

THE BLACK LENS SPOKANE™

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

WHAT HATE LOOKS LIKE IN 2015

When Barack Obama became the first African American President of the United States many cheered because there was a belief that this country had finally moved past the racist past that had plagued it for so much of its history. Finally.

But as the many events around the country since President Obama's election back in 2008 have demonstrated, as well as recent events locally here in Spokane, it seems that we are not as far past American's hate-filled, racist past as we would like to believe.

On February 25th at about 6:30 in the evening, Spokane NAACP President Rachel Dolezol picked up the mail from the NAACP post office box as she

regularly did. When she opened the box and pulled out the mail this time though, she noticed something suspicious. "I immediately noticed a thick package with no return address." The package was addressed to her, Attn: President, Rachel Dolezal and was highlighted in yellow marker with the NAACP address below it. The return address suspiciously said "War Pig (Ret.), Still golfing on Wednesdays".

Rachel waited until she was back in her car to open the package. Inside she discovered a page after page of hate-filled threatening images. An assault rifle with the words, "COME AND TAKE IT." Photos of grisly lynchings. A picture of Black faces used for target practice with "Nice shot, man," written next to an image with a bullet hole through a young Black man's forehead, a photo of her speaking at a rally, and the mention of celebrating Black His-

"WITH OUR FLASH MOB AMMO CLIPS, AND 49NER NECKTIE PARTY ROPES....
WE THE PEOPLE
WILL TAKE OUR COUNTRY BACK!!!"
---WAR PIG (RET.)

tory Month with bodies hanging from trees.

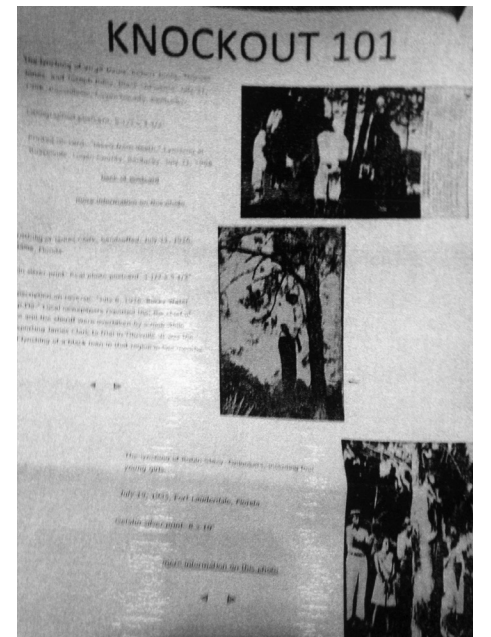
Rachel raced home to make sure that her son was safe, as a cacophony of thoughts raced through her head, who to call first, what to do next, should she leave town; flashes of anger, fear, determination, all jumbled up and meshed together.

After hugging her son "for a very long time", Rachel began the process of reporting the crime. Texting and calling attorneys, police and advisors on what to do next, and calling Crime Check to report the package. The response was immediate. "When the dispatcher heard that there were lynching photos and we are a Black family, she said she had to dispatch an officer immediately because it was a hate crime." The officer bagged the evidence, and called in a "proowler patrol" for that night through the weekend. Even so, neither Rachel nor her son, felt safe.

The investigation is ongoing and Ra-

chel as spoken to a litany of people, including the FBI. She discovered during that process that the "War Pigs" are a "viciously violent" hate group that deals meth and "isn't known for sending mail or threatening, but usually just acting out violence." Rachel wants the perpetrators apprehended. "Until that happens," she says, "the threat is real every day, as evil goes unpunished."

Welcome to post-racial Spokane 2015.



COMMUNITY PROTEST AT EAST CENTRAL

Neighborhood Says ECCO Took Community Out Of Center



A diverse crowd of East Central neighborhood residents and members of the Spokane community staged a protest in front of the East Central Community Center on Thursday, March 26, to express their continued frustration and dissatisfaction with the current management of the center, and with the hiring process that ECCO (East Central Community Organization), who manages the center, is using to select a new Center Director.

Organized by Pastor Happy Watkins, who first raised concerns about ECCO's management of ECCO back in 2013, and has been participating in the city's ongoing efforts over the past eighteen months to find solutions to the persistent complaints, the protest was planned to coincide with a candidate forum that ECCO

was holding on Thursday to introduce its slate of four finalists for the Center Director position to the community. Community members say that they were excluded from the process of selecting the finalists in what was supposed to be a "public process", according to ECCO's newly signed contract with the city.

"This is not about the candidates," Pastor Watkins declared to the protesters gathered around him, "this is about the process, and about being excluded. This place used to be the heart and soul of this community. We want that back."

Protesters are asking that the hiring process be reviewed by the city and a plan put in place to address persistent community concerns before moving forward.

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR



by Sandra Williams

Complete the Mission

"Life has meaning only in the struggle. Triumph or defeat is in the hands of the Gods. So let us celebrate the struggle!"

-Stevie Wonder

Nothing can prepare you for the death of a parent. Out of necessity I have always had an unusually strong belief system; one that I had forged through a life of needing to figure out where I fit in to things that didn't seem to be made for me to fit into them. That and four years of education in a spiritual institute, left me with core beliefs that I was confident were unshakeable, unmovable, and able to stand up to anything.

Then my dad died.

And now everything that I thought I knew and everything that that I thought I believed and everything that I once I held to be as true as true could be has been shaken to its core. To a core that I did not even know that I had.

In the midst of that I had to publish a newspaper. For the first two months that the Black Lens was in existence, I worked on it at my dad's bedside. Every word, every line, and every picture was infused with those hours that we spent together, most of the time saying nothing at all, just being. But the March issue, I had to do on my own. And in March, every word, every line, and every picture brought with it a sense of loss, and of anger, and of fear, and profound loneliness. "I won't do it," I declared in the middle of the night, as if my refusal would somehow bring my father back.

