

Prairie View Will 'Storm' Rose Parade

Contributed by Richard White -- Black College Wire
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Marching Storm to perform at high-profile event

At 10:25 a.m. Friday, Aug. 29, the Black Foxes and Marching Storm flooded the campus with sounds of the cymbals, chants, bass and snare drums. All in celebration for the press conference announcing that the band will perform at the 120th Tournament of Roses Parade on Jan.1, 2009, in Pasadena, Calif.

The press conference, held at the flagpole in front of the A.I. Thomas Administration Building, opened with the band performing, as Jasmine Dixon gave the welcome and introduction of guests. Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade President, Ronald "Corky" Conzonire, and his wife, Marilyn, joined Prairie View President George C. Wright and Mayor Frank Jackson in greetings.

"I love the band's enthusiasm, exciting music, and I know everyone's going to get excited when they come to the parade," Conzonire said. "They will be the first band marching in the parade. I want the band to have a great time, and when you march around the corner, remember that view for the rest of your life."

HBCUs have a Rose Parade history that in recent years has included the Alabama A&M Marching Maroon and White, which led off the 2006 parade, and the Grambling State Tiger Marching Band, which performed in 2007.

Professor George Edwards, the Marching Storm's director, said he was elated to have such an honor bestowed upon the band. "It's indescribable, it's a dream and fantasy that came to life. Something you dream up as a kid, and when it comes to life, it makes hard work worthwhile," Edwards said.

Edwards spoke of the hard work it took for the band to receive such a reward. "It never stops, the dues are monumental, but the rewards are as good as it gets. They may not be monetary, but how do you put a price on pride? Most people apply, but we got invited."

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Richard White is editor in chief of The Panther, the Paririe View A&M University student newspaper, which originally published a version of this article.