

# THE BLACK LENS<sup>TM</sup> SPOKANE

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

## PENTAGON GETS GREEN LIGHT To Expand War in Drought Stricken Somalia

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) – Clouds are moving across Somalia's drought-wrecked landscape – but not the kind that make grass grow and flowers bloom.

Instead, military aircraft will be raining down "precision fires" after an authorization signed by President Trump that relaxes rules meant to prevent civilian casualties in the region. Military officials are also granted wider authority for conducting airstrikes under the relaxed rules.

The new approach to Somalia is in line with increasingly aggressive policies the administration has already adopted in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.

U.S. troops will be working with the Somali National Army and the African Union Mission in Somalia in offensive operations "consistent with our approach of developing capable Somali security forces and supporting regional partners in their efforts to combat al-Shabab," said Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis.

News of the signed authorization was revealed in national newspapers this week. Experts fear the so-called Somalia campaign carries enormous risks — including more



American casualties, botched airstrikes that kill civilians and the potential for the United States to be drawn further into defending a government that barely controls the lands beyond its capital.

The operations are also likely to create a new exodus of desperate refugees fleeing towards Kenya which already houses almost a quarter of a million Somalis escaping war at home.

The war build-up, it must be said, was already underway during the last year of the Obama administration using Special Operations troops, airstrikes, private contractors and African allies in an escalating campaign against Islamist militants in the Horn of Africa nation.

Hundreds of American troops now rotate through makeshift bases in Somalia, the larg-

est military presence since the United States pulled out of the country after the "Black Hawk Down" battle in 1993.

"There appears to be a move by the Trump administration to loosen the rules," said Joel Chamy, director of the Norwegian Refugee Council's office in Washington. "The theme seems to be more aggressive, and the consequences seem to be a spike in civilian casualties."

Unnamed defense sources told ABC News that the "southern" portion of Somalia will be considered an "active area of hostilities" for the next six months. The latest war plans were unveiled as Somalia's government declared the current drought a national disaster, with the U.N. saying roughly half of the country's 12 million people are at risk. A cholera outbreak has also spread.

The country is also one of the seven predominantly Muslim countries included in Trump's recent travel ban that has been suspended by federal courts.

*GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK creates and distributes news and feature articles on current affairs in Africa to media outlets, scholars, students and activists in the U.S. and Canada.*

## INSUFFICIENT FUNDS: COMMUNITY CHALLENGES SRLJC Racial Equity and Community Engagement Largely Left Out of \$1.75 Million MacArthur Grant Budget



**By Ron Toston**

In August 1964, thousands of Americans, of all nationalities and backgrounds, converged on our nation's Capital to hear a young Southern Baptist Preacher deliver a fresh message of hope. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a Dream"

speech was built in part around the theme of coming to the nation's capital to cash a check. The check consisted of "a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"We have come to cash this check," Dr. King said, "a check that will give us, upon demand, the riches of freedom and the security of justice." King used the metaphor of cashing a check to speak of African Americans gaining intangible rights and privileges that were previously enjoyed only by white citizens. However, that check, King said, has come back marked "insufficient funds."



# SAFETY+JUSTICE CHALLENGE

Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

### **The Notion of Criminal Justice Reform**

The United States Criminal Justice System in every state, county, and province is flawed. Spokane county is included. It has become a system that authorizes the murder of men and boys by Law Enforcement with impunity across the Nation. The scope of this essay will not allow me to extrapolate the reasons why this is so. (For more information on why read: "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander and see the documentary "13th" by Ava DuVernay.)

In the "Land of the Free", one out of four Americans are behind bars, on probation, or on parole. African American, Hispanic and Native American men are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. Most are non-violent offenders, but passage of laws and ordinances across the nation makes it legal to give harsher and longer prison sentences to people of color. This mass incarceration takes an enormous toll on all communities and families, especially communities of color.

*Continued on Page 17*

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

The Negro Mother

By Langston Hughes



Children, I come back today  
To tell you a story of the long dark way  
That I had to climb, that I had to know  
In order that the race might  
live and grow.

Look at my face - dark as the night -  
Yet shining like the sun  
with love's true light.  
I am the dark girl who crossed the red sea  
Carrying in my body the seed of the free.

I am the woman who worked in the field  
Bringing the cotton and the corn to yield.  
I am the one who labored as a slave,  
Beaten and mistreated  
for the work that I gave -

Children sold away from me,  
My husband sold, too.  
No safety, no love, no respect was I due.

Three hundred years in the deepest South  
But God put a song  
and a prayer in my mouth.  
God put a dream like steel in my soul.  
Now, through my children,  
I'm reaching the goal.

Now, through my children, young and free,  
I realized the blessing deed to me.  
I couldn't read then. I couldn't write.  
I had nothing, back there in the night.

Sometimes, the valley was filled with tears,  
But I kept trudging on  
through the lonely years.  
Sometimes, the road was hot with the sun,  
But I had to keep on  
till my work was done.

I had to keep on! No stopping for me -  
I was the seed of the coming Free.  
I nourished the dream  
that nothing could smother  
Deep in my breast - the Negro mother.

I had only hope then, but now through you,  
Dark ones of today,  
my dreams must come true:  
All you dark children  
in the world out there,

Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair.  
Remember my years, heavy with sorrow -  
And make of those years  
a torch for tomorrow.

Make of my pass a road to the light  
Out of the darkness,  
the ignorance, the night.

Lift high my banner out of the dust.  
Stand like free men supporting my trust.  
Believe in the right,  
let none push you back.

Remember the whip and the slaver's track.  
Remember how the strong  
in struggle and strife  
Still bar you the way, and deny you life -  
But march ever forward,  
breaking down bars.

Look ever upward at the sun and the stars.  
Oh, my dark children,  
may my dreams and my prayers  
Impel you forever up the great stairs -  
For I will be with you till no white brother  
Dares keep down the children  
of the Negro Mother.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH



Taxes are usually  
due on April 15, why  
were they due on  
April 18 this year?

Answer on Page 19

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

The Black Lens is a community newspaper based in Spokane, WA. The paper is published on the first of each month, and it is focused on the news, events, issues, people and information important to Spokane's African American Community and beyond.

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# JUNETEENTH

LIBERTY | LITERACY | LIVELIHOOD | CELEBRATION 2017

4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL 6:30PM - 8:30PM  
**COMMUNITY PILLAR AWARDS**

FRIDAY, JUNE 16TH | SCC - LAIR BUILDING  
1810 N GREENE ST, SPOKANE, WA 99217

TICKETS: \$12/PERSON [PRESALE] | \$85/TABLE | \$15 [AT THE DOOR]

3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL 9:00AM - 11:00AM  
**FATHER'S DAY BREAKFAST**

SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH | ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL  
1622 E WELLESLEY AVE, SPOKANE, WA 99207

7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL 2:00PM - 5:00PM  
**JUNETEENTH BBQ**

SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH | LIBERTY PARK



**Community Colleges  
of Spokane**



**Spokane Public Schools**  
*excellence for everyone*

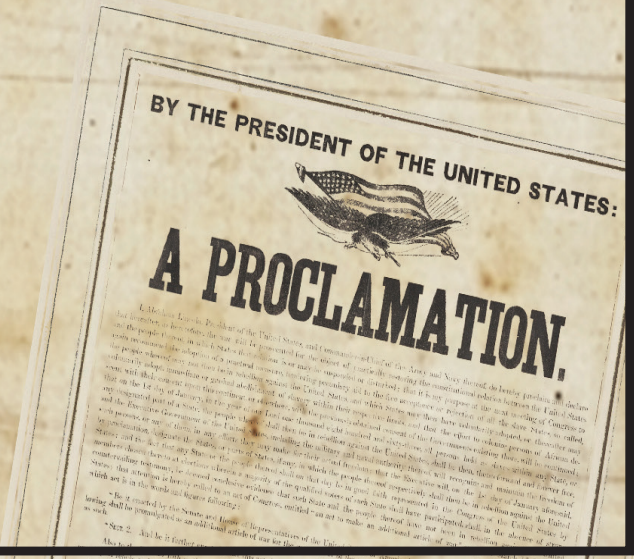
**Spokane Community College  
Black Student Union**



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.INWJC.ORG](http://WWW.INWJC.ORG)



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COALITION**  
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# BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

## Two Prominent Black Judges Dead in Same Week

### Sheila Abdus-Salaam

*Source: Doreen McCallister, NPR.org)*

Associate Judge Sheila Abdus-Salaam, the first African-American woman to be appointed to New York’s Court of Appeals, was found dead on April 12. Witnesses apparently discovered her body floating in the Hudson river around 1:45 p.m. and called 911.

Initial reports from authorities said there appeared to be no signs of trauma on the judge’s body, that she was fully clothed and there were no obvious signs that a crime had taken place. As a result, authorities believed she had committed suicide.

Abdus-Salaam’s husband, Episcopal Priest Gregory Jacobs, challenged that determination and what he considered unfounded conclusions. The New York Police Department subsequently said the judge’s death was deemed suspicious.

The medical examiner’s office has not made an official determination as to what caused Abdus-Salaam’s death, saying the April 13 autopsy was inconclusive and required further evaluation..

Abdus-Salaam was reported missing by her husband on April 11, and according to the NYPD, detectives have uncovered sur-



veillance footage showing Abdus-Salaam walking alone near the Hudson River the night before her body was discovered.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who appointed Abdus-Salaam to the Court of Appeals in 2013, said, “Justice Sheila Abdus-Salaam was a trailblazing jurist whose life in public service was in pursuit of a more fair and more just New York for all.” A public memorial is set for May 26 at Manhattan’s Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

### Raymond Myles

*(Source: Safia Samee Ali, nbcnews.com; D.L. Chandler, newsone.com)*

Cook County Associate Judge Raymond Myles, 66, was shot multiple times shortly before 5 a.m., Monday, April 10, on the porch of his Chicago home. According to the Cook County Medical Examiner, he was pronounced dead at 5:33 a.m., at a nearby hospital.

A woman, described as a “close associate of the judge,” was also shot, but “is expected survive,” said the Chicago Police Department. The woman, according to police, left the house to head to the gym when she encountered “an individual with a gun” outside the door.

The woman and the man exchanged words and the man began firing shots. Judge Myles heard the gunfire and came outside where he was shot.

A neighbor told the Chicago Tribune that he “heard maybe six shots... and the screaming of the woman. She was screaming, ‘Don’t kill him, don’t kill him!’”

Judge Myles presided over a series of high-profile cases out of Chicago, including parts of the 2008 killing of singer Jennifer Hudson’s three relatives.



Myles received his law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law. He was appointed to the court in 1999 and was appointed an Associate Judge in 2001 by Circuit Court Judges. He had served in the criminal division since 2009.

On April 12, police arrested and charged Joshua Smith, 37, with the fatal shooting. Smith had faced Judge Myles in court in 2001 and according to a Chicago Tribune report, Myles was shot as a part of a robbery attempt aimed at Myles’s girlfriend.

### Florida’s First Black State Prosecutor Receives Threats



*(Source: Kaitlyn D’Onofrio, http://www.diversityinc.com/news)*

The Orange County Sheriff’s Office in Florida is investigating after a noose and racist, threatening messages were sent in March to the office of Aramis Ayala, who became Florida’s first Black State Attorney after defeating incumbent Jeff Ashton in the Democratic primary.

According to the Orlando Weekly, Ayala received two envelopes. The first envelope, received on March 20, contained a message that said, “SOONER OR LATER A NIGGER WILL BE A NIGGER.” Also enclosed were business cards with the message, “You are an Honorary Member of S.P.O.N.G.E.” on one side and “Society for the Prevention Of Niggers Getting Everything” on the other. A second envelope, containing a noose was received on March 28. Both envelopes were sent to Ayala’s office in Orlando. The Sheriff’s Office has not confirmed whether or not they were sent by the same person.

The threats to Ayala came after she announced her office would not pursue the death penalty in its cases, including the case of Markeith Loyd, who is set to stand trial for killing his pregnant ex-girlfriend, Sade Dixon, as well as Orlando Police Lt. Debra Clayton. The decision incited widespread Republican backlash, with Gov. Rick Scott removing Ayala from the Loyd case the very same day, as well as from the rest of the state’s nearly two dozen capital cases. More than 100 current and former lawyers, judges and law professors signed a letter to Scott saying the decision “exceeds your authority” and “sets a dangerous precedent.” Ayala has filed a lawsuit against Gov. Scott for his decision in the Loyd case.

### College Student Creates App To Help People Of Color Find Books They Can Relate To



*(Source: y BrittanyShawnte, http://thegedsection.com; photo credit: Mashable)*

Kaya Thomas grew up loving books, but often could not relate to the white characters that were created by white authors. “As a teen, I was feeling erased by the books I was reading at my libraries and at school,” Kaya said in an interview. “The characters were never anything like myself.”

Kaya, who was studying computer science at Dartmouth, decided to create something that would help other readers of color find books with characters that they could relate to. She developed **We Read Too**, an app featuring books with Black, Latin, Asian, Native American, and other non-white characters.