My dad was an infantryman, a soldier of the highest order, and he had brought me up in the ways of the military. One of the most important lessons that I remember learning from him was "always complete the mission." Always. And sitting in the darkness, railing against the unfairness of the universe, it was those words that kept echoing in my ears, my dad's words, "always complete the mission." Always.

So I started to type. Begrudgingly at first. One word led to another. One sentence to another, and eventually, slowly, the paper made its way out of my brain and into my computer.

In the process, I realized that the mission that I was supposed to be completing was not just about The Black Lens, it was about my life. About my dreams, the dreams that I had shared with my father, the ones that he believed in more than even I did. The ones that I have left unfinished- uncompleted.

Then I thought about the Black Community and how we as a people, collectively, have lost our father as well. Martin Luther King Jr. believed in our dreams, probably more than we believed in them ourselves, and the dream that Dr. King had for us as a people was never simply about sitting on a bar stool at a counter or sitting on a bus seat, even if that seat was at the front of the bus. The dream he had was about a people recognizing who they truly were and what their value truly was, and living up to that value in everything that they did. I believe that in so many ways we have lost sight of that as a collective community, and we too have a mission that still needs to be completed. Complete the mission! Thanks dad.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Despite a law banning firearms on federal property, a group of armed gun rights advocates, openly carrying firearms, staged a protest on March 6 in front of the Federal Courthouse in downtown Spokane. Police watched, but made no arrests. The armed protesters then proceeded to walk around Spokane with their weapons.



Photo credit: Robyn K

What would have happened if this group of ARMED protesters on Federal property had been ALL BLACK instead of ALL WHITE?

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THE BLACK LENS NEWS SPOKANE

The Black Lens is a local newspaper that is focused on the news, events, issue, and people and information that are important to Spokane's African American Community. It is published monthly on the first of the month by: Square Peg Multimedia, 9116 E. Sprague Avenue #48

Spokane Valley, WA 99206, (509) 795-1964, editor@blacklensnews.com

Publisher/Editor: Sandra Williams

Subscriptions: digital-\$12/year; mail- \$3/month or \$30/year

Deadlines: 15th of the month prior to publication.

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

From Across the Country and Around the World

Loretta Lynch Still Not Confirmed as First Black Woman Attorney General



(TriceEdneyWire.com, NAACP) - African-American and civil rights organizations are in full lobbying mode to push for the confirmation of Loretta Lynch to be the nation's next attorney general.

If confirmed, Loretta Lynch, a Harvard Law School graduate, would be the first African-American woman attorney general, but Lynch's nomination has been stalled for months, longer than any Attorney General nominee in three decades, inciting pro-civil rights activists and politicians to press the Senate to proceed with the confirmation process.

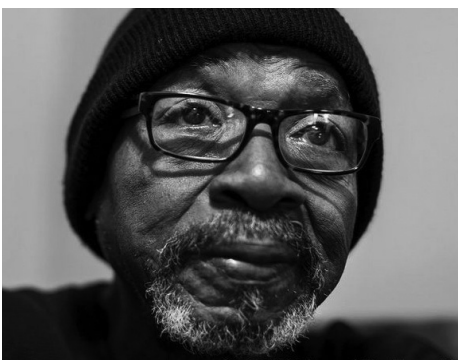
Hilary Shelton, the NAACP's Washington bureau chief and senior vice president for policy and advocacy, said that in addition to coordinating with the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, his organization is making sure that its membership is "activated, educated and engaged" in the Lynch process.

On Feb. 26, Lynch's nomination was sent to the Senate floor by the Senate Judiciary Committee by a 12-8 vote. All of the Democrats on the committee supported her nomination and three Republicans, Sens. Orrin Hatch (Utah), Lindsey Graham (S.C.), Jeff Flake (Ariz.) voted for her also.

The NAACP is asking for help to send a message to the Senate to move forward on Loretta Lynch's confirmation. Washington Senators to contact include: Senator Patty Murray: (509) 624-9515 and Senator Maria Cantwell: (509) 353-2507 or call Call 1-866-338-5720 and tell your Senator to Confirm Loretta Lynch.

For more information about Loretta Lynch and her background, visit: <http://www.justice.gov/usao/nye/meetattorney.html>

Glenn Ford, freed after 29 years on death row, suing for wrongful conviction



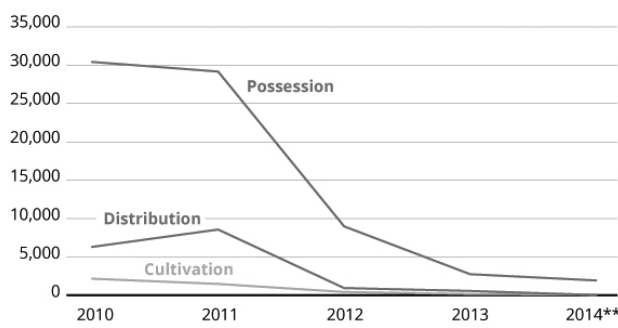
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Glenn Ford, who spent nearly 30 years on death row in the Angola Louisiana State Prison before his murder conviction was vacated last year, has filed separate federal lawsuits claiming he was wrongfully imprisoned and was also denied medical care following a cancer diagnosis that later became terminal.

The suits also detail misleading testimony and evidence suppression that kept the 65-year-old Ford locked up for much of his adult life.

Ford was convicted in 1984 for the murder of Isadore Rozeman, a jewelry and watch repair shop owner in Shreveport, that Ford had previously performed yard work for. Despite maintaining his innocence through the trial and subsequent appeals, an all-white jury returned a guilty verdict in December of 1984. Two months later, Ford, who is African-American, was sentenced to death.

It was not until March 10 of last year that Louisiana prosecutors filed a motion to vacate his conviction, saying two assistant district attorneys had learned of "credible evidence" of Ford's innocence.

