Award Recipients

**Charles C. Yancey**  
*Boston City Councilor*

Boston City Councilman Charles Calvin Yancey grew up in Boston’s Roxbury neighborhood where, at the age of twelve, he wrote a letter to the Mayor of Boston requesting that a vacant lot across the street from his home be turned into a playground. The playground became Yancey’s first political success. Attending Tufts during the height of the civil rights movement, Yancey was one of the founding members of the Afro-American Society and the African American Cultural Center at Tufts. Yancey was first elected to the Boston City Council in 1983. He is the longest serving elected public official in the history of Boston politics. He served as President of the Boston City Council in 2001 and the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials in 1999. The annual Charles C. Yancey Book Fair has provided over 100,000 free books for Boston children since its beginning in February 1987. For his unflinching advocacy, committed to a job well done, the Africana Center is presents Boston City Councilor Charles C. Yancey with the 2010 African Center Leadership Award.

**David Rone**  
*Co-Head, Creative Artists Agency Sports*

David Rone has parlayed his love of sports and exceptional negotiation skills into a thriving professional career in the sports marketing field. From junior varsity basketball to Director of Officials for Intramural Athletics, David represented the Class of 1984 to the Faculty Committee on Athletics. David was also proficient in the classroom and served as a Guest Lecturer in Dean Robert Sternberg’s "Nature of Leadership" class. He is credited with the establishment of a Challenge Grant to launch the Gerald R. Gill Fund in memory of the school’s beloved history professor. Currently, David is Chairman of the Board of Overseers, School of Arts & Sciences. He is one of 4 candidates nominated by the Alumni Council to run for one of two open seats as Alumni Trustees on the Tufts Board of Trustees. David Rone remains committed to providing an influential voice for the future of Tufts University. For his unceasing dedication and support, The Africana Center is pleased to recognize him with the 2010 Africana Center Leadership Award.

**Charlene Desir**  
*Ed.D. Doctoral Academic Advisor/Program Professor*

A 1991 graduate of Tufts, Charlene Desir was an active volunteer for the SCOPE recruitment project that recruited her as a high school student. Charlene was a shy student and life on campus at Tufts gave her an opportunity to grow and learn about the significance of social intelligence. Her experience on campus was the foundation for her life of service to young people. As a Spencer Research Training grant recipient at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, she examined the social adjustment of immigrant students in public schools. Dr. Desir, now a school psychologist, moved to Florida to be closer to Haiti, and had been working with college students who lost their lives in the Haiti earthquake. She and her husband, a talented artist, are planning a major project entitled Walls of Hope in support of those affected by the Haitian disaster. Dr. Charlene Desir is being acknowledged with the 2010 Africana Center Leadership Award for her work to support students’ academic goals in the U.S and Haiti.

**Mitchell Robinson**  
*Legislative Assistant, Congressman Edward J. Markey (D-MA)*

Mitchell Robinson’s degree in political science and political leadership on campus has served him well on the road to a career on Capitol Hill. He held numerous student positions at the university as president of the Student Body, Tufts Black Alumni Association and the Tufts Community Union, not all at the same time. Robinson was also recognized as a Tisch College Scholar and was an active member of the Emerging Black Leaders. He further honed his political skills as a MA College Coordinator/Boston Field Organization for the Deval Patrick Campaign for Governor. Now, as a Tufts graduate, he has a unique perspective on the significance of a Tufts degree and the need for a more diverse and engaged Tufts Alumni Network. Mitchell Robinson remains dedicated to finding innovative ways to better connect, demonstrating that you can get from the campus to Capitol Hill. The Africana Center is pleased to award the 2010 Africana Center Leadership Award to Mitchell Robinson for his continued commitment to the growth of the Tufts alumni community.
Denise Phillips  
**Coordinator of Programs and Special Projects, The Africana Center**  
As we gather to celebrate the role that the Africana Center has played and continues to play in lives of so many Tufts students; it is important to acknowledge that the Africana Center is more than just a building located at 8 Professors Row. Instead, we must recognize that the Center’s success is a reflection of the dedication and support of its staff, past and present. It is their tireless service that has contributed so much to the Africana Center’s 40-year history. So, I would like to recognize the service of Denise Phillips. During her tenure at Tufts, Denise has embodied the mission of the Africana Center by “providing a supportive and welcoming environment through the promotion of the traditions and history of people of African descent.” Whether it is negotiating vendor costs for the annual Gala, making late night BJ Warehouse runs before EBLS, or just listening to the exaggerated fears of graduating seniors, she continues to go above and beyond through her dedication and service. She has shown us all that service to the Diaspora begins with service to the students of Tufts University. As Program Coordinator she ensures that the Africana Center sponsors programming and events that highlight the richness and history of Tufts’ students. Barbeques, movie nights and plays make the center a community of learning and support. Denise ensures that the Africana center is a welcoming place, one of refuge and community. She ensures that students understand that service and community may have begun at 8 Professors Row, but it surely does not end there. Her dedication to the Alumni, Students and the Center is truly unmatched and that is why we acknowledge her service and leadership by presenting her with The Africana Center Champion Award.