The app allows users to browse a database of over 600 books, all of which were written by people of color for readers of color. Each book has a profile that gives its plot description, a cover photo, and links to share the book on social media or buy it online. There is also an option to “discover” books, which matches users up to a book based on genre!

Kaya launched her app in August 2014, before her sophomore year of college. She is currently raising money on Indiegogo to expand We Read Too, hoping to feature more than 1,000 books and launch an Android version of the app. The campaign has already raised over \$12,000, passing Kaya’s original goal of \$10,000. (<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/we-read-too-central-resource-for-books-by-poc-app-diversity#>)

### S. Korea’s First Black Model



*(Source: Jason Strother , http://www.aljazeera.com; Photo credits: SF Models/Photograph by Park Jong-soon, BNB12 )*

Teenager, Han Hyun-min, recently made his third appearance at the Seoul Fashion Week, which is a twice yearly event for South Korean designers. The high school student, with what his agents call “a distinct look” is his country’s first Black Korean model.

Han’s mother is Korean and his father is Nigerian. He only speaks Korean and has only ever lived in South Korea, growing up in Itaewon, a relatively diverse Seoul neighborhood that is a destination for migrants. Despite having many “mixed blood” friends, Han was still the target of bullying. “I got a lot of dirty looks and I felt people were disgusted by me,” Han said in an interview.

Han’s discovery came when the owner of an internet cafe where Han spent much of his free time, persuaded him to model for a friend’s clothing line.

Gregory “Chan-wook” Diggs-Yang, chairman of the Movement for the Advancement of the Cultural-diversity of Koreans (MACK), sees Han’s success as an indication of greater social openness towards mixed-race Koreans.

For a Black Korean to make it in the fashion industry is a sign that “things are going in the right direction”.





# BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

## Local, State, National and Around the World

### City of Spokane Issues Request for Proposals to Manage the East Central Community Center

The City of Spokane is accepting proposals from organizations interested in running the East Central Community Center (ECCC). Proposals are due on May 1.

Starting in 2013, and spearheaded by the efforts of Pastor Happy Watkins of New Hope Baptist Church, who addressed both the NAACP and the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs, with complaints that after management of the center was transferred from the City of Spokane to the East Central Community Organization (ECCO), community members were feeling increasingly disenfranchised and excluded from a center that used to be an important neighborhood hub and gathering place for them.

For well over a year, a very engaged and determined group of community members attended meetings, participated in community forums, spoke to city officials, made phone calls, sent e-mails, and organized a protest in the center parking lot, all in an effort to express their unhappiness with the way ECCC, which opened in 1979, was being managed.

In December 2014, a committee, convened by the City of Spokane, spent weeks reviewing the City's existing contract with ECCO, along with supporting documents



and supplemental information, and meeting with community members, as well as the ECCO Board of Directors and staff. The review committee ultimately recommended that ECCO's contract should be renewed for two years, contingent on ECCO agreeing to eight recommendations that were added to the contract. The contract was renewed in January 2015.

Two years later, in December 2016, the review committee that was again convened by the City of Spokane, recommended that an RFP (request for proposals) be issued by the City for management of the Center. The RFP was issued in March and the city hopes to have selected who will run ECCC by June.

ECCO will run the center through the end of December and the new operating contract will start in January 2018.

### Trial for Man Who Shot & Killed William Poindexter Set for May 1 in Spokane Superior Court

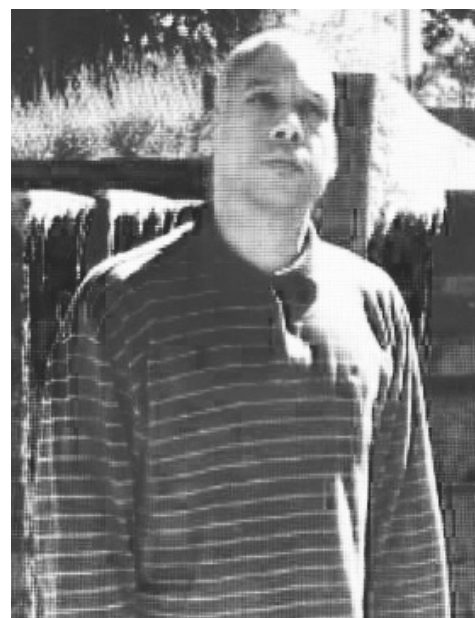
The trial of Edward A. Bushnell, who shot and killed William Poindexter on July 21, 2015 in Spokane's East Central neighborhood, is scheduled to begin on Monday, May 1 in the Spokane County Courthouse.

According to witnesses, Bushnell confronted Poindexter at the intersection of Fifth and Altamont and a fight broke out between the two men. Bushnell claims that he was assaulted by Poindexter with a bat during the fight, but Poindexter's friends claim that Bushnell threatened Poindexter with a knife and he was defending himself.

As Poindexter and his girlfriend were walking away from the scene together, Bushnell, who has a concealed weapon's permit, retrieved a 9mm gun from his backpack and fired three shots at Poindexter's back. Killing him.

Bushnell admitted to shooting Poindexter when the police arrived, but claimed self defense, saying he felt threatened. Witnesses, however, said that 30 to 45 seconds elapsed as Poindexter and his girlfriend were walking away before Bushnell fired his weapon.

Bushnell was initially charged with 2nd degree murder. The charge was later upgraded to 1st degree murder.



### New Orleans Begins Removal of Confederate Monuments



(Source: Yesha Callaha, <http://www.theroot.com>; photo credit: WILX via YouTube screenshots)

New Orleans began the process of removing several Confederate statues on April 24. City workers started taking down the statues early in the morning while it was still dark to avoid possible confrontations with those who want to preserve the confederate history.

In an Associated Press interview, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said "there's a better way to use the property these monuments are on and a way that better reflects who we are."

The first statue to be removed was the Liberty Monument, an 1891 stone pillar that honors the Crescent City White League, an organization started in 1874 to turn Republicans out of office and intimidate freedmen from voting and political organizing. Other monuments slated for removal include those of Generals Robert E. Lee and P.G.T. Beauregard and Confederate States of America President Jefferson Davis.

"The monuments are an aberration," Mayor Landrieu said. "They're actually a denial of our history and they were done in a time when people who still controlled the Confederacy were in charge of this city, and it only represents a four-year period in our 1,000-year march to where we are today."

### Barack Obama Delivers First Post-Presidency Speech



(Source: Sophia Tareen, <http://thegrio.com>; Photo Credit: AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast)

Former President Barack Obama gave his first public appearance since leaving office at a forum for students at the University of Chicago.

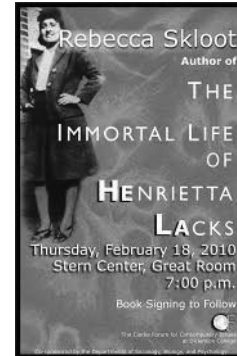
During the forum, which took place adjacent to where Obama's presidential library will stand, he offered advice to young people on leadership, managing social media, marriage, and talked about his formative experiences as a community organizer and as a young politician running for office in Illinois.

"Although there are all kinds of issues that I care about and all kinds of issues that I intend to work on, the single most important thing I can do is to help in any way I can to prepare the next generation of leadership to take up the baton and take their own crack at changing the world," Obama said during the event.

Since delivering his farewell address in his hometown of Chicago in January, Obama has kept a low profile. He met privately Sunday with a group of at risk young men, talking about gang violence and opportunities for jobs.

Obama told the hundreds of area students in the audience that his focus after holding the nation's highest office will be civic engagement with young people, and that he hopes his presidential library, which will stand near the edge of campus, will be part of that mission.

### Oprah Winfrey Stars in HBO Movie About Henrietta Lacks



(Source: Ronda Racha Penrice, <https://newsone.com>; <http://www.hbo.com>)

A movie adapted from Rebecca Skloot's critically acclaimed and best selling novel, "The Immortal Life Of Henrietta Lack, starring Oprah Winfrey and Rose Byrne, premiered on HBO Television in April.

The film tells the story of Henrietta Lacks, an African-American woman whose cells were used without her consent to create the first "immortal human cell line", leading to unprecedented medical breakthroughs, and changing countless lives and the face of medicine forever. The film is told through the eyes of Lack's daughter, Deborah (played by Winfrey), and chronicles Debora's search, along with journalist Rebecca Skloot (Byrne), to learn about the mother she never knew.

Thirty-one year old Henrietta Lacks, died of cervical cancer in Virginia after seeking treatment at Johns Hopkins, the only hospital in the area that treated Blacks at the time. During her treatments, samples were taken from Lacks's cervix without her permission or knowledge. The samples were given to George Otto Gey, a physician and cancer researcher at Johns Hopkins, who discovered that Lack's cells, multiplied instead of dying like most, which made them invaluable for medical research, and the cells become known as the HeLa immortal cell line.

The HeLa Cells, which are still in use and even traveled into space in a Russian satellite, generated billions of dollars in major medical advances, including the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, the AIDS cocktail and in vitro fertilization. However, the Lacks family was never compensated.



# YOU SHOULD KNOW

(Or Things You Probably Didn't Learn In School)

## ART AND HISTORY

by *Bertoni Jones Bey*  
([jbaguart@yahoo.com](mailto:jbaguart@yahoo.com))

### Queen Hatshepsut

Of the thirty-one dynasties representing the ancient empire of Kemet (Egypt) the most powerful woman to ever come forth was an eighteenth dynasty ruler named Queen Hatshepsut.

Ma'at ka Ra Hatshepsut (meaning "balanced spirit of Ra foremost of noble women") was the fifth ruler of the eighteenth dynasty. Born of a royal lineage, she was the only daughter of three children from Tuthmosis I and mother Aahmes. When her two brothers died, she became the sole heir to the entire Kemet Empire.

She ceremonially married a half-brother, Tuthmosis II, from another wife, Moutnofrit. His son Tuthmosis III was next in line for the throne, but being too young to effectively rule Hatshepsut became co-regent ruling with him until 1473 BC.

In that same year she took the official reigns of the country solely and became pharaoh for more than twenty years from 1473 BC – 1458 BC.

Before Hatshepsut ascended the Kemet throne there had never been a female pharaoh. She commanded all subjects acknowledge her not as queen, but as pharaoh, or supreme ruler and daughter of Ra. And as the earthly daughter of the god Amon-Ra she represented her nation in both feminine and masculine aspects.

She dressed in clothing reserved traditionally for male pharaohs wearing the khat headdress with the serpent and uraeus, a type of men's kilt called the shendy, and even publicly wearing the pharaoh's ceremonial beard.

Her massive palace was built in the Valley of the Kings fortified by tall natural rock

defenses. In global politics, her skills as an expert stateswoman and diplomat were legendary.

Her charm, beauty, and intelligence won over many foreign envoys in both trade and armed alliances. And she was aided by a court advisor and expert in diplomacy named Senmut, or Sennemut (*His carved stone image can be seen in front of the Masonic Lodge in downtown Spokane*).

Queen Hatshepsut's greatest economic achievement was reviving trade with her African neighbors in the rich land of Punt (near Somalia), trading Kemet weapons and jewelry for ivory and gold, greyhounds, spices, and slaves.

A hundred years after the expulsion of foreign invaders called the Hyksos (1570 BC), Hatshepsut's still simmering anger is accounted in her own words carved in stone at the Temple of Istabl Antar in Middle Egypt: "...They ruled without Re, and he did not act by divine command down to [the reign of] my majesty. [Now] I am established upon the thrones of Re. I was foretold for the limits of the years as a born conqueror. I am come as the uraeus-serpent of Horus, flaming against my enemies. I have made distant those whom the gods abominate, and the earth has carried off their foot [prints]."

At the end of her reign Hatshepsut became the victim of her step-son Tuthmosis III's jealousy. He reacted by chiseling her name out of carved inscriptions, destroying her public images, and attempting to erase all mention of her name. And even still there has never been a comparable example anywhere in the ancient world of a woman who so skillfully displayed leadership, power, and command over so large an empire as that of Ma'at ka Ra Hatshepsut.

Sources: *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality* – Cheikh Anta Diop; *The Horizon History of Africa: Civilizations of the Nile* (4500 B.C. – A.D. 350) – Margaret Shinnie; *When Egypt Ruled the East: George Steindorff/Keith C. Seele; Tutankhamun and The Golden Age of the Pharaohs* – Zahi Hawass; [hatsepsut.bediz.com/story.htm](http://hatsepsut.bediz.com/story.htm); [tour-egypt.net/historicalessays/Hatshepsut.htm](http://tour-egypt.net/historicalessays/Hatshepsut.htm) (Caroline Seawright).



## Claudette Colvin: One of the Women Before Rosa Parks



(Reprinted from "10 Little Known Black History Facts", <http://www.pbs.org/black-culture>)

Most people think of Rosa Parks as the first person to refuse to give up their seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. There were actually several women who came before Rosa Parks; one was **Claudette Colvin**.

