The Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony was started in 1989 by B.R.O.T.H.E.R.S. as a way to celebrate African American culture and achievement at a predominantly white institution. This year, 121 graduates participated—114 undergraduates and 7 graduate students—6 master’s degree recipients and a doctoral degree recipient—way to go Dr. Patrice Collins. Thirty-six graduates earned a 3.0 or higher and seven completed the Minor in Black Studies.

This year’s keynote speaker was alumnna, Latisha Brandon:

Latisha is a 26 year old young woman who grew up on the Westside of Chicago. Latisha entered Northern Illinois University (NIU) in Spring of 2006 determined to follow her dreams of one day opening her own Black Community Arts Center and eventually become a Black History Professor at a Historically Black College. Latisha currently holds a Bachelor’s of Science in Sociology and a Master’s of Arts in Counseling, Adult and Higher Education. While at NIU, Latisha served in many leadership positions. She taught a number of courses, joined Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated in March 2009, was a member of the Leadership Academy, was an Assistant Vice President for Educational Leadership with the Campus Activity Board, and coordinated the “Kids of DeKalb” mentoring program. Latisha now works for three non-profit organizations on the Westside of Chicago where she tries to bring light to a dark place through educational enrichment, collaborative programming, curriculum development, community advocacy, and mentorship.

WORDS OF WISDOM…
Latisha Brandon, Keynote Speaker:

“30 Days from next Sunday, I want you to get SERIOUS about making YOUR dreams a reality!”

“Explore New Things, Make Bad Decisions (learn from them), Execute Some of Your Own Ideas and Take Time Finding Yourself.”

“Training camp is over…college is like training camp…..the degree only means we are qualified to play.”

“When you learn…teach! When you get…give! Maya Angelou”

“Strive to leave a legacy; We are young and Black in America…these opportunities didn’t come cheap and they don’t come easy.”

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BGSA 2013-14 Officers: President, Ronnett Lockett; Vice President, Marlo Barnett; Treasurer, Dionne Griffin; Public Relations, Rickey Layfield and Shatoya Black; Advisor, Dr. Joy Coates
25th Annual Black Graduate Recognition Ceremony
“Moving Forward with Excellence: Embracing a New Milestone!”
May 4, 2014
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SENIORS & GRAD STUDENTS—GREAT JOB—DON’T BE A STRANGER!

FRESHMEN – JUNIORS…BE SAFE OVER THE SUMMER, AND SEE YOU IN THE FALL!

PICTURED ABOVE – CENTER FOR BLACK STUDIES STAFF [LEFT TO RIGHT]: Mr. Derrick Smith, Community Outreach Coordinator; Dr. LaVerne Gyant, Director; Dr. Joy Coates, Associate Director; and Ms. Regina Curry, S-Plan Coordinator (not pictured, Ms. Ronnie, Office Support Specialist)