



## **College Woman of Excellence & Recipient of the LLWC Foundation Scholarship:**

*Rachél Christina Oatis*

Spelman College – Lutcher

Rachél Oatis, a native of Lutcher, Louisiana, is currently a sophomore political science major completing her undergraduate studies at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the daughter of Reverend Dr. Charles and Rolinda Oatis. She attended Lutcher High School graduating with honors while, serving as the youngest person in her community to pass an ordinance. She is the founder of the St. James Parish Youth Commission where young people learn the inner workings of local government.

Over the course of one year, Ms. Oatis has served as a student volunteer for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, lead chapel assistant for Sisters Chapel, a voter registration aide on Saturdays, and as an intern for Congressman John Lewis, Georgia's 5th Congressional District Representative. On campus she is very active in Spelman's Student Ambassador Organization and serves as a public speaker for some of the college's esteemed events. Recently, she traveled to Tobago, Trinidad for a cultural enrichment engagement to learn behavior and leadership styles of Caribbean women serving in government and academics.

In the summer of 2015, she participated in the Southern University Law Center's Civil Rights Restorative Justice Project, through which she conducted research on policy initiatives on anti-civil rights violence in the United States from the 1930s to 1950s. Rachél is also a participant in Spelman's Independent Scholars Interdisciplinary Study Program, where she is documenting oral histories through interviewing elderly African-American women. Through these and other service-learning opportunities, Ms. Oatis finds that she has grown in the areas of teamwork, problem solving and action planning. Working hands-on in the community has fostered her empathy and self-efficacy and has allowed her to take an active role in helping to shape her community and campus life.