It was March 2, 1955, when the fifteen-year-old schoolgirl refused to move to the back of the bus, nine months before Rosa Parks' stand that launched the Montgomery bus boycott.

Claudette had been studying Black leaders like Harriet Tubman in her segregated school, and those conversations had led to discussions around the current day Jim Crow laws they were all experiencing. When the bus driver ordered Claudette to get up, she refused.

"It felt like Sojourner Truth was on one side pushing me down, and Harriet Tubman was on the other side of

me pushing me down. I couldn't get up."

Claudette Colvin's stand didn't stop there. Arrested and thrown in jail, she was one of four women who challenged the segregation law in court.

If Browder v. Gayle became the court case that successfully overturned bus segregation laws in both Montgomery and Alabama, why has Claudette's story been largely forgotten?

At the time, the NAACP and other Black organizations felt Rosa Parks made a better icon for the movement than a teenager. As an adult with the right look, Rosa Parks was also the secretary of the NAACP, and was both well-known and respected – people would associate her with the middle class and that would attract support for the cause.

But the struggle to end segregation was often fought by young people, more than half of which were women.



# THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER



## Take charge of your happiness

By Evelyn Anderton

Have you ever found yourself questioning why you are not happy? Thinking maybe if you won the lottery, had a better job, made more money, lived in a mansion, or married a rich man you would automatically become happy. It's not that easy, none of those things can really make you happy.

Too often people are looking for happiness in the wrong places and with the wrong people. Before you take this journey pursuing your happiness, take this time to list the things that are blocking you from being happy.

I can recall early in my marriage, calling my mother and sharing with her that I was not happy. My mother's next words were a question of one word, WHY?

I began rambling off about six or seven reasons why I was not happy.

I heard a soft sigh and her next question was "what do you want me to do about it"? I thought to myself what a strange response, yet I did not have an answer.

Next my mother proceeded to give me some advice that has stuck with me for over 40 years. Mother explained to me that I'm in charge of my own happiness, because I'm the only one who knows what makes me happy. Unfortunately, that telephone conversation did not make me happy, but opened my eyes to realize only I can make the change.

It took me several weeks to figure out what mother was trying to tell me. I never thought about making sure I was happy. I was so busy making sure everyone around me was happy. Finally, one day a light bulb came on, and I realized I was part of the problem blocking my path to happiness.

I began to focus on the attitudes and behaviors that lead to happiness over unhappiness. I gave serious thoughts to my beliefs and values. Surrounding myself with people who could help

me increase the probability of happiness. I know many of us are familiar with the old saying "misery loves company". Happiness can use some company too.

Many times when I envisioned happiness, it was always full of short joyful moments and memories. I found myself being able to hold onto negative thoughts and despair that clouded my thoughts of happiness. I realized that this is a place in my life needing a change if I am going to experience happiness.

Therefore, I had a new attitude when it comes to bitterness and despair. It is much easier to promote happiness. I had a new attitude when it comes to negative thoughts and feelings. I found something that relaxed me (meditation, reading). I had a new attitude when it comes to happiness and I chose happiness.

Don't let anyone or anything block your path to happiness. You deserve to be happy. Just never forget that you are in charge of your own happiness.

Now is the time to TAKE CHARGE!!!

# Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears



## But For the Grace of God...

It is the never-ending horror story of human history—WAR, the human animal's ability to consciously rain terror down on our fellow human beings. Only the players, the politics and the places change. Throughout history we pick and choose from a boxed set of rationalizations and justifications for war. The common denominator, no matter how rationalized, is a thirst for power and control over other living things. The absolute of war is that it is brutal, and the innocent pay the highest price.

Since November of last year, I've lived in the bubble of the great moral/political American dilemma of a Trump presidency. I've been to a greater or lesser degree pre-occupied with finding my equilibrium in a world that feels far more threatening than it did six months ago. The air gets very stale in that bubble, and occasionally I step outside of it. So it was in December that I started to pay real attention to the devastating, intractable war against ISIS as it plays out in Syria and Iraq.

This is a headline from the Tuesday December 13, 2016 edition of the British daily newspaper The Guardian: "Aleppo's people are being slaughtered. Did we learn nothing from Srebrenica?" It was written by a reporter who as a teenager survived the Srebrenica genocide—the July 1995 genocide of more than 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks, mainly men and boys, in and around the town of Srebrenica during the Bosnian War.

The report begins with Nedžad Avdić telling his personal story:

On a night in mid-July 1995, Serbian soldiers took us to the field where we were to be executed. They stripped us and tied our

hands behind our backs. Lined up, five by five, rows and rows of dead bodies before my eyes, already shot, lives snuffed out in a single bloody instant. I was shot in my stomach, right arm and left foot and felt an incredible pain, as the gasping last breaths of men filled my ears.

I continued to read related stories appearing in The Guardian that day about the human tragedy in Aleppo: The UN's human rights office said earlier there were reliable accounts that pro-Syrian regime forces have been entering homes in the last remaining rebel strongholds and killing civilians on the spot. People in east Aleppo, who have issued distress calls and appeals to the international community to rescue them from retribution, continued to post farewell messages overnight... predicting they would either die by the ongoing bombardment or be tortured and killed if they surrendered.

I began researching older news coverage. I read this in an article in the October 17, 2016 edition of Time Magazine: The Iraqi military, backed by Kurdish and U.S. allies, launched on Monday its long-awaited offensive to take back Mosul from the ISIS militants who have occupied it for more than two years. Alarms quickly sounded about the fate of the 1 million civilians in Iraq's second-largest city. "Those who try to flee will be forced to navigate a city covered with booby traps, snipers and hidden landmines," warned Aram Shakkam, an official with the non-profit group Save the Children based in Iraq. "Without immediate action to ensure people can flee safely, we are likely to see bloodshed of civilians on a massive scale."

The madness continues, but now it is the civilians of Mosul, Iraq under siege, and it is US led airstrikes killing them. This is from a New York Times story on March

27, 2017: "At Site of Deaths, Our Reporters Find Cost of U.S.-ISIS Battle"

Dozens of Iraqi civilians, some of them still alive and calling out for help, were buried for days under the rubble of their homes in western Mosul after American-led airstrikes flattened almost an entire city block...

In the same report, this was pulled from the boxed set of justifications:

Maj. Gen. Maan al-Saadi, an Iraqi special-forces commander, said his men had called [for] the American airstrikes that caused the civilian deaths...He said that Iraqi forces had lost thousands of men fighting the Islamic State, and that to lose so many civilians in a single attack "in return for liberating the entire city of Mosul—I think it is a normal thing."

I think it is a normal thing?!

Then came the most heinous act of all to date. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad ordered the bombing of his own people, releasing the chemical nerve gas Sarin. This excerpt is from a report in the April 4, 2017 New York Times:

...One of the worst chemical bombings in Syria turned a northern rebel-held area into a toxic kill zone on Tuesday...Dozens of people, including children, died—some writhing, choking, gasping or foaming at the mouth—after breathing in poison...

How can I possibly relate to this mind-numbing brutality? Since the American Civil War, there has been no major conflict fought on American soil. Unless we are immigrants or refugees from war-torn countries, no American alive today has been under siege in our own homes from gas bombs and missiles, like our brothers and sisters in Aleppo, and Mosul.

We have never experienced the wholesale slaughter of human beings as Bosnians did

on the streets of Srebrenica. We have never known the sheer horror of genocide as those in Rwanda, Darfur, Cambodia, and Armenia. Americans alive today have never been torn from their homes and sent to extermination camps as over six million Jews were in Germany and German occupied countries during WWII. No, we have not experienced this in our neighborhoods, but to bury our heads in the sand and believe this could never happen in the United States is willful and dangerous ignorance. There is no salvation for our species until we stop turning a blind eye to that which is not part of our own personal reality. Recognize the truth that there but for the Grace of God, go I.

Americans and people of goodwill around the world are not impotent in the Syrian/Iraqi civilian crisis. We must support organizations doing the humanitarian work of insuring that food, water and medical care reach the survivors of this violence. We must keep the pressure on our nation's leaders to welcome more than a sprinkling of Syrian refugees into our country. We must counter xenophobia in ways that transform hearts and minds.

As spiritual beings, our work is to realize there is an inextricable, divine connection between all that lives and breathes, and has being. My child is the child crying out from the rubble of my bombed out home. My mother is dying in my arms, gasping for air—writhing in pain, because nerve gas bombs have exploded on our doorstep. I am the refugee forced to flee the violence that has over taken my country. Feel the pain and suffering of others in our soul, and draw on genuine empathy to transcend the illusion of separation. This is Love, and it is our only hope against the evil of war.

Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity.



# GOVERNMENT / POLITICS

## NICK BROWN: GOVERNOR INSLEE'S GENERAL COUNSEL

### Keynote Speaker for May 16 'Rise for Justice' Fundraiser to Benefit Spokane's Center for Justice

The keynote speaker for this year's "Rise For Justice", Spokane's May 16 fundraiser for The Center For Justice, is Nicholas Brown, General Counsel for Washington Governor Jay Inslee.

The journey that led the Washington native to Olympia and into the prominent role that he now occupies within Inlee's administration is an interesting one, and one that he recounted for The Black Lens during a recent interview. Here are excerpts from that interview.

***Tell me a little bit of about your background and your family?***

My father is from South Carolina, originally, and my mom is from Missouri. They were both in the military and met at Walter Reed back in the late 60s. They were stationed all around and I was born when he (my dad) was down at the Presidio, in San Francisco. I've got an older brother who is five years older. My folks are still here, (in Seattle). They are both retired and just being grandparents. I'm down in Olympia now, with my wife and our two kids.

***Talk a little bit about growing up, where you went to school, college.***

I grew up just twenty-five minutes from where I am now. Steilacoom is a town, technically, but it's more of a neighborhood. It's real small, right outside of Fort Lewis and south of Tacoma. I was there from high school and then I went off to Morehouse for college in Georgia. I was looking to leave Washington for a minute and try something new and Morehouse was great on a lot of different fronts.

***What was it that attracted you to Morehouse and what did you get out of it?***

We don't have any HBCU's really, they're mostly in the south and a couple in the Midwest, so they weren't really on my radar very much. When I was a freshman or sophomore in high school, my pops said, 'you should really think about Morehouse'. So we went out there and took a tour when I was a junior in high school. I just really fell in love with the city and with the school. I was really intrigued by going to a school that was all Black, or at least ninety-nine percent. I was really intrigued by going to an all male college. I thought that would be a different environment.

And then with the college itself, I was really happy at Morehouse because it was nice to have role models. When I was growing up here, I was one of the two or three smart Black kids. When I was in honors classes, there were never many of us, peers, and I didn't have that many Black teachers, or teachers of color at all growing up. So to go to Morehouse and have professors and classmates, that was really cool.

I've often said to people that Morehouse taught me more about diversity than any other place I've been. We pride ourselves here in the northwest of being very diverse, and an open and welcoming place, and in a lot of ways are. But my experience growing up was also a lot of the typical stereotypes that people have that are broken down on racial lines. Going off to Morehouse, where everybody was essentially eighteen to twenty-two year old Black males from



various parts of the country, there was so much diversity in that very myopic student body. It was just everybody. You know, the really super smart kids who didn't study and the athletes and the kids who didn't really care, you know, everybody. And to me that was really eye opening.

***Were you always interested in law or did that come later?***

That came a little bit later. I mean I had always had an interest in policy and political stuff and but I didn't think about being a lawyer necessarily. I think when I went to Morehouse, my original plan was to do business or something, as much as any eighteen year old has a plan. But I pretty quickly decided I wanted to be a political science major.

I went to college on an army scholarship, so I really started thinking about law school in part because I was either going to go regular army or try to do something different. I starting thinking about becoming a JAG and that's when I started thinking about maybe going to law school and that way I could serve in the military as a lawyer rather than as a typical officer.

I graduated from Morehouse (with a degree in Political Science) and got commissioned as an Army Second Lieutenant. When I graduated, I applied for and got an educational delay to go straight to law school.

***You went to Harvard Law School. So how was Harvard?***

I don't want to overstate it but Harvard is a magical place. I mean, law school is not for everybody. For a lot of people, it just kind of sucks, but Harvard is a unique place because it's not only the law school, it's the whole surrounding community. I spent a lot of time hanging out at the Kennedy School of Government, which is the government grad program, and people that I was watching on the news growing up would be there presenting on things.

Law school is tough, it's a grind, especially the first year, but transitioning from Morehouse to there was easier in some ways. In my first year class, we had like five hun-

dred fifty students come in, and there were fifty-three or fifty-four Black students, you know, as opposed to like UW that has one hundred twenty or so law students coming in and maybe six or seven Black students. So in sheer numbers, you know, it was pretty good.

***What did you learn about yourself at Harvard?***

I definitely learned that I'm not the smartest kid in the world. There are a lot of smart folks there. I went from being a top tier student to being a sort of middle range student, which was fine by me.