Marijuana Charges Plummet In Colorado Since Pot Made Legal, but Blacks Still Arrested More



*Does not include all possession data for Denver because of differences between local ordinances and State Criminal Code
**Prorated based on data for 49 weeks for 2014

Source: Drug Policy Alliance

THE HUFFINGTON POST

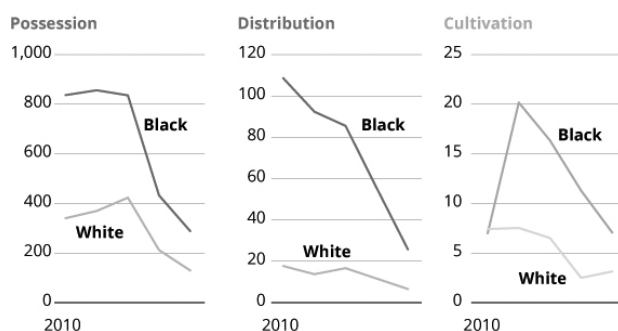
(Matt Ferner, www.huffingtonpost.com) - A new report, recently released by the Drug Policy Alliance, reveals that, overall, the total number of charges filed in Colorado state courts for marijuana possession, distribution and cultivation fell dramatically by nearly 95 percent across the state -- from 38,878 total charges in 2010 to just 2,036 in 2014.

Possession charges, the largest category each year prior to the passage of Amendment 64, dropped from 30,428 in 2010 to 8,978 in 2012 once the amendment was passed, then dropped to only 1,922 in 2014, when retail marijuana shops opened their doors for the first time.

Additionally, distribution and cultivation charges, numbering in the thousands prior to Amendment 64, have nearly vanished, with only 23 distribution charges (a 99 percent drop from 2010) and 91 cultivation charges (a 96 percent drop) in 2014.

However, while the overall number of arrests for marijuana offenses dropped significantly from 2010 to 2014, racial disparities in marijuana arrests still persist in the state according to the report.

Arrests by race, per 100,000 population*, 2010-2014**



*Does not include all possession data for Denver because of differences between local ordinances and State Criminal Code
**Partial data for 2014: January through September

Source: Drug Policy Alliance

THE HUFFINGTON POST

In 2010, the marijuana possession arrest rate for whites in the state was 335 per 100,000 people; for Blacks it was 851 per 100,000 -- meaning that the arrest rate for Black people in the state was more than twice as high as the arrest rate for white people. Meanwhile, Black people account for less than 4 percent of the state's entire population, but amount to more than 9 percent of the state's marijuana possession arrests.

And while the overall number of arrests for marijuana possession declined significantly by 2014, Blacks are still arrested more than twice as much as whites for possession, and still made up more than 9 percent of possession arrests.

The report, prepared by Prof. Jon Gettman, PhD, Shenandoah University, provides comprehensive data on marijuana charges and arrests in Colorado before and after the passage of Amendment 64 in 2012. The report compiles and analyzes data from the county judicial districts, as well as various law enforcement agencies via the National Incident Based Reporting System.

To read the full report, visit: <http://www.drugpolicy.org/resource/marijuana-arrests-colorado-after-passage-amendment-64>

Daymond John Mentors 13-year-old CEO Who Built \$200,000 Business



(Richard Feloni, www.businessinsider.com, 3/20/15)

Daymond John, the founder of FUBU, became Mo'ziah Bridges' mentor in 2013 after he and his mother appeared on the fifth season of "Shark Tank". Mo'ziah and his mother were asking for \$50,000 in exchange for 20% equity in their company, Mow's Bows.

Mo'ziah was offered a deal that would require him to pay royalties on his ties, but Daymond John and one other shark advised him not to take the deal. Daymond told Bridges that in 1989 he declined an offer of \$10,000 for 40% of his hat company; and 10 years later, the company had grown into FUBU and was valued at \$100 million. Instead, Damon offered to mentor Mo'ziah for free.

With Damon John's mentorship, Mow's Bows has grown from \$50,000 in revenue when he appeared on Shark Tank to \$200,000 this year. He has secured his first licensing deal with shoe and bag company Cole Haan and secured a deal with Neiman Marcus to have Mo's Bows available online and in a limited number of retail stores.

Mo'ziah says Damon John taught him that with success comes the responsibility to give to others and as a result he has decided to make an annual bow tie and use 100% of the proceeds to help underprivileged kids who want to attend summer camp.

Troops from Niger, Chad Pursue Boko Haram



(www.africanglobe.net) Troops from Chad and Niger pursued Boko Haram members across a northern Nigeria border, driving them out of a village that Boko Haram had been holding. Niger and Chad, along with Nigeria and Cameroon, are participating in a joint offensive which is aimed at stopping Boko Haram, who are militants that have been terrorizing local residents.

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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

Lewis and Clark's YORK

Art and Article by Bertoni Jones

York was a member of the Lewis and Clark expedition that lasted from May 1804 until August 1806. Of the 33 member expedition—including the Shoshone Princess Sacajawea—York was the only African-American.

York was born a slave in Caroline County, Virginia in 1770. His family members (father, mother, brother, and sister) were all the property of the Clark family, but York was specifically the boyhood servant to William Clark. Although in his diary entries William Clark would refer to York as his “servant,” there is no mistake that York was William’s chattel property: York was deeded to William by his father in his will.

The Lewis and Clark expedition’s mission was to explore the Missouri River and find its connections to the Pacific Ocean. During the expedition, York more than proved his abilities in survival skills, hunting, and employing medicines from nature. In the expedition, he had one rifle, one vote, and was for all purposes an “equal” member.

Naturally, because of his large, muscular build and skin color, York became the most popular

amongst the various native peoples. According to native tradition, warriors returning from battle covered themselves in black charcoal as a sign of bravery. When they saw York, Native Americans naturally believed him the bravest warrior in the expedition. And, when they tried to rub off his “war paint,” they were amazed it wouldn’t come off.

Through some of his forward scouting duties, York began to experience his first taste of self-independence and individual freedom on the land. Naturally, he began to wonder if all of his sacrificial work for the expedition could lead to his liberation from slavery.

