



Pointing the Future in the Right Direction

NLU celebrates five distinguished alumni at annual fundraiser

By Nicholas A. Love

Congratulations to the distinguished honorees of the 2015 Reach Award:

- Evelyn Chenier '03 and '11
- Elizabeth Dozier '08
- Rebecca Estrada '12
- Josh Fine '04
- Darrell Williams '03

National Louis University's twelfth annual Reach Awards Gala honors NLU alumni who have improved themselves and their communities through education. The recipients of the award represent all corners of the university, including the Professional Assistance Center for Education (P.A.C.E.) program and, for the first time this year, the Veterans Program.

The gala is one of the university's most prestigious functions, attended by members of the board of trustees, senior administrators and faculty members. It took place among

some of the most iconic displays at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History, including the world-famous "Sue," the most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever discovered.

During the silent auction portion of Reach, the lively atmosphere was anything but silent as attendees chatted and enjoyed the traveling hors d'oeuvres. So engaging was the conversation, that the master of ceremonies could only coax people into their seats and begin dinner with the threat of no dessert.

At the presentation of the awards, the evening hit a more serious note. In their acceptance speeches, Chenier and Williams detailed their deep commitment to guiding the next generation. And the room was mournfully silent after Dozier dedicated her award to a student killed in a shooting only a week

before. Fine and Estrada followed with a touching reminder of the importance of family as a source of inspiration and gratitude.

Scott Smith, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, concluded the Reach Gala with three simple words: pride, commitment and celebration.

The Reach Award winners certainly are committed, and take deep pride in the work they do. While it is painful when tragedies happen in the midst of everything, it is important to celebrate the successes.

Because, as Dozier stated at the end of her speech, the future is not some place that we go, but it is some place that we create.

Watch the 2015 Reach Awards at nl.edu/reach



"This award is a reflection of what is in each of our hearts. We each want to help influence and uplift our fellow community members."

Evelyn Chenier '03 and '11
College of Arts and Sciences



"I accept this award tonight on behalf of all those across our great city who dare greatly every single day on behalf of our children."

Elizabeth Dozier '08
National College of Education



"When someone asks me about myself, my first response is that I'm a mom. And I am very proud of all my three children that are here with me today. I have dedicated my life's work for my children."

Rebecca Estrada '12
College of Management and Business



"I would also like to thank my wife, who I met at the P.A.C.E. program. It was love at first sight — it sure was."

Josh Fine '04
P.A.C.E.



"Going from the 'hood to the [White] House is very inspiring to me, and I use that when I talk to students throughout the Maryland-D.C.-Virginia area at different career days."

Darrell Williams '03
Veterans Program