What I think I most learned is just about myself and just that everything is possible. You know, you come and you see people who are doing amazing things, or are thinking about doing something unique, and there's no one telling you that you can't.

In some ways Morehouse was good for that too. They do a lot of just building the character and confidence of the young men who come through there and then send them off. And when I got to Harvard, I felt like I could do the work. And there were a lot of really successful people who would come through there at Harvard and it was just like, alright, if those folks can do it, then I can do it too, or at least I can get close. So it definitely opened my eyes towards what's possible in the world.

***Then you were a JAG attorney. What does a JAG attorney do?***

I was a JAG from 2003 through 2007. Most JAG spend time doing some sort of family law, helping people with marriage and divorce things, or small level consumer things, they bought a car with a bad loan and now they are getting mistreated by the bank or something. So I did a little bit of that. I ran the Army tax center in my first year, helping soldiers fill out their tax returns. I spent two years as a defense lawyer, kind of equivalent to being a public defender, just in the military. I was in Baghdad for a year. So I spent all of 2005 in Iraq doing criminal defense for soldiers. It was a surreal experience. I had my clients and they were getting into trouble, from small things to big things, and we had full on jury trials in the middle of the

war zone. Pretty unique. Then I spent my last year as a prosecutor. I switched to doing that once I came back here (to Washington).

***What did you do after that?***

I got out of the Army in 2007 and then I went for six years to the U.S. attorney's office in Seattle. For the first couple of years I was in general crimes. I did a little bit of everything, white collar, mortgage fraud, prosecutions, guns. Then I spent my last three and half to four years doing mostly violent crime and working with state and local task forces on gang crime, and a lot of large scale drug enterprises and that kind of thing.

***How did you end up with Governor Inslee?***

The short story is that I applied for the job. I was in my old job for about six years. I was newly married, had a new kid. I'd been kind of thinking about moving on to something different, and I had maintained an interest in politics and that kind of stuff. So I was just talking to a friend of mine and he said, 'you know, I heard the Governor is looking for a lawyer. That sounds like something you might want to do.' I said yeah that would be cool. My friend knew someone that knew someone who worked on the campaign and they sent me an e-mail and said, hey would you be interested and send in your resume. I did. I interviewed with the chief of staff and then interviewed with the governor, got the offer and moved down from Seattle. So that's how I got the job. I just put in for it.

***What does a General Counsel do?***

I can speak about what I do. It's interesting because I've met a lot of my predecessors and everybody has done something a little bit different, depending on who they were and depending on the governor. Basically I'm the in-house lawyer for the Governor's office. Within the Governor's office there are 50 people, give or take, and I'm the lawyer for the office. I hired a deputy so there's two of us now.

We provide day to day legal advice on all the issues that might arise. What that means is that I'm the ethics advisor for the office. During the session, in particular, we spend a lot of time reviewing and analyzing bills to make sure that there are no issues. We work with our policy staff to identify legal issues. My job is to make sure that policy and political problems don't become legal problems.

I do the governors judicial appointments. He appoints people from the Superior Court level, County, the Supreme Court. I do those for him. I do a lot of Tribal things, helping to manage and mitigate some of the tribal affairs issues. I work with the AGs office to identify and track all of the high profile cases in litigation that the Governor needs to be aware of. And then, given my background, I do a lot of criminal justice policy stuff. To my surprise, the Governor has let me take the lead on a lot of our policy issues around criminal justice. I work with our policy folks on trying to adopt better corrections policies. In my first year here, into the second, the Governor let me work on putting a moratorium on the death penalty.

*Continued on Page 18*



# The Vibes

By Afaria McKinney



At first I was blind to the Universal signs  
you may be asking what the hell does that even mean?

This world is filled with fantasies along with evil schemes,  
they go hand in hand like Uncle Sam the man you never  
want see, comes to me and says

“What do I see ? “

“Well then” I say

“I believe I have some facts to provide you”

Listen young grasshopper listen as I attempt to guide you  
through the shadows this world has put up,  
be careful for it will divide you.  
I believe it has already surely blinded you.

From micro aggressions to macro apologies,  
from black lives matter to all lives matter in a crowd being  
told what to say,

“ Isn’t it all lives that matter?”

“Your holding up the wrong sign!”

“We’re all fighting the same fight right ?”

And they wonder why I frown, don’t crowd me please just  
listen to my speech, I say I remember when kids use to say

“You are black! You are brown! Hey man why the frown,  
stand up now so we can push you back down.”  
Still confused then let me take on a trip through the inner  
workings of habituation

From 40 acres and a mule to 40 oz and a pit bull,  
why the drool?, I wonder why?  
From slave movies, to the appropriation of a culture,  
GET OUT ! I shout.

Because that movie currently shows everything that goes  
on around the globe,

I can see Uncle Sam and Uncle Tom talking at the dinner  
table about reasons a so-called civil rights movement is  
one of the biggest jokes on the planet.

“It’s not just us, but justice,  
that’s what we’ll have the people say,  
they’ll fight for equal rights, and equal likes,  
it all goes through social media anyway.

So don’t play, we got mixed feelings anyway,  
half-rican born, oppression raised.

Ignorant to those who don’t know my ways.  
My life, my strife, I continue in my fight,

Thank you for listening world good night.



## SENIORS CAN APPLY FOR \$40 IN CHECKS TO USE FOR FRESH PRODUCE

**The Deadline for Applying for the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is May 31, 2017!**

For the third consecutive year, Catholic Charities Spokane Food For All will work with Aging and Long-Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW) to distribute Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) vouchers in Spokane County.

**The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program** is designed to improve the nutritional health of low income seniors by providing them with \$40 in vouchers that can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from certified farmers markets.

Over \$56,000 in vouchers will be distributed following a random drawing in June. All affidavits postmarked by May 31, 2017 that meet the eligibility guidelines will be included in the drawing. Affidavits, which include eligibility requirements, are available on-line at:

<http://www.catholiccharitiesfoodforall.org/senior-farmers-market-nutrition-program>

To be eligible for the SFMNP, you must meet all of the following:

- You must be 60 years old or older (or 55+ if you are Native American /Alaska Native)
- Your income must be below 185% of Federal Poverty Level. That means:
  - \$22,311 Annual or \$1,859 Monthly Income for 1 person
  - \$30,044 Annual or \$2,504 Monthly Income for 2 people
- For larger households, add \$644 month for each additional person
- You must be a resident of Washington State

**For more information, please contact Catholic Charities Food For All at (509)459-6163, or E-mail at: [jhansen@ccspokane.org](mailto:jhansen@ccspokane.org).**

# UNION NOTES

## Opportunity: When It Comes, Who Will Answer?

By Rick Colon

“Opportunities come and go, but if you do nothing about them so will you”. Have you ever heard that phrase?

Well, consider things you might have experienced in the labor movement since you’ve entered it. What has changed? Has it been for the betterment or the detriment? Consider your workplace, has it increased personnel or decreased? Has work your company done increased or has some, if not all, been shipped to some other “right to work state, or another country”?

When I started in my present capacity, union density, (the amount of workers with union contracts) was almost 15%. In 2016, current statistics estimate union density to be about 10.7%, as some of the statistics show.

Opportunity has been knocking. Perhaps no one heard it or the noise was too loud and no one decided to open the door. Whatever the situation, union membership continues shrinking and what’s been increasing are basically the lower end of union representation, like healthcare workers.

It has been a known fact that with less and less people involved in unions, those remaining have to perform more and more of the work that needs to be handled. Everyone seems to be busier than previous years.

Unions have been merging over the years and continue to do so. I remember the days when we had two Steelworkers unions and two Teamster unions. Currently there is only one of each.

Oddly enough the Spokane Labor Council seems to be increasing in membership. However, a good number of



the current members, as was noted by a show of hands at the last Labor Council meeting, will be retiring relatively soon. That means once again OPPORTUNITY IS KNOCKING. Who or how many will step up to answer this opportunity before the mass retirement cycle begins to take place?

Opportunities like: Community Volunteerism during the month of April; Workers’ Memorial Ceremony on April 22, this year; the Letter Carriers Food Drive, on May 13th; Labor Council Committees and other Labor Council activities, along with those provided by United Way of Spokane County (our partner in the community, with an AFL-CIO Community Services Engagement Director) are all available to provide opportunities to help highlight positive union involvement in the community.

OPPORTUNITY IS KNOCKING, what are you willing to do?

*Rick Colón is the Director of Community Engagement for the AFL-CIO, [rickc@UnitedWaySpokane.org](mailto:rickc@UnitedWaySpokane.org), 509-324-5025.*



# CELEBRATING OUR MOTHERS

## Rosa Anderson



To our mom who’s an angel on Earth, we love you to infinity and beyond.  
**Happy Mother’s Day**  
The Anderson Family

## Shirley Tullos



**A man’s work is from sun to sun, but Mothers work is never done.**  
Happy Mother’s Day  
Love you Stephanie Tullos

## Eleise Kinlow



**Happy Mother’s Day!**  
Thank you for being a great Mother to our children.  
Love you dear,  
Ezra Kinlow

## Evelyn Anderton



**Happy Mother’s Day**  
I love you mother and wish your day is as special as you are  
Love you Tiffinee and Cornelius Yancey

## J’Ann Jennings



Mothers hold their children’s hand for a short while, but their hearts forever  
Love you mommy, Zaynan and Nezhiah.

## Carolyn Johnson



Any woman can be a mother, but it takes someone special to be a mom.  
You are that special woman and mom.  
**Happy Mother’s Day. Love you, Tom Johnson**

## Lillian Anderson



**Mom,**  
Through life’s up and downs you have always been a source of unconditional love, strength and support. We are blessed by your presence.  
**Happy Mother’s Day!**  
From All of Us

## Diane Jackson



Making a decision to have a child – it’s momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body.  
**You’re the best,**  
Happy Mother’s Day God Mother  
Tiffinee and Cornelius Yancey

## Alice Moore

**THE CHECK**  
By Natasha Niemi

I don’t need money and I’m not in trouble again, Just wanted you to know, you’re more than my mom, You’re my friend. Thanks for your unconditional love; You’ve never failed to treat me like your angel from above. Thanks for constantly pulling my butt from the fire; You never accepted poor effort So I always aimed higher.



You said this is a mother’s job, But you never got a check. Not even Bill Gates’ bank account Could cancel such a debt.  
**THANKS Mommy, I love you.**  
Your loving children-  
Monica, Michelle, Michael, Marie



# HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

## Mary Summler



Mother is not a person to lean on, but a person to make leaning unnecessary.

Happy Mother's Day God Mother  
Tiffinee and Cornelius Yancey.

## Wilhelmenia Williams



For all of our lives you have always been there for us and you showed us what love is. We are both better parents because of you. We love you mom!

Rick and Sandy

## Etta Watkins



Happy Mother's Day  
to my wife of 54 years. You  
are an amazing mother, grand-  
mother and great grandmother.

And an amazing woman.

Happy Watkins

## Peggie Troutt



Of all rights of women,  
the greatest is to be a Mother

Happy Mother's Day and may God Bless You  
Tiffinee and Cornelius Yancey

## Jean Jordan



Happy Mothers Day. You are the best mother around. We appreciate the things that you do for us and for so many other people. You are always there when we need you and we love you very much.

Gloria and Jerry

## Jerrelene Williamson



Still love you  
madly, Mom!

Jennifer Roseman



## Save The Date

The Links, Incorporated  
Spokane Chapter  
Presents  
"The White Rose Brunch"



Saturday June 3, 2017

11:00 A.M.