The expedition’s members were active in the Bitterroot Mountains on the Lolo Trail. They lived amongst the Clatsop Natives in Oregon, encountered the Snake and Columbia Rivers in Washington State, and allied with the Nez Perce along the Clearwater River of Idaho. They did not actually find a direct river route to the Pacific, but they still returned to St. Louis as heroes.

While the Lewis and Clark expedition’s other members received double pay and 320 acres of land upon the expedition’s end, York remained a slave for ten more years.



Bertoni Jones

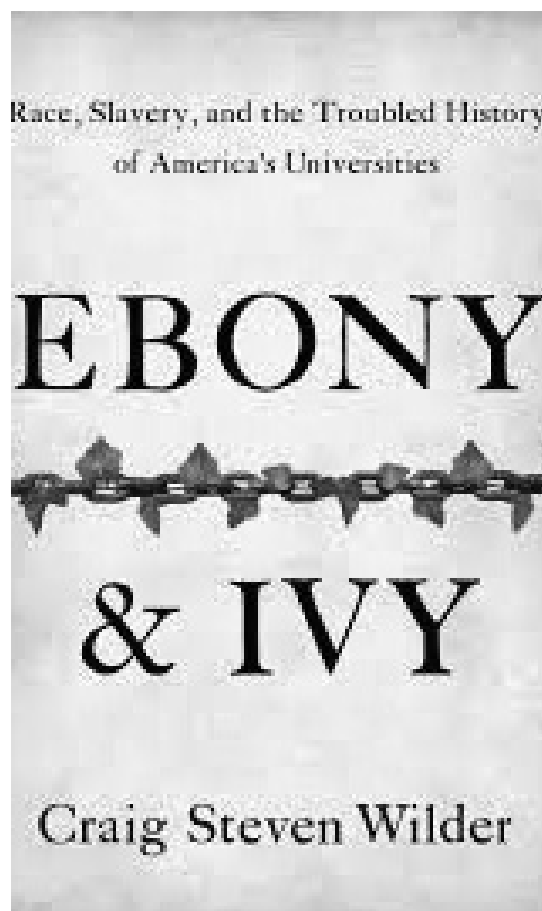
After a lifetime of service, William Clark’s compensation to York was his freedom, one wagon and a team of horses. With this, York moved to Kentucky and operated a freight business. He died in Tennessee of cholera in 1832.

Sources: *Black Heritage Day III* (Jamiyo Mack), Wikipedia (York), PBS.org/lewisandclark/inside/York.

BOOK REVIEW: EBONY AND IVY

Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities

By Tracy Poindexter-Canton



It’s no coincidence that at the height of the African slave trade, the majority of America’s Ivy League universities were at the peak of burgeoning into prestigious and sustainable institutions. Such is the case Craig Steven Wilder makes in his revealing 2013 book, *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities* (Bloomsbury Publishing).

Wilder, a history professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, meticulously uses a decade’s worth of research to expose the often inconvenient and uncomfortable history of how the development of elite universities, such as Harvard, Yale, Rutgers, Brown, Columbia, William & Mary and others, were financed—and many of them founded—by New England, Mid-Atlantic and European slaveholders.

The first half of *Ebony & Ivy* divulges primarily on colonization:

the seizure of Native American land, the socioeconomic factors that positioned slave owners and slave traders as college trustees and founders, and the presence of African slaves on early Northeastern college campuses.

Part II, entitled “Race and the Rise of the American College,” looks at the manufacturing of racist ideologies to justify slavery and white supremacy. Wilder also examines the origins of race science in academia and its promulgation into mainstream culture.

This book serves as an important tool in looking at how institutionalized racism has infiltrated and continues to infiltrate higher education. In more recent Harvard history, we have seen this in the success and publication of the controversial book, *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray (a Harvard alum) in 1994, which argues that black people genetically lack the same level of intelligence



as whites—a clear perpetuation of colonial-era scientific racism. And within this past school year, we have seen black students at Harvard make national news for their “I, Too, Am Harvard” photo campaign—highlighting the overt and covert racism they experience on a daily basis.

Despite a few redundant chapters, *Ebony & Ivy* offers a groundbreaking exploration into the sordid relationship between slavery and the founding of America’s top universities.

(Sources: www.democracynow.org, www.wgbh.org/basicblack)

BUSINESS / ECONOMICS

WHERE ARE THE BLACK BUSINESSES IN SPOKANE?

NAACP Economic Development Committee to Compile Black Business Directory to offer Support

Minority businesses make up nearly 15 percent of the 28 million small businesses in the United States, according to a 2014 CNBC.com article titled: "Minorities: The force fueling small-business growth" written by Silvana Ordoñez, and African Americans, she says, owned 1.9 million of those businesses.

In his April 2014 Fortune.com article, "America Got a Cold and Black Businesses Got Pneumonia", Brandon Southward added that Black business owners are the fastest-growing segment for business ownership in the United States, growing at a rate of 60% from 2002-2007.

However, according to an article published in the Memphis Business Journal, while Blacks are starting businesses at greater rates, their businesses are also failing at greater rates.

The Spokane NAACP's newly formed Economic Development Sub-Committee is planning to address the barriers that are preventing Blacks in Spokane from starting and growing their businesses

Currently chaired by Ben Cabildo, founder of the business development organization AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian & Native American), the committee feels that one of the barriers to success for Black Businesses is a lack of support from the Black community. But you cannot support what you do not know about, so committee members have decided that an important first step is to develop a directory of the current African American owned businesses.

Future committee plans include hosting a mixer for Black Business Owners and Professionals, sponsoring workshops, connecting business owners to mentors, and identifying sources of financial support.

Help the NAACP identify and support all of the Black Businesses in Spokane.

If you know of a Black Business, small or large, send their name to sandy@blacklensnews.com or call the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (x1141)



Library of Congress, "E.J. Crane, Richmond, VA", displayed as part of the American Negro exhibit at the Paris Exposition of 1900. Public Domain, created December 31, 1898. <http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c18028>

PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT

By Otis Manning, Retirement Solutions

All of the decisions that you need to make in preparing for retirement can seem overwhelming! Obtaining Medicare, a Medicare Supplement, Long Term Care Insurance, applying for Social Security, and if you are fortunate enough to retire with a pension from your employer, deciding on how to receive the payout- as a lump sum or monthly payments.

