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Soledad O’Bien speaks at Andrews University Leadership Conference

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Young volunteer finds old seal at Jordan field school

In May 2013, after a long day at Tall Hisban, Jordan, volunteer Rebekah Hudon spotted something spectacular. It turned out to be an old stamp seal: a small engraved stone that ancient administrators used to make imprints on documents in order to verify the authenticity of the document. Only one such seal has been found in the 45 years of Andrews University excavations at Tall Hisban.

“Rebekah first thought the seal was a large bead and showed it to me. I recognized it immediately as a seal, and we were both elated,” says her father, Jeff Hudon, adjunct professor at Bethel College, Mishawaka, Ind.

“This seal clearly belonged to someone of administrative significance,” says Øystein S. LaBianca, director of the Hisban Cultural Heritage Project, a part of the Madaba Plains Project, a collaboration between Andrews University and La Sierra University. “Now we need to explore whether the iconography of the seal offers any indication of the status and function of its owner,” says LaBianca.

The thumbnail-size scaraboid seal is made of dark brown stone, and preliminary investigations indicate the seal was made between 300 A.D. and 500 A.D. Jeff Hudon will conduct further research on the seal, comparing it to other known seals of its type and researching the seal’s iconography and cultural significance.

Soledad O’Brien speaks at Andrews University Leadership Conference

The critically-acclaimed journalist Soledad O’Brien was the keynote speaker for Andrews University’s annual Leadership and Diversity Conference, July 19—22.

O’Brien, a special correspondent for Al Jazeera America and former CNN correspondent, has reported on breaking news around the globe as well as often-divisive issues in modern society. She currently is working with CNN to produce a series of programming specials through her company, Starfish Media Company, which is dedicated to uncovering and producing stories that examine issues of race, class, socioeconomic status and opportunity.

The pre-conference began Friday, July 19, with an opening presentation on steward leadership given by Scott Rodin, partner and head of strategic alliances at Artios Partners. Prudence LaBeach Pollard gave Saturday evening’s keynote speech. Pollard is vice president for human resources, faculty development and research at Oakwood University, professor of management in Oakwood’s School of Business, and clinical associate professor in the School of Public Health at Loma Linda University.

On Sunday night, Debbie Weithers, associate dean for student life, interviewed O’Brien about her experience in journalism and media, her perspectives on increasing opportunities for minorities, and the role of media in society. On Monday morning, O’Brien gave a keynote speech titled “Diversity: On TV, Behind the Scenes and in Our Lives.” She referenced Martin Luther King Jr.’s original “I Have a Dream” speech, noting the original draft “was a very uncomfortable message. Digging into fairness and justice can make us very uncomfortable,” O’Brien said. “True leadership is about going off-speech because you know it’s more important to be on the right side of history,” she said.

Samantha Snively, graduate student writer, Division of Integrated Marketing & Communication

Soledad O’Brien, renowned former CNN journalist, was interviewed on stage and presented the keynote address for the 2013 annual Andrews University Leadership and Diversity Conference.

Jeff Hudon and his daughter, Rebekah Hudon, stand at the sift where the stamp seal was found. All excavated soil goes through the sift in order to filter out special objects like pottery, bones — and in this case, a seal.

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