Red Lion River Inn

700 North Division

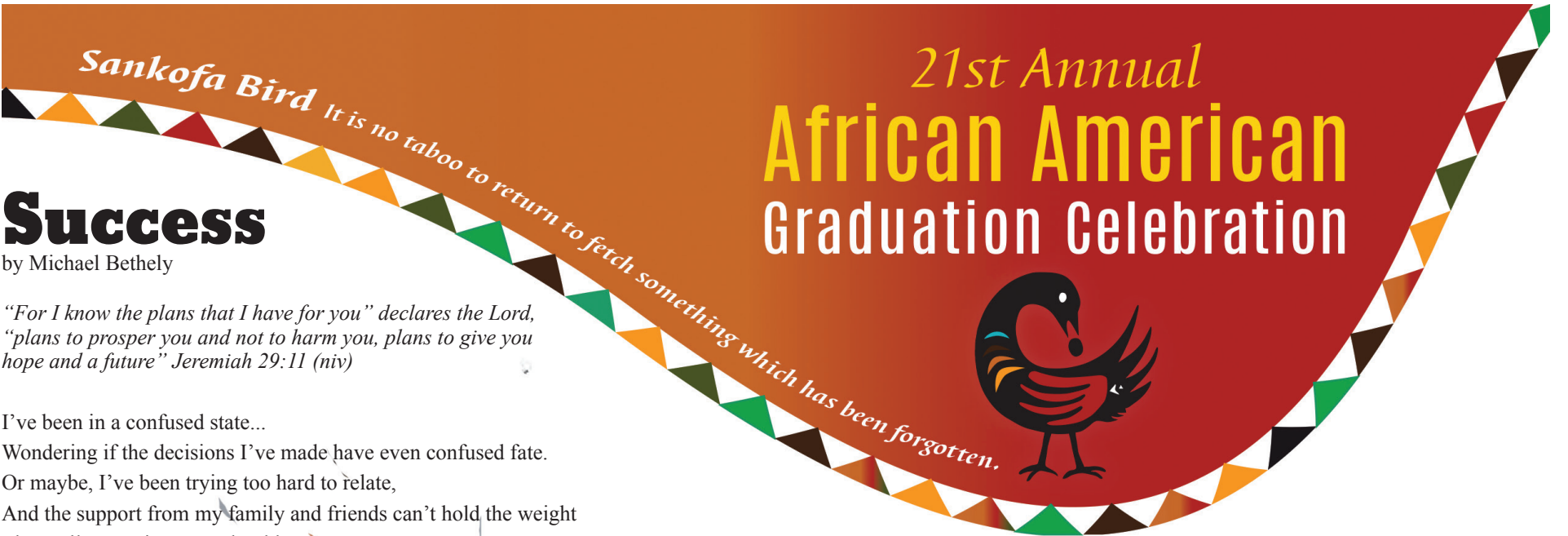
Spokane, WA

Contacts

Dr. Jeanne Baynes 509-255-6013

Teresa Hemphill 509-928-4615





# Success

by Michael Bethely

*“For I know the plans that I have for you” declares the Lord,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you  
hope and a future” Jeremiah 29:11 (niv)*

I’ve been in a confused state...  
Wondering if the decisions I’ve made have even confused fate.  
Or maybe, I’ve been trying too hard to relate,  
And the support from my family and friends can’t hold the weight  
That I allow to sit on my shoulders.

You see, my Great Expectations, continue to get lower...  
Along with my self-esteem, which has my train of thought runnin a little bit slower,  
Now I’m coming up with excuses like, ‘I’m a grower, not a show-er’.  
All while knowing the steps that I’m taking aren’t helping me to move forward.  
It’s like I’m marching in place, while everyone else is moving towards...  
Their goals...  
And their dreams...  
And whatever their happiness deemed.  
While I’m looking up the definition of SUCCESS trying to figure out what it means.

Luckily, I have an App for that...so I type in all the letters,  
And it says:

SUCCESS: The favorable or prosperous termination of all attempts and endeavors

The favorable or prosperous termination ---  
Which means, in order for my life to be a SUCCESS, it has to reach it’s expiration.  
And all my attempts and endeavors have to have some type of foundation,  
And favorable or prosperous...well, they should describe my inclinations...

Yet, I remain impatient.  
With myself.  
Backtracking in life, like I’m coming back from backpacking up a mountain  
that could be made of the cash...  
That I don’t have,  
And that’s being counted by my non-existent accountant.

But I can either be speaking that into existence,  
Or giving in to the persistence that being broke has pushed me into  
With very--little--resistance.  
Which is cause I’m not too fond of money...  
And while you may plant that as funny,  
There’s no way that I’m a let the source of the root of all evil run me.

Which is the way it seems to be all around.

I promise, if We ALL looked out for each other...  
You looked out for me  
I looked out for you  
He looked out for him  
She looked out for her  
They looked out for them  
If WE looked out for US...

We’d probably find enough money laying on the ground,  
Cause you know it grows on trees.  
And while the world is planting seeds,  
Telling us that we need this, or that we need that,  
Or that we got to have this, or that we got to have that,  
Or that we have to look like this, or have to look like that...  
People are soaking it all in, and it branches out and always leaves...

A false sense of security...  
Which leads to insecurities.  
Which is probably why I’m looking up the definition  
of something that God has already destined ME to BE.  
Already destined YOU to BE...

A SUCCESS.

## Richard B. Williams Annual Memorial Scholarship



Richard Williams spent his entire life giving back to his Spokane community, through this commitments and support of many organizations, both in time and financial support. He was active in Eastern Washington University and the Africana Education Program for over 20 years.

Those who knew Richard speak to his generosity and willingness to always offer a helping hand, to always ask, “what do you need and how can I help you?”

Mr. Williams passed away in November 2015. Recently, the Africana Achievement Celebration was renamed to honor Mr. Williams’ memory, now known as the Richard Williams Africana Achievement Celebration.

In 2016, the African American Graduation Committee elected to create the Richard B. Williams Memorial Scholarship, a fund intended to assist superior African American high school graduates entering into higher education.

**Who Receives the Scholarship:**  
~African American high school students  
~Living in Spokane County  
~3.0 minimum GPA  
~Student demonstrates financial need  
~Student must be accepted to a college or university

**To learn more about how you can contribute to the Richard B. Williams Memorial Scholarship contact the Major Gifts Director or Scholarship Manager at Community Colleges of Spokane Foundation at 509-434-5123. or visit [www.ccs.spokane.edu/foundation](http://www.ccs.spokane.edu/foundation).**



# 2017 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION



Photos courtesy Rev. Robert Robinson, Talent of Memories



# THROUGH BOB'S LENS



By Bob Lloyd



The Spokane NAACP President said he will resign to run for public office.  
**Is progress for one the same as progress for the community?**

For more words and images from Artist and Photographer Robert Lloyd visit Bob's website <http://4comculture.com>.

## Head Heart Hands

**Moving Forward Together**

PJALS 2017 Benefit Luncheon with Keynote Speaker Lisa Brown  
*Attend at no cost with an opportunity to give!*

Wednesday  
**May 31, 2017**  
11:30a- 1:00p

The Lincoln Center  
1316 N. Monroe

Reserve your seat  
at no cost:  
[www.pjals.org](http://www.pjals.org)







# #GO ZAGS

Spokane’s Gonzaga Bulldogs had a historic 2017. The team ended the regular season with a 32-1 record, became WCC Champions for the fifth straight year and reached the championship game of the NCAA Basketball tournament. The Black Lens spoke with two members of this record breaking team.

## COACH DONNY DANIELS

Coach Donny Daniels, who just completed his seventh year as Assistant Basketball coach at Gonzaga University, was born in New Orleans and raised in Los Angeles.

Daniel’s mom, dad, older sister Jane, older brother Warren Jr., and his twin brother, Ronny, all moved to Southern California in 1954 when the twins were a few weeks old. Warren Jr. was hit by a car a year later, when Daniels was “one year and six days old,” so Daniels never had the chance to know his brother, and his parents have since passed away, but Daniels’ sister is living in Atlanta and brother Ronny is in Chicago.

Daniels was an active kid when he was growing up and played baseball in elementary school. Then he says, he “fell into football” and did that for two years, during his freshman and sophomore years at Verbum Dei High School, a Catholic, Jesuit high school in Los Angeles. But his junior year, Daniels switched to basketball.

What prompted the switch? Daniels’ high school basketball coach, George McQuarn, who he is still close friends with today came to him and said, “hey, I heard you’re pretty good.” The coach asked if he wanted to try out for the team. “Well,” Daniels

says, “in the eleventh grade, if somebody says that to you. Okay. So, I did it and the rest is history.

Daniels history is a distinguished one. He graduated from California State University, Fullerton, in 1977 with a degree in Criminal Justice and entered the work force out of college, but was approached by his college coach who told Daniels that he thought he would be good at coaching and asked him to think about it.

Daniels did think about it and started coaching, first as a volunteer coach at Fullerton, his alma mater, in 1979. When he didn’t get a full time assistant job at Fullerton, he moved to L.A. Harbor Jr. College where he was the head coach for two years. From there Daniels traveled back to Cal State Fullerton as a full time assistant, and stayed for three years before heading to the University of Utah, where he was an assistant coach for 11 years, from 1989-2000. Then in 2000, Daniels returned to Cal State Fullerton again as the head coach from 2000-2003, before being offered a position at UCLA as an assistant under coach Ben Howland. He stayed at UCLA for seven seasons before heading to Gonzaga in 2010.



Photo Credit: Gonzaga Athletics

Daniels says he was hired for all facets of his experience, but he gravitates to the “bigs”, the centers and forwards. “I enjoy that. I understand that. Not that I don’t understand the perimeter guys, and although I was a guard in college, I just gravitated towards that.”

In describing his role as Assistant Coach, Daniels says his job is to carry out the philosophy of head coach, Mark Few. “Inside of those guidelines we coach that position. We teach what he wants us to teach and then we use our experience in certain aspects to increase and enhance what we’re already doing. There’s an offensive piece. There’s a defensive piece. Game plans, scouting assignments, certain teams that I am responsible for, basically what the oth-

er team does and then how we as a team are going to take that away.”

Daniels is also actively involved in recruiting for Gonzaga. Once he spots a player that fits a position that they need, he then makes sure that he and Coach Few are on the same page, “because what I like, he might not like, or what I don’t like, he might like.” Then Daniels says, “we sell Gonzaga from the grass on the ground, to the rooftops on the building, and we have a lot to sell here, academically, athletically, socially, and what we did this season, going to the final four, all of those new achievements on a national stage has really enhanced our brand, not only here locally but across the country.”

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## JOSH PERKINS

Josh Perkins, a red-shirt sophomore and starting guard for the Gonzaga University basketball team, who finished last year with a 3.7 GPA and was on the Dean’s list, grew up in Park Hill, Colorado, a predominately Black neighborhood on the outskirts of Denver.

Both his Mom, Tonia, and dad, Randy, played basketball, so Perkins says he didn’t have a choice. “I think I came out with a basketball.” In fact, Perkins says, “my first present was a little basketball hoop with a little baby ball. So I picked it up and shot it before I was even walking.”



Photo Credit: Gonzaga Athletics

Perkins tried football one year, but gave that up and has played basketball every year since then, even attending Huntington Prep, a basketball-focused college preparatory school located in Huntington, West Virginia, his senior year.

Perkins was spotted at a young age by one of his role models, Chaunce Billups, also from Park Hill, who played for seventeen seasons in the NBA and was the 2004 NBA Finals MVP. “At a young age, took notice in who I was and that I had potential to be good at basketball. He reached out and since then he’s been a guy that I looked up to, both on and off the court, and that continues to this day.”

Perkins’ other role model, and the primary one who shaped him, he says, is his father. “I have a strong father figure, who did everything he could to put a roof over my head and make me happy, even if he wasn’t happy. He did whatever he could and I saw that, so I try to be just like my dad. I was also blessed because he had a lot of friends and a lot of uncles that raised me as well.”

The support and guidance that Perkins received while growing up helped to boost his self confidence, but there were two moments that stick out for him when that confidence was challenged. The first was when he traveled to West Virginia alone for his senior year of high school. “I’m one of the most confident people out there, that’s just me. But I think that’s the first time I experienced some lack of confidence and I didn’t really know what was going on. I think for me to stick with it and have close people around me to get me through that, I grew on my own as a basketball player, but also as a person.”

Perkins, who decided to visit Gonzaga after Coach Brian Michaelson drove all the way to Philadelphia to watch him play because his flight got canceled due to a storm, says the second moment came his freshman year at Gonzaga when he broke his jaw and had to sit out the season. “That was my first serious injury and I didn’t get to play, but I didn’t let it bring



Photo Credit: Gonzaga Athletics

me down. I took the opportunity to study the game. I took the opportunity to get better and I think that’s what matters. You can’t look down on your losses. You’ve still got to make good with what you’ve got.”

Of his experience in the NCAA tournament this year and reaching the championship game, Perkins says that it still doesn’t feel real. “As a kid it’s something that you dream about. You do everything because of moments like that and I’m just glad I got to share the opportunity with my teammates, my brothers, some good guys. Obviously because I’m a competitor, losing the championship game will be something I’ll always remember. But because we came up a little short, it added some fuel to my fire. I definitely don’t want to feel that way again, so I’m going to put in the work and hopefully not come up short next year.”

Perkins says that what he has learned about himself over the years is to make the most of whatever he has and if he were to have any advice to offer... “I think my message would be to just be ready for whatever. No matter what. If you put your mind to it, anything is possible. I know a lot of people say that, but I really believe that hard work will pay off and whatever you put your mind to, you can do it.”



# MONEY / FINANCE

## 4 Smart Ways to Use Your Tax Refund

Source: Ashley M Fox, <http://www.blackenterprise.com/money/taxes>

Have you ever gotten a tax refund or lump sum of money, and months later felt like you had nothing to show for it? If this has happened to you, it's OK to make mistakes. However, it is not OK to repeat them.

Let's leave those old financial habits in the year 2016, and let's prepare our minds and bank accounts for 2017.

You are a wealth builder, and as a disciplined wealth builder, you must have a plan in place for your tax refund. It's about time we give your money a purpose. Here are some ways to use your upcoming tax refund wisely:

### 1) Start or increase your "in-case-life-happens" fund

There are always going to be unexpected expenses that require you to use money. Face it, life happens! Unexpected expenses will always come, but it is only considered an "emergency" if you're unprepared.