Also, many employers have abandoned pensions and have set up 401K, 403B & TSA accounts and you will need to decide on what type of investment you want to roll this money into. The list is endless. However, deciding on what type of investment you want to roll your retirement money into is MAJOR.

Objectives

SAFETY should be your number one objective. Since you are retiring and not working any longer, you will not be able to make up any losses. So, SAFETY is first and foremost.

GROWTH on your retirement funds should be the second objective. Is it possible to obtain both SAFETY & GROWTH in the same investment? Yes, it is.

The third objective should be how you can **AVOID RUNNING OUT OF MONEY IN RETIREMENT**. There are investments that will help you accomplish all three objectives.

Investing in Annuities

The simple definition of an Annuity is a contract between you and an Insurance Company. There are four different types of Annuities:

Fixed, Variable, Immediate & Index Annuities.

A **Fixed Annuity** pays a fixed amount of interest either for one year or for a period of years, such as over a 3, 4 or 5 year period. Fixed Annuities come in two different forms: Traditional Fixed Annuities and a Multi-Year Guaranteed Annuity.

Traditional Fixed Annuities are similar to a Certificate of Deposit from a bank because they pay a certain interest rate which is good for one year and the rate changes each year as the rates in the economy changes.

A **Multi Year Guaranteed Annuity (MYGA)** is another type of Fixed Annuity however the interest is Guaranteed for several years such as over a 3,4 or 5 year period. Both of these Fixed Annuities pay the lowest interest versus all other forms of Annuities.

A **Variable Annuities** is variable because the return is variable. The returns go up and down. In bull markets, when the market is going up, there can be gains, however in bear markets, when the market is going down, you risk losing principal and there can be losses. Also, you pay the highest fees with Variable Annuities versus all other types of Annuities.

An **Immediate Annuity** is called immediate because the income starts immediately. There is no deferral period. They can offer a guaranteed lifetime income, however you need to be careful if it is important to you to leave a legacy to your heirs. Make sure you

obtain an Immediate Annuity that has a death benefit because many do not.

An **Index Annuity** is called an Index Annuity because your interest is tied to a financial index. As the index rises, you may receive interest credits. As the index decreases, you may receive no interest credits. Whatever happens, your interest earnings or lack of earnings is tied to a financial index.

Index Annuities are the only one of the four types of Annuities that will help you obtain the above three objectives: Safety, Growth and Guaranteed Lifetime Income!

Index Annuities accomplish this by offering (1) guaranteed safety of principal- you will never lose the original amount you invest; (2) growth is tied to a financial index such as the S & P 500 Index; (3) guaranteed lifetime income- you can start this monthly income immediately and the income will be paid to you and your spouse for your lifetime. Even if you deplete the Index Annuity & withdraw enough principal and interest to have a zero balance, your guaranteed lifetime income still continues for your lifetime and your spouse's lifetime! If there is a balance upon the decease of you and your spouse, the balance will go to your heirs.

Negatives of Index Annuities

They do not pay as much as Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds in bull markets. These securities can pay higher returns than Index Annuities, however they also have higher risks. Index Annuities will pay higher than

Certificate of Deposits, Money Market Accounts and other safe money alternatives. However, they are not designed to compete with securities in bull markets.

Positives of Index Annuities

Index Annuities historically pay up to 4 to 8%. In bull markets they can pay double digit returns. Currently, some Index Annuities offer an up-front bonus of up to 7% (in the State of Washington) added to the original principal as an incentive for you to open an account with that particular company.

Preparing for retirement can be made a little easier with the help of a Financial Services Professional. A Financial Services Professional can analyze your current finances and recommend several Index Annuities that best fit your needs.

Pastor Otis Manning is the President of Retirement Solutions. He has studied economics and attended California State University at Los Angeles with a Major in Business Administration. For questions or additional information about this article contact Retirement Solutions, 9212 E. Montgomery Avenue, Suite 401-4, Spokane Valley, WA 99206, 509-927-6277, ombusiness7@aol.com, web site: www.retirementsolutionsco.com

(Disclaimer: this article is written for educational purposes only and is not intended to be investment advice. You will need to meet with an advisor to discuss your individual situation.)

HONORING OUR ELDERERS

ROBERT LLOYD

A CONVERSATION ABOUT ART AND MORE (PART 1)

In 1976, Robert Lloyd saw an advertisement for the World's Fair, Expo 74, that was taking place in Spokane about the same time as he was ready to graduate from graduate school. He was attending Brookes Institute of the Arts in Valencia California, pursuing an M.F.A. degree in Design and Photography, and looking for a job. So, even though he had never heard of Spokane, when he saw a job located in the city, he thought that if he applied for the job and got an interview, he would get to go to the World's Fair.

Not only did Robert get the interview, but he got the job as well, and became a photography instructor at Eastern Washington University, moving to the Spo-

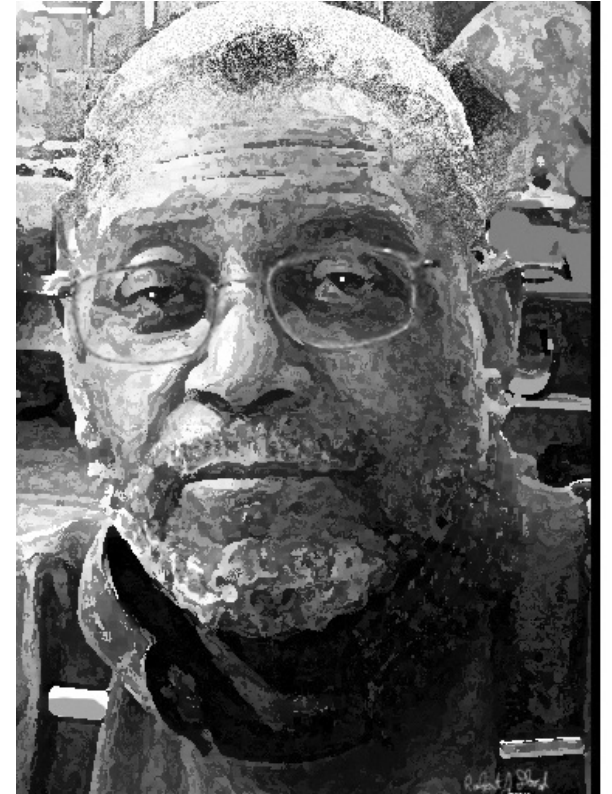


kane area with his wife, Diane Gray, a Stanford graduate, who became a teacher at the Reed School on the EWU campus.

