

WME AUTHOR IS FEATURED ALUMNA SPEAKER AT VASSAR COLLEGE'S 19TH ANNUAL KENTE CLOTH CEREMONY

Dr. Claudia Thomas, America's First African American female orthopaedic surgeon speaks on achieving Diversity.

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (May 27, 2008) - Windsor Media Enterprises, LLC announced over this past weekend that Dr. Claudia Thomas, America's first black female orthopedic surgeon, was the featured alumna speaker at the African American Alumnae/i of Vassar College's (AAAVC) 19th annual Kente Cloth Ceremony. The Ceremony took place on May 24, 2008. Dr. Claudia Thomas, a 1971 Vassar graduate, shared her message of championing diversity in this country, with the goal that all facets of American society proportionately represent the gender and ethnicity of its population.

Alumnae/i representing four decades of the AAAVC, an organization that Dr. Thomas helped create, were on hand to bestow the ceremonial cloths. During the event, senior students of the African descent were invited to say a few words of thanks to those who helped them through their Vassar journeys. The ceremony was moving and inspirational to all members of the Vassar community.

In April, Dr. Thomas received the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) 2008 Diversity Award for her "preeminent role ... in the black community and also in the field of orthopaedics." She has been acknowledged for her role in increasing the number of minorities and females within the orthopaedics profession. Today, Dr. Thomas's work includes reaching out to schools in her local area (Florida) to build relationships with the students, demonstrating the opportunities available through education and perseverance.

Dr. Thomas's autobiography, *God Spare Life*, chronicles her journeys and struggles (which included surviving a life-threatening illness, a natural disaster, and life as an activist and student at Vassar in the late 1960s, among many other things). For more information on Dr. Thomas's incredible story, visit her website and blog at GodSpareLife.com.