Start 2017 with an account that is ready for any unexpected expense that comes your way. Saving something small every month is great, but why not jump-start the year with a solid foundation. The goal is always to have 3-6 months of your monthly expenses set aside. So, be sure to determine that amount, and deposit a portion of your tax refund into your savings account.

### 2) Pay down your high-interest credit cards

If you are like most people, the thought of owing someone is, oftentimes, annoying. You'd rather just get it over with, pay them off, and go about life without the thought of having to pay yet another bill.

There's nothing wrong with feeling that way, but before you go into the year 2017 ready to pay off ALL your debt; slow down. Review your outstanding debt, and only pay your high-interest credit balances down to a 30% utilization. By just paying your high-interest credit cards down, you will increase your credit score, and you can potentially lower your monthly credit card payment. Do not spend your entire tax refund on paying down debt.

Once you've paid the credit cards down: CUT UP THE CREDIT CARDS. There is no point in paying down your credit cards just to use them again. Grab some scissors, and end that bad habit immediately.

### 3) Invest in a Roth IRA

Paying down debt is important, but how long are you going to defer your wealth just to pay down debt? While you are building a plan to pay everyone back, make sure you take care of YOU!! Depending on your income, age, and financial goals, use your tax refund to open a Roth IRA. Roth IRAs are a great way to help lower your taxes and increase your retirement savings. Roth IRAs also allow you to take advantage of the tax-deferred compounded growth.

Just think: when you retire, you don't want to live off less income, right? If you'd like to be better financially in the future, it is time to start planning for tomorrow, TODAY!

### 4) Invest in a permanent life insurance policy

Life insurance is one of the best ways to create generational wealth for those who are most important to you. Having a life insurance policy in place should be a standard for people of ALL ages because it helps ensure that, as a community, we are leaving our families in better financial positions. However, life insurance can also be used as a way for you to invest your money and use it while you are living. By utilizing permanent life insurance to help grow your money, depending on the company and product, you can also receive downside protection (if you are not comfortable with watching your money go up and down with the stock market).

Every year during tax season, you can do an annual contribution into your policy. This way, you do not have to worry about monthly payments. Not only will you have one less monthly bill, but also another investment that can help create AND pass down wealth. Key items such as your age, health, and income will help determine how your local agent should structure your policy. Companies such as Nationwide, Pacific Life, and Transamerica Premier have great permanent life insurance policies that many people can take advantage of.

## COACH DONNY DANIELS

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One of the important things that Gonzaga has to offer its potential players, and its current ones as well, is the life experiences and life lessons from Daniels and the other coaches.

"Although basketball is important and we're trying to win, he (the player) is still going to have fifty years after his eligibility is over to make a life, not only for himself, but hopefully he's married, has children, God willing his parents are still alive and he'll have to take care of them in some aspect, so what you try to do is leave them with something before they leave here that they can hold on to."

One of the things that Daniels says he tells players that are going through problems is "if this is the worst thing that you're going through in life, then you're going to have a great life." He says, maybe the player will take that with them. "Sometimes a kid is down because he's not playing, maybe he's down because it's not going the way he envisioned it and you've got to let him know that it's just a small piece of what you're going to go through."

"These kids that we bring in here," Daniels continues, "we don't know what they've been through in their life. We think we know, but we don't know, so we have to be very conscious of that. Sometimes I think I'm in a kid's life, as a coach, because I'm going to tell them the right thing to do when they go through some adversity, and sports will send you through some adversity. I'm here to tell them, I've been through that. I know exactly what you're going through."

Daniels says his life lessons also go beyond the basketball court.

"Sports can only take you so far," he says, "there's 1% that make it, then there's the 99% that are out there someplace. Everybody wants to be LeBron James, but nobody wants to be the guy that pays LeBron James. You can be involved in the sport, but you don't necessarily have to be the athlete. Think higher. Your window every day from the day that you are born closes just a little bit. So take advantage."

When asked what he would say to young Black kids in particular, Daniels shared, "I would tell them, play to basketball as long as you can. But instead of spinning on that proverbial wheel, get off the wheel and see what else is out there for you."

He encourages the players to take advantage of the situation that they are in. "I tell everybody, when you are in basketball, with people wanting to get to know you, get to know them, because you never know who you meet or whose hand you shake. You don't know who your roommate is. You don't know who the booster is who gets on the bus all the time. You never know, because at the end of the day, that person may want to hire you and that's not a bad thing. That's why you came to Gonzaga, or wherever you go to school."

Daniels also encourages his players to make a difference in the communities that they are from. "I tell them, go back to your community and make an impact. Go back and give back."

Daniels' commitment to staying connected and giving back has made an impact on his own life as well. Despite the challenge of job stability in his profession, he has been fortunate he says.

"I've been with some very successful programs. At Utah we were very successful. My first stint at Cal State Fullerton, we had a great deal of success. At UCLA, and at Gonzaga, we've done things in he last 3-5 years that have never been done in the program. We won 33 games, then two years later, 35 games, now it's been 37 games, plus a final four appearance, plus a national championship game. So I've been blessed beyond belief to be in this business and be in three different programs that have gone on to a final four."

But despite all of the success, Daniels says in five years, "I want to be retired. I want to visit my kids and hopefully grandkids. I want to save enough money to live comfortably. I know I'm not going to live like Bill Gates, but I can do okay. As you get older, you start thinking about things. I want to wake up, start my day. I want to hear the birds, and I just want a very simple but comfortable life."

Concluding, Daniels shares, "I've had bumps and things along the way, just life stuff, but I've been blessed and I understand that. I don't know why I have been blessed with these opportunities in life, maybe I've done things right, maybe I put myself in the right position, maybe I did the right things, that's why I tell people, you never know who notices you."



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# THE LAW & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## Insufficient Funds: Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council

Continued from Page 1

Being labeled a criminal, often equates to a life sentence for the formerly incarcerated person. However, this is not only a person of color problem. This is an America problem, one that is screaming to Americans of all nationalities and backgrounds of the need to seek and create solutions.

Please don't misunderstand, violent offenders should be locked away. Criminal justice reform is about reevaluating and reprogramming how we as a society imprison and rehabilitate non-violent offenders. Locally and nationally.

**Let's Change the Way We Use and Misuse Jails**

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation reports that the majority of people in jail are presumed innocent. Many are simply too poor to post bail. The way that we currently use prisons and jails to address this population carries a significant cost to individuals, families, and communities.

“A nationwide poll on perceptions of jails and local criminal justice systems reveals that the majority of Americans believe the role of jails should not be to punish, and shows broad support for treatment and rehabilitation. The poll, conducted by RTI International and Zogby Analytics with support from the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge, shows that Americans are particularly supportive of treatment and rehabilitation services for people who have committed non-violent offenses and for those with serious mental illness.”

“The way we misuse and over-use jails in this country takes a toll on our social fabric and undermines the credibility of government action, with particularly dire consequences for communities of color,” said MacArthur President Julia Stasch. “The thoughtful plans and demonstrable political will give us confidence that these jurisdictions will show that change is possible in even the most intractable justice-related challenges in cities, counties, and states across the country.”

**The Safety and Justice Challenge**

The MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge recognizes that there are better, fairer, and more effective alternatives to excessive jail incarceration. The Challenge supports a network of competitively selected local jurisdictions committed to finding ways to safely reduce jail incarceration, making communities healthier, fairer, and safer.

“The 11 jurisdictions receiving funding to implement their plans are representative of jails and local justice systems across the country. They range from large cities like Philadelphia and New York City, to smaller and mid-sized localities like Pima County, Arizona, and Spokane County, Washington. This diversity of sizes, geographies, demographics, and challenges will produce a variety of innovations and models for reform that communities across the United States can adopt.” (MacArthur Foundation)

**Spokane County Receives MacArthur Grant of \$1.75 Million**

Spokane County was awarded a \$1.75 Million MacArthur Foundation Grant in April of 2016. Prior to receiving the Grant, county officials met with community leaders and nonprofit organizations and talked about their proposed efforts to reduce county jail populations and new avenues to address the disproportionate numbers of people of color in the jail. The proposition was met with widespread acceptance from the community. Over the course of a year, elected officials sponsored several meetings, in what was termed “community engagement,” to enlist support and buy-in from community members, but the meetings failed to engage the community in a real and meaningful way and the experience left many community members feeling doubtful about the authenticity and credibility of the officials that held the meetings.

**Community Members Question Community Engagement**

In early April 2017, the Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council (SRLJC), this region’s primary decision making body for the MacArthur Foundation Grant, announced that they would begin a community engagement process as

was outlined in the grant application. Community leaders responded by drafting a letter to the SRLJC asking what “community engagement” looked like from the SRLJC perspective and requesting correspondence as to how exactly the council intended to share information with the community throughout the process.

Community members turned out for a meeting on April 10 that was hastily called in response to the letter sent to the SRLJC. The expectation from the community was to cash our metaphorical check, a check that would, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, “give us, upon demand, the riches of freedom and the security of justice.” A check that would incorporate the community members most impacted by Spokane’s criminal justice system into the SRLJC’s decision making process for the MacArthur Grant.

However, within the walls of that first meeting, facilitated by members of the Burns Institute, the exact opposite came to pass. The letter from the community, which was a collective expression of deep concern about the SRLJC’s honest commitment to transparency and accountability, was instead referred to as a “nuclear option” by representatives from the SRLJC, and other whispers expressed that the rest of the SRLJC would be “very upset” to hear of their beloved community requesting anything from them. How dare they!

The check that the community sought to cash came back marked: INSUFFICIENT FUNDS.

**Questions from the Community**

The grant to Spokane County from the MacArthur Foundation to address Criminal Justice Reform has two key components. The first is community engagement and the second is reducing the racial and ethnic disparities that exist in the jails and prisons in Spokane County, which are some of the highest disparities in the country. The MacArthur Foundation provided Spokane County with the financial resources to positively impact both of these components.

Continued on Page 20

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## It's the Law. Freedom from Discrimination.

This series will offer information about Washington RCWs that deal with discrimination.

### YOUR RIGHT TO OBTAIN WORK...

RCW 49.60.180 (1)\*

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.180>

**It is an unfair practice for any employer to:**

- refuse to hire any person because of race, color, and/or national origin unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification;
- to discharge or bar any person from employment because of race, color, national origin;
- to discriminate against any person in compensation or in the terms or conditions of employment because of race, color, national origin;
- to print or circulate, or cause to be printed or circulated, any statement, advertisement, or publication, or to use any form of application for employment, or to make any inquiry in connection with prospective employment, which expresses any limitation, specification, or discrimination as to race, color, national origin.

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## YOUR RIGHT TO ENJOY PUBLIC RESORTS...

RCW 49.60.215 (1)\*

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.215>

**It shall be an unfair practice for any person or the person's agent or employee to commit an act which:**

- directly or indirectly results in distinction, restriction, or discrimination;
- requires any person to pay a larger sum than the uniform rates charged other persons; or
- refusing or withholding from any person the admission, patronage, custom, presence frequenting, dwelling, staying, or lodging in any place of public resort, accommodation, assemblage, or amusement, except by conditions and limitations established by law and applicable to all persons, regardless of race, color, and/or national origin.

\*Disclaimer: The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx> is the statutory law in Washington State. The above excerpts do not represent the full text or protections provided under the Revised Code of Washington and solely a starting reference as a community service by The Law Office of D.C. Cronin. This information is not to be considered legal advice. Please consult the RCW's for complete texts and omissions and seek legal advice regarding specific situations. Read the full text of RCW 49.60.030 visit: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=49.60.030>.



# Nick Brown: Governor Inslee’s General Counsel

Continued from Page 8

*What have been some of the biggest challenges for you over the years?*

In this job, the hard part is to know a little about a lot of different areas. My background, before I took this job, was almost exclusively in criminal law, and what I get asked to be smart on now is everything. So the hard part is just knowing enough about all the different areas and then frankly knowing the right people to call to get help if I don’t know. So I rely on a lot of other people to help educate me so I can help him.

The challenge before here was working on the really complex cases and trying to make them simple. I spent a lot of time talking to juries and juries typically don’t know about the law, so sometimes it can be complex issues and complex stories and just really trying to boil it down to something straightforward. Sometimes that’s easy, depending on the case, and sometimes it’s hard.

And then finding time for everything else in your life is the other part. I’ve got two little kids, ages four and two. Trying to spend a lot of time with them is challenging.

*Thinking back over all that you’ve done, what would you say you’re most proud of?*

I have a few different moments as a lawyer that I am most proud of. I can think of a couple of cases in the military, particularly when I was in Iraq. Defending those soldiers. I look back on that with a lot of appreciation, because you know you’re representing people, that are not only facing whatever criminal charges that they are facing, but they’re doing so in the middle of a war. Right. So, they’re out there fighting and putting themselves in danger, and then they have criminal charges to worry about, and helping them navigate that to make their life better.

