jayden Hannah.

"Professor Hill meant a lot to me. He was a light and a symbol of positivity on this campus. He knew how to brighten your day," Hannah said.

Hannah has known Hill since he was 15. He became acquainted with Hill during a high school program that taught young African-American males how to become African-American men. "Out of all of the mentors that were involved in the program, Mr. Hill was the most impactful," Hannah said,



Photo by Walter Harris

This tree was planted in honor and remembrance of Langston professor, Anthony Hill, who passed away in September. The tree sits on the lawn between Sanford and Jones halls.

who is now 20 years old.

From being his mentor to becoming his professor, Hannah said this tree dedication shows how much Hill impacted the LU community.

"The tree is a physical manifestation of the impact he had

on this university. When people come to the campus, they can look at something that Mr. Hill has left," Hannah said. "This tree says that the work that he did paid off in the end. Although he has passed, the work he did lasts on."

Students give up Homecoming 2019 to participate in 53-hour code-a-thon

By G'ahri Gassaway
Staff Writer

While most students spent Homecoming with friends and family celebrating Langston University, a select few computer science majors sacrificed their Homecoming weekend to generate code for 53 straight hours.

Under the direction of computer science professor Ralph Grayson, five students participated in the annual Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Code-a-Thon. The event started at 6 p.m. Oct. 25 (Friday), and it did not conclude until 11 p.m. Oct. 27 (Sunday).

A code-a-thon is an event where software developers compete, in our case computer science majors, to build original and working applications (apps,

websites, etc.) for a specific theme or problem provided by the host of the event.

During that short amount of time, the team of five students created an app for entrepreneurs to promote their services/products using a networking platform while connecting with customers. The app also allows entrepreneurs to sign up and add their business or a customer to sign up and see the services/products available. The app has the users enter their zip code, so the entrepreneurs available are always local to the user.

Langston also participated in the event last year and won a ribbon, but Grayson feels honored to be the first and only HBCU to participate in the event both years. Grayson hopes that the partnership of Langston with the Federal Re-

serve Bank of Kansas City can get more HBCUs involved in the near future.

"I hope we just open the door for other HBCUs," Grayson said.

Though they spent the entire weekend in Moore Hall, away from the Homecoming festivities, the students said they still enjoyed themselves during the event, especially because of the unique experience it gave them.

"I would definitely do another code-a-thon," said Tyler Fails, senior computer science major. "It allows you the freedom to think creatively and execute ideas that wouldn't have been possible, unlike just working on an assignment or project."

Although Fails was slightly bummed because she couldn't participate in Homecoming, she knows this experience could open the door to something

bigger down the line.

"It was a little disappointing that I wouldn't be able to partake in Homecoming events, but at the same time I knew that doing the code-a-thon would help me in the long run, professionally and academically, so I wasn't too upset," she said.

Some students did not know about the event, but after hearing about the sacrifice they made for Homecoming, they appreciate bringing new ideas to the campus.

"I just feel like them giving up their time during Homecoming week, so they could try to bring something towards Langston, just really shows the love that they have for their university," said Taylor Ross, senior broadcast journalism major.