

# 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DISCERNING DIVERSE VOICES SYMPOSIUM C&IS ALUMNI PANELS

Presented by the College of Communication & Information Sciences  
The University of Alabama, Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 5-6:30 p.m.**

**Opening Reception: "Diversity in the Workplace:  
Mapping a Path for Success"**

Camellia Room

**Moderator:** Debra Nelson, ('80, Broadcast & Film)  
Owner, Elevate Communications  
Member, C&IS Board of Visitors

**Panelists:**

Satina Richardson ('97, PR)  
Communications Director, UAB School of Optometry

Eddie Lard ('80, News Editorial)  
Senior Account Manager, Direct Communications  
(former reporter with Birmingham News)

Kristina Hendrix, APR ('03, PR)  
Director Corporate Communications, Dynetics, Inc.  
(Huntsville-based federal defense contractor)

Staci Brown Brooks ('99, B.A., Journalism; '13, MBA)  
Director, Digital Strategy & Communication,  
Alabama Power Company

*Local communication professionals will discuss their experiences as they paved the way for diversity in their respective fields.*

**Networking reception to follow**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 1-1:50 p.m.**

**"Profiles in Courage: Strategies for Personal and Professional Resilience"**

Yellowhammer Room

**Moderator:** Dr. Caryl Cooper, Associate Professor,  
Department of Advertising and Public Relations

**Panelists:**

Eunice Elliott ('97, Journalism)  
Morning News Anchor, WVTM 13

Robyn Sirmans ('06, TCF)  
Freelance Writer; Former Emmy-Nominated  
Producer/Executive Producer--WVTM 13

Chanda Temple ('92, Journalism)  
Public Information Officer, Mayor's Office,  
Birmingham

Alexis Barton ('10, B.A., A&S; '15, MA, Journalism)  
Journalist and Senior Communications Consultant,  
BBVA

*Diverse media professionals with more than 15 years' experience have demonstrated their mastery of the writing, communication and technological skills required for excellence in the field. However, today's professional is at the epicenter of a political and philosophical shift in our nation. Journalists work in an increasingly hostile and pessimistic social environment that includes charges of "fake news," death threats and, sometimes, the murder of colleagues. Politicians, pundits and other talking heads have turned "truth," an established ethical standard, on its head by using disinformation tactics and perpetuating unsubstantiated claims of media bias. To weather the storm, media professionals may find themselves in need of another skill set: strategies for resilience. Today's professionals will share their strategies for personal and professional growth, and also discuss their perspectives as minorities on how to prepare for the future of media.*