I think my single most proudest moment as a trial lawyer was when I prosecuted a triple rape case. One of the victims had problems communicating with anybody, particularly strangers, in part because of the trauma that she had been through. I remember when we put her on the stand to testify, I was not sure whether she would speak, but she got on the witness chair and she actually spoke to me. It was great. We actually didn’t convict on her charge. The jury hung. But even though it was a loss in some ways, it was a victory because she got to tell her story, and that was in large part because I spent a lot of time trying to get to know her. So that was great.

And then in this job, I would say it’s definitely the death penalty moratorium I’m most proud of. I give the Governor a tremendous amount of credit for being willing to do that, particularly early on in his term as a Governor. It wasn’t politically the safest thing to do and he was willing to do that and let me do that work. So I think that he has changed the trajectory of the death penalty in Washington even though it wasn’t frequently used. My guess is that it will never be again used, even though it’s still legal. So, I’m proud of that.

*(For his work on the death penalty moratorium in Washington state, Nick Brown was recognized by the Seattle Magazine as one of the most influential people of the year; and the King County Bar Association gave him the Governor’s Leadership Award.)*


*There’ are so many forces that exist for you, as a young Black man, to not be successful. As you look back, what do you think were the keys for you to have made it through the web of things that could have sent you in a different direction?*

That’s a hard question, in part for me because I feel very lucky in a lot of ways. My folks have always been loving to me and loving to each other and I never felt like I lacked for that sort of base level support and love, and that’s something that is lacking for a lot of people. So while I have been successful, it would have been that much harder had I not come from the foundation of having two loving supportive parents, and you can’t take it for granted.

I would say it’s the small things. I’ve seen a lot of friends of all types get caught up in just little stupid things. Particularly when you are in high school and you can do something that in retrospect seems so minor and stupid, but a little small thing like that can throw you off the track. It’s a longer conversation, but part of the problem with our justice system is that it makes overcoming those stupid things harder, particularly harder for people of color. And so looking back, I feel like avoiding those small pitfalls has been good.

The other thing is I think I’ve always put a huge priority on school and always doing well in school was important. Graduating and going to college made it so much more likely for success. So the more people can focus on that the better. And then, at a base level, you just have to try to be good every day. Good to your neighbors and good to people in your professional world, and try to keep that priority, doing the right thing has been critical for me.

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# POLITICS IN BLACK AND WHITE

## BY AUSTIN WASHINGTON



## Question of the Month

### Continued From Page 2

#### EMANCIPATION DAY 2017

Federal tax returns in the United States are due on Tax Day, April 15th. This year, Tax Day fell on a Saturday, which meant that taxes should have been due on Monday, April 17th. Except April 17, 2017 was **Emancipation Day** in Washington, DC.

Emancipation Day is a holiday celebrated in Washington DC to mark the anniversary of the signing of the Compensated Emancipation Act. It is annually held on April 16, but because this year April 16 was on a Sunday, Emancipation Day was observed on Monday, April 17.

On April 16, 1862, Abraham Lincoln, who was the US president at the time, signed the Compensated Emancipation Act, which freed more than 3000 slaves in the District of Columbia. However, slavery did not officially end in the rest of the United States until after the American Civil War, which lasted from 1861 until 1865. The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution formally ended slavery in the US. The 13th amend-

ment was proposed on January 31, 1865, and ratified by 30 of 36 states in the same year.

On January 4, 2005, legislation was signed to make Emancipation Day an official public holiday in the District of Columbia.

Elsewhere in the United States, the emancipation of slaves is celebrated in Florida (May 20), Puerto Rico (March 22) and Texas (June 19). There are also similar events in many countries in the Caribbean, including Anguilla, Bahamas, Bermuda, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Many of these events occur during the first week of August as slavery was abolished in the British Empire on August 1, 1834.

Emancipation Day is a legal holiday in Washington DC. Local government offices are closed and many public services do not operate. A wide range of events are arranged in Washington DC to mark Emancipation Day. In all other areas of the United States, April 16 is a normal day and public life is not affected.

Source: <https://www.timeanddate.com/holiday>




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# OUR VOICES

## Marching for Climate While Black

By Rev. Lennox Yearwood  
Special Commentary

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - This past Saturday, April 22nd, at the March For Science in Washington DC on Earth Day, I was assaulted, roughed up, and detained by police in the shadow of the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture.

It was not part of an action or planned civil disobedience. It was sadly a much more regular event - an interaction between police and a person of color gone very wrong. I have spoken at the Earth Day event on the National Mall in years past. But this year I was particularly excited to attend the March for Science to hear Mustafa Ali speak.

Mustafa, if you don't know, courageously resigned as the head of Environmental Justice at the EPA after a 24-year career. He is now Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice, and Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus. Mustafa and the rest of our Hip Hop Caucus team were already at the march. I had spent the early morning driving around handling daddy duties and was arriving at the rally about midway through.

I was walking in the rain and carrying an umbrella down Constitution Ave. from the National Archives Building towards the Washington Monument. Constitution Ave. was closed and I was excited to see so many people out for the Science March. As I approached 14th St. on Constitution, the walk sign was on, but there was an MPD officer in the middle of street letting cars proceed across 14th, so I stayed on the curb. I waited as the crossing signal turned red and then it turned back to walk, signaling clearance for all of us on the curb to cross, which we started to do.

I was the only person of color in the immediate area. The police officer then told everyone to get out of the crosswalk. By then I was about half way across the street. I paused in the middle of the street and then decided it was easier to proceed to the other side of the street, in effect getting out of the crosswalk. The officer then ran up to me, grabbed me forcefully by my jacket and swung me around, slamming me up against a food truck. I yelled, "What are you doing? Stop grabbing me." He told me



to stop resisting, to which I responded that I wasn't. I dropped my umbrella, and put my hands up. I told him I was there for the Science March. He said he had to detain me because I "could be on drugs."

YES, he really said that.

By this time I'm surrounded by five police officers, still in the street, next to the food truck into which I had been slammed. It was very serious. I was in fear for my life. The officer then asks if I had an ID because he wanted to check for outstanding warrants. He asked if I had heard him, I said not until I was in the middle of the crosswalk, when I, like everybody else had started walking. I asked why he was detaining me and why he roughed me up. He told me to shut up and to give him my ID.

I unzipped my rain jacket, which revealed two things - my clergy collar showing that I'm a minister and a VIP badge for the March for Science. At that moment

the officer's demeanor changed, as his perception of me changed slightly. It was as though until that moment he didn't believe I was "supposed" to be there. Yet, he still detained me, ran my ID, and when he found nothing, told me it was easier to rough me up than to stop cars from coming into the crosswalk, and then ultimately, he let me go.

As unfortunate as it is to say, this interaction with the police is not the first or worst I've had of this kind, and it is all too common for people of color in Washington DC and all over this country.

But the deeply disappointing truth of this Earth Day case of racial profiling, was that none of my fellow science marchers stopped or took issue with what was happening. They didn't question or pause to witness in a way that one would for a member of one's community. There was one young woman with bright pink hair, who asked if I was okay, told the cop she

knew me, and asked if I wanted her to make a phone call for me. She was encouraging. Otherwise, not a move was made at a march about protecting our planet and communities, to speak up or attempt to correct an injustice that was happening right in front of them.

I am a prominent leader in the climate movement. It is not hyperbole to say, if this can happen to me, then imagine what it feels like for a young person of color who might be coming to a march like this for the first time.

When something like this happens, I think first of my two teenage sons and all that might go wrong for them in an interaction with police, and it scares me as only a parent can get scared at the thought of losing a child as so many have. I also think of all the various efforts within the climate and environmental movement that are meant to broaden and grow the movement in numbers and diversity.

And I think, all those efforts will not be as successful as they should be until there is true recognition of what it means to march for climate as a person of color, and until there are meaningful things put in place to create a multicultural movement that accounts for the different experiences we have even at the same climate march, let alone in the same country, and certainly on the same planet.

I hope my platform in this movement and the reality that I was profiled and assaulted by police at a climate march further brings to light the work we need to do to change the culture of our movement by first defining what a truly inclusive movement is from the perspective of the very communities we want to have more deeply involved in the issue of climate change. Still, I'll be marching again next weekend at the People's Climate March in DC.

Can't stop, won't stop, as we say in Hip Hop, because too many lives depend on us solving climate change and revitalizing vulnerable communities.

Although I missed Mustafa's speech on Saturday among many other powerful speakers while being detained, I caught them on video later. Please watch Mustafa's powerful words on revitalizing vulnerable communities because together we can win. All power to the people!

## Insufficient Funds: Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council

Continued from Page 17

However of the \$1.75 million granted to Spokane County, only \$20,000 was budgeted for racial equity and \$12,000 for community engagement, or 0.018% of the total budget.

Community members question why a letter that simply asks questions and requests an assurance of accountability, transparency and reliability from SRLJC professionals has been condemned, dismissed and largely ignored, even as we sit face to face, in the same room.

For the record, as a community, we have been historically ignored, hoodwinked, and flat out lied to by those in positions of power, and as a result, before we move forward to

participate in the SRLJC "community engagement" process, community members need reassurance that there is 100% buy-in from the SRLJC System Professionals that THIS TIME we are actually going to work together.

I have identified three major groups of stakeholders whose involvement, in a decision making capacity, are key to moving this bold project forward.

First, the system professionals who are on the Racial, Equity and Diversity (RED) Subcommittee; second, the community at large and its leaders; and third, the individuals and families of presently incarcerated persons of all nationalities, who carry with them the zeitgeist of mass

incarceration and the solutions that lie within their individual testimonies.

If the MacArthur Foundation Grant is truly to accomplish its goals in Spokane County, we must not shrink back from the enormous task that lies before us all. Individually and collectively our presumptions, presuppositions, prejudices, and long held beliefs must be tethered, questioned, confronted, and demolished, allowing the Spokane community to cash this necessary check, "a check that will give us, upon demand, the riches of freedom and the security of justice."

Not another check stamped: Insufficient Funds!



# OUR VOICES

## GU Should Care About Minorities Beyond the Stats They Represent

By *Eli Ashenafi*

I didn't do Bridge. I remember when the invitation came through my mailbox the summer before freshman year. Being Black in predominantly white schools was nothing new to me, so why would I purposefully ostracize myself and allow Gonzaga to label me as a "minority" before I ever even got a chance to be blend in?

All I ever wanted was to be normal.

What took me only three years to figure out was that it wasn't just some invitation I was avoiding. In reality all I was avoiding was my own identity.

Navigating this campus as a Black man has been challenging. I've known this since freshman year; I just didn't allow myself to think about it. I told myself that all my struggles were the same struggles as my white friends.

This was incredibly naïve and ignorant.

Here's why: Nothing about my history is taught in the classroom. None of my classes inform me on how to be a Black man in this world. No one ever prepared me for the eight times I've been pulled over by cops, the three times job interviewers have made an inappropriate comment about my intelligence in relation to my skin color, or the countless times people have crossed to the opposite side of the street just to avoid the "scary Black guy."

I came to this school alone. No one told me how to survive, much less thrive. I guess I never really asked, but really did I need to?



When every other white student is just naturally in some sort of support group, it sure as hell seemed like there weren't that many people who were struggling like I was.

One day, with the help of a very supportive friend, I finally found myself at a Black Student Union meeting. It was immediate bliss. All this time I thought BSU was a place to go to be ostracized as a Black student, openly ignoring that it was happening regardless. Now I'm about to graduate, and I have a few thoughts I'd like to leave with GU.

I am not angry, just incredibly disappointed in this university. In the Comprehensive Leadership Program here we talk about turning up the heat so as to maintain a vested interest on the issues. It's a damn shame that most students in this school only care about racial inequality when something happens that's too large to avoid. It's even worse when I can say the same about the administration.

Secondly, this is not a university I would ever recommend a student of color to attend. I

shouldn't have to ask my professor to talk about racial inequality in an HR class. I shouldn't have to be a sociology student just to learn about gender and racial inequity. There should be as much effort put into making underrepresented minorities comfortable and acclimated as there is for everyone else.

Students of color form tight-knit communities on this campus, and they often stay together. To a certain extent this is by choice, but when the only people that you feel care about you or relate to you are the ones who look like you, then we have a glaring problem.

Dr. McCulloh shouldn't tell me to my face that he feels like many upperclassmen (of color) start on the path of social justice only to feel "burnt out" by senior year.

Why do they burn out? Is it because the work is too much? Is it because the cause seems hopeless? Is it because there is literally no support from the majority of students and faculty? Because don't ever tell me these students, who never asked to solve a whole institution's worth of problems, are "burnt out" for any other reason than the countless times they were all but told they don't matter.

Many of us in the Black community often talk about how GU showed such a vested interest in us as we picked a university, but seemingly stopped caring once we got here. I'm not here to help diversify your pie chart. At least show me this.