As for Spokane, Bob liked its size and "the ability to see what is happening to you and where it's coming from." In Chicago, where he had experience with grass roots activism, he said, "people would be altering your life, and you would have no idea, who, where, what or why, but here in Spokane, it was pretty obvious where it was coming from."

Bob had a feeling about what he thought the world ought to be, and believed that he would be able to work on bringing that to life in a city like Spokane, that he would be able to build the kind of community that he wanted to live in. It was that belief that led him in 1976 to found and publish the African American Voice, a community Newspaper focused on Spokane's African American community.

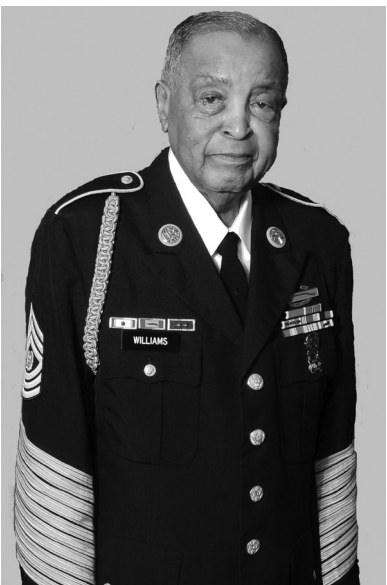
He said Blacks at that time were "so separated, and so far apart, you know we were talking about one half of one percent, and when you'd see another African American downtown on the other side of the street, you'd wave and shout 'hi' because you were so glad to see them." People think that Black people all think alike and that "we all walk in lock step",



but he said he wanted to know what people were really thinking, and the paper was a means of getting at that. "With the African American Voice, I stumbled into a group of people, and the only thing we had in common was that we liked to debate and argue the issues and that's exactly what we did." Their motto was, "if you believe it, you can write about it." It was an exciting time, but eventually, contributors moved away or graduated, and funding became harder and harder to come by. The African American Voice closed its doors in 2000, and Bob says that since then, he hasn't been able to find a similar group of people to work with. *Part 2 in the May Issue.*

50 YEARS OF MILITARY SERVICE

Spokane Honors Command Sergeant Major Thomas E. Williams



It was fitting that the "going home" celebration for CSM Thomas Edward Williams should be a Baptist service with military honors held in a Catholic church. Thomas' life had been about helping people work together across their differences, and in his passing, he was still doing the very same thing.

Thomas E. Williams, affectionately called Tom by his family and friends, passed away on February 7, 2015 at his home, after having served his country for a total of fifty years, thirty as an active duty infantryman and another twenty years in the Military Science Department at Gonzaga University, where he trained and prepared hundreds of students for leadership as officers in the United States Army. Students who would go on to become Lieutenants, Captains, Majors, Colonels, Generals, doctors, lawyers and judges; compassionate and respected leaders in their communities.

Thomas' military career began on April 12, 1948, at the age of fifteen, when he "traced" his mother's signature and enlisted in the United States Army to escape the poverty and hardship of rural South Carolina, where he had worked as a sharecropper, picking cotton, corn, and potatoes, and plowing the fields, and had to leave home at the age of 11 to attend high school, because in the mid-1940's the high schools in his home town were segregated for whites-only. By the age of 17, Thomas had already been promoted to Sergeant, assisting in the transi-

tion of the United States Army from a segregated to an integrated branch of the military after Pres. Harry S. Truman desegregated the Armed Forces.

Thomas' service took him from South Carolina to California, Hawaii, Germany, Korea, Vietnam and finally to Spokane. Along the way the highly decorated soldier received numerous awards and commendations, including the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal amongst many others. Additionally, he was awarded the Distinguished Citizen Medal by the Jonas Babcock Chapter of the National Society of Daughter's of the American Revolution in 2014, and the Freedom Foundation's Freedom Award in 2011.

In 1998, The Department of Military Science at Gonzaga University established the CSM Thomas E. Williams Leadership Excellence Award, which is given each year to the ROTC cadet who throughout his or her tenure best exemplifies the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. In 2008, Gonzaga University awarded the Doctor of Laws Degree, Honoris Causa to Thomas, recognizing the knowledge, the wisdom and the unparalleled leadership of the humble soldier who had never graduated from high school.

Despite his numerous honors and awards, however, Thomas was most proud of his family, his marriage of fifty-eight years to his wife, Wilhelmina, who he met in 1955 when he gave

up his seat to the "pretty nurse" on a Trailways bus in Greenwood, SC, and the success of his two children, Rick and Sandy, and his three grandchildren, Renika, Rachel and Adrian.

The service to say goodbye to the "Sergeant Major" and honor "a life well lived" was held on Friday, February 13, at St. Aloysius Catholic Church on the Gonzaga University campus, officiated by Rev. Happy Watkins of New Hope Baptist Church. Tributes to Thomas' life were presented by a Colonel from Spokane, a Major General from Texas, a metaphysical teacher from Los Angeles, the President of Gonzaga University, and the Mayor of Spokane, who issued a city proclamation naming the day Command Sergeant Major Thomas E. Williams Recognition Day.

