

Paine College

Many Cultures, One Paine Family

Presented by:
International Student Association



PAINE
COLLEGE

Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Eleven o'clock in the Morning
Dr. David and Betty C. Peterson HEAL Complex
Augusta, Georgia



Adrienne L. Rice is the Founder and Executive Director of Sustainable Georgia Futures (SGF), a trailblazing organization committed to building equitable pathways into the clean energy economy for Black communities and people of color across the American South. Under her leadership, SGF is redefining what inclusive climate justice looks like—centering grassroots leadership, relational organizing, and community ownership in a region too often excluded from national climate conversations and investments.

Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and raised in both Chattanooga and Atlanta, Georgia, Adrienne’s upbringing in working-class Black communities deeply shaped her political consciousness, values, and approach to leadership. She often credits her grounding to the “good, humble, sincere people” who raised her—teachers, elders, church members, and community organizers who instilled a sense of dignity, interdependence, and collective purpose. Adrienne is guided by the Southern African philosophy of Ubuntu: “I am because we are; we are because I am.” This principle anchors her worldview and fuels her conviction that liberation is a collective project, never a solitary pursuit.

For over 25 years, Adrienne has built a distinguished career as a strategist, facilitator, and social justice organizer, working at the intersections of racial, economic, and environmental justice. She has organized in over 100 communities across more than 40 U.S. states, as well as in Canada and South Africa—bringing her expertise to campaigns ranging from worker rights and public education to environmental health and community reinvestment. Her organizing philosophy emphasizes deep listening, authentic relationship-building, and long-term leadership development, an approach she often refers to as “organizing at the speed of trust.” Throughout her tenure, Adrienne has trained hundreds of organizers, supported frontline communities in designing effective campaign strategies, and cultivated cross-sector alliances between labor, environmental justice organizations, Black-led institutions, and rural community networks. She is recognized for her ability to bridge historical divides—between generations, geographies, and movements, and to design campaigns that honor lived experience while driving policy change.

At Sustainable Georgia Futures, Adrienne is leading a visionary effort to transform the South’s clean energy future. SGF’s programs are built around community-rooted workforce development, wraparound support services, and leadership development teams (LDTs) in historically disinvested Black and rural communities. Under her guidance, the organization is working to scale a 10-city strategy across Georgia to train and mobilize 10,000 clean energy workers over five years, with a focus on union alignment, environmental health, and economic resilience. Adrienne’s work challenges the extractive nature of traditional economic development by investing in people—not just pipelines—and ensuring that climate solutions also build Black power, economic dignity, and intergenerational opportunity.

Academically, Adrienne’s background reflects her lifelong commitment to both healing and systems change. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Africana Studies from Tennessee State University, a Master’s degree in Counseling Education from Florida A&M University, and a Master’s in Social Innovation from Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Her studies have equipped her with a rare blend of clinical insight, political strategy, and community design thinking, all of which she brings to bear in her work. Beyond her organizational leadership, Adrienne serves as a trusted mentor, speaker, and facilitator in spaces focused on climate equity, Black feminist organizing, and community-led innovation. She has spoken at regional and national convenings on topics including environmental justice in the South, intersectional leadership, inclusive green workforce development, and healing justice in movement spaces. Above all, Adrienne sees her work as part of a larger legacy. She often reflects that any success she has achieved is possible only because of the paths carved by ancestors, movement elders, and freedom fighters who came before her. With deep humility and fierce vision, she continues to build Sustainable Georgia Futures as a vehicle for dignity, justice, and joy—for today’s frontline communities and the generations to come.

Program

Panashe J. Mukumba '27, Presiding
Treasurer, International Student Association

Invocation.....Miracle Brown '29
Vice President, International Student Association

Scripture.....ChaVonne Campbell '27
Member, International Student Association

Campus Announcements.....Pablo Rivera '27
President, International Student Association

Introduction of the Speaker..... Amor Sears '27
Secretary, International Student Association

Musical Selection.....Paine College Choir
Mr. Trey McLaughlin, Director

The Address.....Ms. Adrienne Rice
Founder and Executive Director of Sustainable Georgia Futures (SGF)

Remarks.....Dr. Lester A. McCorn
President, Paine College

The Paine College Hymn (on back of program) Frank Yerby '37

Benediction.....Reverend Dr. Luther B. Felder, II
Campus Pastor

The Paine College Hymn

Mr. Frank Yerby, '37 and Mr. Mark Fax

O College of our heart's desire,
resplendent in our gaze,

Awake in us thy sacred fire
and let us to thy truth aspire
throughout the coming days.

And may the thing that thou hast sought,
our nation's woeful lack,
True union of the heart be brought
and differences be set at naught
between the white and black.

Paine College, guardian of the way
that each young foot must tread,
Thy gates are open to this day
and our firm, martial strides display
hearts clean and unafraid.