*Eli Ashenafi is a Gonzaga senior studying business.*

# On The Brink

By *Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.*

(TriceEdneyWire.com) — Among other non-academic activities in our contemporary society, all public school children are introduced to vital, emergency life saving drills. Fire drills, lock-down drills, shelter-in-place drills and tornado drills are all common to our students and welcomed by parents and concerned family members. If asked, most students can easily explain the purpose and intricacies of assuming the "Duck and Tuck" position. First, one locates a position away from glass and loose debris that can be dangerously propelled by high winds. Next, facing a wall or other solid, protective edifice, one assumes a vertical fetal position, with his/her head lowered as far as possible between his/her knees. The "Duck and Tuck" position is employed in every public school tornado drill.

Although now used almost exclusively for tornadoes, I'm old enough to remember when the primary purpose of the "Duck and Tuck" was as a drill for students to prepare for nuclear attack. Then, the world had fresh recollections of the destruction and devastation of such attacks. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not just historic events. I have been both places and memory of the horrors are still real. I can appreciate the serious and solemn approach world leaders, specifically American leaders, took in navigating through world events with the goal of maintaining peace.

Even Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, principle physicist in developing the atomic bomb, understood the monster he unleashed upon humanity. With clarity of thought he stated, "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds."



"*The Day After*", a 1980's movie about a nuclear war between Russia and the United States (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Zh-jpHYjZpc&t=600s>), was recommended to me as a stark refresher of what a nuclear war could mean. I shudder to think that this depiction could have an element of truth, yet I believe that in reality our fate would be far worse.

Truth could be stranger than fiction. Specifically, through its development and threat of deployment of nuclear weapons, North Korea holds South Korea, Japan, China, and, possibly, parts of the United

States hostage to the fear of nuclear holocaust. A US Navy Aircraft Carrier Battle Group now sails, more or less, toward the Sea of Japan on course to achieve what only God knows. Conflicts in mid-eastern Asia serve as a potential tipping-point for widening conventional warfare that may force us to a combative point-of-no-return. Terrorists turn the hatred and xenophobia that is running rampant in the United States into recruitment propaganda for an internal and external assault upon our social stability.

As I write this, a megalomaniacal US President has taken great enjoyment in upsetting any logical order in international relations. He, seemingly, derives genuine pleasure in offending long-standing allies and courting the allegiance and camaraderie of nations that we have long numbered among our historic adversaries. We now reject the values that have made our nation great and embrace the hatred and divisiveness that weaken us spiritually and morally.

Years ago, Five-Star General Omar Bradley predicted our current circumstance. He said, "Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount."

The threat to our species is critical. Our only choice is to heed the call for active political involvement. Through our engagement we must demand that our current impractical and unrealistic leadership plot a more reasoned course to the future.

*Dr. E. Faye Williams is National President of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. 202/678-6788. [www.nationalcongressbw.org](http://www.nationalcongressbw.org)*




# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES


Do You Want A Career in Real Estate? Call Me.


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**Robert A. Gilles**  
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rgilles@gillesrealty.com  
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Spokane, WA 99205

Put our experienced team to the test!





**American Red Cross**

### Three Full-Time AmeriCorps Positions

The American Red Cross, Northwest Region is seeking enthusiastic individuals to serve as **full-time volunteer stipend AmeriCorps Team members in Spokane from September 1, 2017 through July 15, 2018** in the following positions:

Community Preparedness Coordinator  
Service to Armed Forces (SAF) Coordinator  
Volunteer Program Coordinator

**Must Commit to serve full-time for 10 1/2 months (September 1, 2017 - July 15, 2018), serve min. 40 hours a week and meet the 1700 minimum requirement for a full term of service**

**Benefits:**

- **\$1,202.86/month living stipend** (before taxes) and \$5,815 AmeriCorps Education Award upon successful completion of service term commitment and 1700 hours of service
- Eligibility for health insurance coverage
- Student loan forbearance (on qualifying loans)

To see complete job descriptions and qualifications or to apply, go to <https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/publicRequestSearch.do>, then go to the quick search section and complete the following steps:

- Enter Project Type | AmeriCorps State/National
- Enter State | Washington
- Enter Program Name | American Red Cross
- Click on the green search button to see available positions

## Career Opportunities S P O K A N E

Long established manufacturing company is seeking energetic and hard-working individuals for management, sales, office, machine operators and laborer positions. To view all of our current openings, please visit our website [www.SCAFCO.com](http://www.SCAFCO.com) and/or CWalla, our authorized distributor of SCAFCO products [www.CWalla.com](http://www.CWalla.com) to fill out an application.


You can also send your resume to SCAFCO at **2800 E Main Ave Spokane, WA 99202.**

**Benefits Package Includes:**

**Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance, Vacation, Excellent 401(K) and Profit Sharing.**







**community-minded  
ENTERPRISES**

### Operations Associate

This position supports the overall mission and vision of Community-Minded Enterprises through assisting the administrative team and CMTV14 in production and event planning, updating and insuring accuracy of the studio's online calendar of events/meetings, inventory control and tracking, and daily operational tasks. Also acts as a liaison between the admin team, supervisors, and IT team leads for general building and maintenance support for multiple locations.

**Qualifications:**

- 2+ years' experience working in an office setting including ordering supplies, customer service, facilities maintenance, office machinery and inventory systems.
- Strong knowledge of all Microsoft Office programs and Office365 as well as Word Processing; Spreadsheet; & Database software.
- Experience working with both Apple and PC computers.
- Basic knowledge of production equipment, including audio helpful but not required.
- Demonstrated commitment to cultural relevancy, diversity & inclusion.
- Excellent in-person, phone & written communication skills.
- Ability to prioritize work & manage time effectively.
- Strong competency working both in a team setting & independently.
- Experience tracking, managing, & meeting weekly & monthly project goals.
- Must have current, valid driver's license & be able to pass required background checks.

The Operations Associate is a benefited full time position with a pay range of \$14-15 hr DOE. Community-Minded Enterprises provides a competitive benefits package.

**To apply:** send cover letter, one page resume, and three professional references to [HR@community-minded.org](mailto:HR@community-minded.org) or Human Resources, Community-Minded Enterprises PO Box 48150 ~ Spokane, WA 99228.

**No phone calls or in-person queries please.**

To see the full job listing for this position or other employment opportunities at Community Minded Enterprises, visit: <http://community-minded.org/employment>

*CME is an EEO employer and encourages women, minorities and those with disabilities to apply.*

For more information or to place an employment advertisement contact The Black Lens at 509-795-1964 or [sandy@blacklensnews.com](mailto:sandy@blacklensnews.com). For price information visit the website at [www.blacklensnews.com](http://www.blacklensnews.com) and click on the advertising tab at the top of the home page.



# MAY EVENTS

## MAY 6

### SILENT AUCTION TO BENEFIT PASTOR HAPPY WATKINS

New Hope Baptist Church invites you to attend a Benefit Auction in celebration of Pastor Happy Watkins. Proceeds will benefit New Hope's purchase of a new church.

*Doors Open at 4pm, Auction closes at 8pm*

**Spokane Eagles Lodge**

**6410 N. Lidgerwood, Spokane**

*(Near Francis & Division)*

Also featuring a fashion show, gospel music, refreshments and a live auction.

## MAY 15

### NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

**7:00pm**

**Community Building - Lobby**

**35 W. Main Street, Spokane WA**

For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or visit the website at <http://spokaneNAACP.com>

## MAY 16

### RISE FOR JUSTICE

Breakfast fundraiser for The Center for Justice. Keynote speaker: Nicholas Brown, principal legal advisor to Washington's Governor Inslee.

**7:30am – 8:50am (breakfast served)**

**Hemmingson Center Ballroom**

**Gonzaga University**

**702 E Desmet Ave, Spokane**

*The event is at capacity, to be placed on the wait list contact LaTisha@cforjustice.org.*

*Please send information about upcoming community events to [sandy@blacklensnews.com](mailto:sandy@blacklensnews.com) or call 509-795-1964.*

## MAY 19

### GET OUT

The Black Lens and the Magic Lantern Theatre are partnering to host a special screening of the film, "Get Out", which uses the horror movie genre to tackle the issue of racism. The movie will be followed by a discussion about the issues raised in the film.

**Magic Lantern Theater**

**25 W. Main Avenue, Spokane**

**TICKETS: \$10**

*Seating is limited. To purchase tickets visit the Black Lens website at [blacklensnews.com](http://blacklensnews.com) or call 509-795-1964.*

## SAVE THE DATE

## JUNE 3

### THE SPOKANE LINKS ANNUAL WHITE ROSE BRUNCH

The Spokane Chapter, The Links, Inc. invites you to attend the annual White Rose Scholarship awards & Silent Auction Brunch

**June 3, 2017**

**11:00 AM**

**The Red Lion River Inn**

**700 N. Division Drive, Spokane, WA 99202**

**Admission \$40.00**

Proceeds from the brunch benefit the Scholarship fund and Links Programs

For tickets contact:

Dr. Jeane Baynes 509-255-6013

Teresa Hemphill 509-928-4615



# D.L. HUGHLEY



THE ORIGINAL  
**KINGS OF COMEDY**

COMEDY CENTRAL

**HBO**

## May 4 - 6

### Spokane Comedy Club

**315 W. Sprague Ave., Spokane**

**To purchase tickets visit**  
<http://www.spokanecomedyclub.com>  
 or call 509-318-9998.



## 2017 JUNETEENTH COMMUNITY PILLAR AWARDS

### For Outstanding Support of the Black Community

The Inland Northwest Juneteenth Coalition is currently accepting nominations for the **2017 Community Pillar Awards**. The awards will be presented on Friday, June 16th at Spokane Falls Community College at the 4th Annual Pillar Awards Banquet.

You are invited to nominate ONE individual, business, or organization for their outstanding work, contributions, and/or support of the Black Community in each of the following categories:

- Non-Profit Organization**
- Business**
- Individual**
- Church/Religious Organization**

### Deadline for Nominations: May 27th, 2017.

Mailed in nominations must be postmarked by May 27th, 2017.

### To Submit Your Nomination:

**By Mail:** INJC, P.O. Box 10267, Spokane, WA 99209

**By E-mail:** [inwjc@gmail.com](mailto:inwjc@gmail.com)

**Online:** [www.INWJC.org](http://www.INWJC.org)

*The 4th Annual Community Pillar Awards Banquet will be held on Friday, June 16th at Spokane Community College. There will be a full course buffet, entertainment, and special presentations for the award recipients. Pre-sale tickets for the banquet are \$12/per person | \$85/Table. At the door tickets: \$15/per person.*

**For more information visit [www.INWJC.org](http://www.INWJC.org)**

## A Benefit Auction

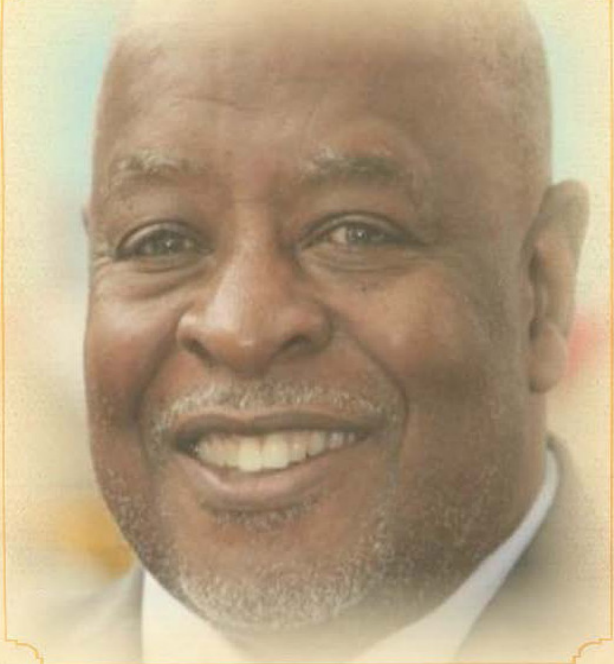
In Celebration of

### Pastor Happy Watkins

Proceeds will go towards the purchase of the new home for  
**New Hope Baptist Church**

## Saturday May 6th, 2017

Doors open at 4:00pm, Silent auction closes at 8:00pm



Featuring:

### Northwest Entertainers

**Spokane Eagles Lodge**  
**6410 N. Lidgerwood**  
More Details @ [www.newhopespokane.com](http://www.newhopespokane.com)

Also Featuring:

Fashion Show  
 Gospel Music  
 Refreshments  
 Live Auction



*The Black Lens and The Magic Lantern Theatre Present*  
**A SPECIAL SCREENING**



**Watch the Movie then Stay for the Conversation!**

**Tickets \$10** **FRIDAY, MAY 19TH** **Seating Limited**  
**7pm**

Magic Lantern Theatre, 25 W. Main Street, Spokane

**For Advance Tickets call 509-795-1964 or visit Blacklensnews.com**

*\*\*\*Tickets may not be available at the door on the night of the screening.*