At high noon, as chapel bells were ringing overhead and punctuating his words, Thomas' son Rick Williams offered a heartfelt eulogy about the father that had shaped his life, followed by a tear-filled thank you from Thomas' granddaughter Renika, and friends and family members who shared their stories of the lessons Thomas taught them, and his remarkable ability to make friends with everybody that he encountered. Full military honors were given to CSM Thomas E. Williams at the Washington State Veteran's Cemetery in Medical Lake, WA.

Thomas' story is included in the book "Underage and Under Fire" by Allan C. Stover, featured along with the stories of other Veterans of Underage Military Service (VUMS).



Jerry Rolwes

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

AMARI TROUTT: CITIZEN OF THE MONTH



On March 5, Amari Troutt, a sixth grader at Grant Elementary school, was named *Citizen of the Month* for the second time! The first time was in December.

Teachers at Grant Elementary select two students who have excelled each month and the award is presented to the students at a school assembly.

According to her award, Amari was selected for being “a great role model in class, for taking pride in her work, and for being willing to help others when they needed help, including her teacher.”

In addition, the award, which was signed by Principal Mary Weber and teacher Deborah McNamee, describes Amari as coming to school “with a positive attitude and a smile on her face, ready to learn”.

“My husband and I are very proud of Amari,” her grandmother Peggie Troutt shared, “Amari stays focused on her education and she told her grandpa that she had to get a good education so she could get a good job to be able to take care of us if need be one day. That statement brought tears to my eyes”

Amari made up her mind that she was going to get the Citizen of the Month Award and she got it. In fact, she only missed getting a third Citizen of the Month Award by two points, but told her grandma, “that’s okay, I know how to get it the next month.”

Amari’s favorite subject is writing and her goal is to someday be a basketball sports manager. With her determination, she is bound to succeed, but in the mean time maybe she will write for The Black Lens.

THE MOST VALUABLE CURRENCY

By Izaiah Dolezal

How do you spend your time? What do you enjoy to do during your free time? Have you ever looked at the clock and realized that you have no idea where the last few hours went?

For many of us, time is seen as an obstacle, something getting in the way of what we wish to do next. Whether it be getting out of class, going home from work, or getting to chill with friends, we always wish time would “speed up” or “slow down” to fit our own needs.

This is an unhealthy way to think. When we do this, our brains tend to only focus on wanting to leave our current situation, and not only are we rendering ourselves unproductive, we are giving up valuable time in which we could be bettering ourselves, in some way. We have all heard that time is precious, but do we really know just how precious it is?

How we choose to spend our time says a lot about us. It shows people what is important to us, which in turn can be a basis for people’s judgment. Every moment we are alive, we are growing as a person—no matter the age—and spending time doing things that will negatively or positively impact us and ultimately harm or benefit our well-being as well as our chances of becoming who we wish to be.

In order to fully utilize our time, we must change our attitudes towards it. We must re-wire our brains to see time as our most



valuable currency and ask ourselves how we should spend it, in a way that is not wasteful. Once we realize the value of time, we can then allocate it to building our dreams and goals.

It is a tough world out there, and to truly succeed, one must be “ahead of the curve.” This means getting started early, on whatever path we are on. Take the time each day to work towards achieving your individual goals, and give no time to those who drag you down, and pull you away from your true self.

Time is an amazing thing. For all the vast knowledge which humans possess, we cannot stop time from passing. Every day is full of lessons, and we all have the ability to be wiser than the day before. So, how do you spend your time?

Izaiah Dolezal is currently a sophomore at the University of Idaho.

MAKING WAVES

By Deonna Smith



Featuring a successful Spokane native who is making waves across the nation.

KIRISHA MARSHALL

Howard University Law Student

Kirisha Marshall is a Spokane Native who is definitely making waves. Kirisha attended Central Valley High School and later went on to receive her Associates of Science Degree in Political Science from North Idaho College.

When faced with the daunting decision of where to continue her education after high school, Kirisha like many other students was faced with many options. One thing she was not uncertain of though was her passion to be a lawyer and it was this dedication that pointed her in the direction of a college where she would be able to focus.

Instead of leaning towards the more popular option of Washington State University, Kirisha went to North Idaho College, where she felt she could better discern which steps would lead her towards her future goal.

In the same way, Kirisha’s decision to go to Howard University, in Washington, DC, was an intentional one. She was looking for an experience that would take her out of her comfort zone, and as one of only five Black students at her high school, moving to DC, the city with the highest concentration of Black professionals in the country would be a step out of her comfort zone indeed.

In Spokane, Kirisha had what is a familiar experience for many Black students, she was the only Black person in many of her classes, and re-

calls feeling as if a room full of eyes were upon her as the enslavement of African Americans was discussed in class. At Howard the experience was reversed. Kirisha remembers empathizing with the only White student in her class as slavery was discussed and the other student was the subject of uneasy glances.

Experiences like that have made Kirisha’s time at Howard meaningful. She says, “what made Howard meaningful was really the ability to get to know me and figure out who I was outside of what I always knew. Moving so far away from family really forced me to grow up, but I think being at a place like Howard, I was able to create family there. I was able to meet so many people who looked like me, but were all so different from me, and I think that was an experience that I needed.”

After receiving her Bachelors of Arts from Howard in Political Science with an emphasis in Law and a minor in Philosophy, Kirisha was faced with another difficult decision, where to go to Law School.

Again the choice was between returning to her comfort zone in Spokane or forging her own path.

Spokane’s lack of diversity, in more ways than one, and the saturation of the law community by Gonzaga Law graduates were both important factors in Kirisha’s decision not to move back to Spokane, plus



she felt that having outside experience would one day pay off. So, Kirisha chose once again to be courageous and to stay at Howard, and she will be graduating from Howard Law School in May 2016.

Kirisha has managed to compile quite an impressive resume in the time that she has been away from Spokane. She is currently interning with a Federal Public Defender in Washington DC and is planning on working for the Philadelphia District Attorney next summer. She also travelled back to Spokane last summer for an internship with the Spokane County Public Defenders Office.

Kirisha’s experience is not limited to the American justice system either, she also spent a summer in South Africa studying Comparative Constitutional and Immigration Law and International Business.

Continued on Page 9

OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE
SERVICES
PROGRAMS

NAACP UPDATE: COLLABORATION FOR TRANSFORMATION & GROWTH

Rachel Doležal, President of Spokane NAACP

In the wake of fierce opposition to our work this spring, there has also been an encouraging groundswell of support for the NAACP.

Combatting the terrorism of local hate groups, the community and leaders across the nation banded together to visualize unity in the face of adversity. The Spokane NAACP is grateful for all those who rallied, stood in the trenches of online commentary, spoke eloquently to City Council, and joined as new members in the month of March.

These are tenuous times, and we are working to develop a support base that reaches the type of critical mass that offsets the isolation felt by communities of color in Spokane.

Beyond the public display of comradery, there were some ways

our local branch grew beneath the surface tension. We added two new active committees with stellar chairs at the helm of each and grew to 107 members.

Our Economic Development Committee, under the direction of Ben Cabildo, is focused on developing a usable directory of Black-owned businesses in Spokane and forging a strong allegiance between Black professionals and allies in the area.

Founder of AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian & Native American), a business development organization, Ben has been working for more than a decade to support and expand access to capital, contract acquisition, and strong economic strategies for minority-owned businesses in Spokane.

He is joined by committee members who are doing academic research in economics, business owners, and retired professionals. With a wealth of expertise, this committee promises to do big things to support NAACP Economic Development initiatives in Spokane. Check out job opportunities that are friendly to people of color on our website: www.spokanenaacp.com

Another important committee that had a kick-start in February with the voter registration drive at the screening of Selma, worked hard to expand in March. Chaired by political veteran, Jan Baker, the Political Action Committee has gained members and is launching initiatives that further the NAACP mission and vision. Connecting local with state and

national issues, this committee promises to address voter registration and access, work toward recruiting local political candidates that represent communities of color, and support key legislation from the challenging posture of non-partisan activism. The Political Action Committee encourages members to call WA state senators, urging them to expedite confirmation of Loretta Lynch as the next U.S. Attorney General. This brilliant sister has been waiting longer than any AG nominee in three decades for a vote, and she stands poised and completely competent to be the first Black woman Attorney General of the United States.

Important work like this, to further civil rights and racial justice is done in our local committees.



With a strong base of 8 active committees (Education, Health, Criminal Justice, Political Action, Membership, Economic Development, Communications, and Freedom Fund), we are ahead of schedule for our plan to grow the branch from zero to 8 active committees by the 6-month mark this year.

With committee chairs serving alongside officers, this growth has expanded our decision-making board to 17 members on the Executive Committee. This large team means lively discussion at meetings and sustainable leadership for Spokane's NAACP.

It is my distinct honor to serve within such a stellar inner circle amid strong collaborative arms surrounding the work we do.

SPOKANE RALLYS TO FIGHT RACISM AND SUPPORT NAACP

In response to a hate-filled and threatening package that was sent to NAACP President Rachel Doležal by an anonymous source, members of the Spokane community quickly organized two events to fight back and loudly declare that displays of bigotry and hatred like that would not be tolerated in the city.

On Friday, March 6, from noon to 1pm, members of the Spokane community held hands and linked arms for "Arms of Compassion". Rev. Todd Eklof of the Unitarian Universalist

Church, who helped organize the event, said it was a symbolic way to show the Spokane community's solidarity with the NAACP and its strong support of equality for all."

On Monday, March 9, the Spokane City Council presented a salutation to the NAACP and the The Human Rights Commission, along with community partners, held a "Unite Against Racism" rally outside Spokane City Hall before the city council meeting, to show solidarity with the NAACP, and to unite against racism.



BRIDGING THE GAPS

A Community Relationship Awareness Forum

By Della Montgomery-Riggins

We gathered together on February 19 at the Red Lion Hotel in downtown Spokane for the First Annual Community Relationship and Awareness Forum: Bridging the Gaps in the Spokane Community, presented by Joseph M. King of King's Consulting Services.

Clergy, community leaders and community members showed up for the forum, small in number, but large in commitment, to plan our next steps of action, commit to continuing the work of leaders and every day unsung heroes/heroines, and to develop a community plan of action.

The forum presented a panel of community leaders to speak to the issues faced when working together across differences. Highlights from the forum panelists include:

Pastor Ezra Kinlow of Holy Temple Church of God in Christ shared "As long as I am still able to stand, I will stand and keep going on."

Lori Hunt, Director of Multi-Cultural Services at Spokane Community College expressed the need for strategic planning as the community develops an action plan.

Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich encouraged parents to volunteer to read to school children and spoke about his responsibility to protect all citizens.

Rev. Todd Eklof of the Unitarian Universalist Church pledged the support of his congregation in organizing, standing firm, and being present at events that further our collaborative goals.

Martin Meraz-Garcia, Professor of Chicano Education at EWU, pointed out that single parents often have difficulties in providing and attending extra curricular activities

Kitara Johnson shared that our most valuable gift is family and we must come together to ensure our community is "providing an environment to thrive not just survive, no matter the cost, no matter the pain."

OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE
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THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

Pariends

By Evelyn Anderton

“Pariends” (Parent–Friends). You won’t find it in the Webster dictionary, or Oxford, or any thesaurus, but you will find it in the Hwee “urban” dictionary. It’s something that just comes to mind when parents reference their children as “their best friend.”

How we choose to parent our children today will affect their personal development for tomorrow. Too many parents today are “pariends” (Parent–Friends), instead of parents. The effect of having a pariends relationship with your children has significant consequences.

If you have a tendency to treat your child as a “friend,” you should understand this important interpretation of friendship. Friends are a group of people that have the same connotation about ideas and life. The truth is: children and adults have very different concepts about life expectations. There are differences in how a child and adult conceptualize what is right and what is wrong. There are also differences in the basic understanding of life and how lessons are learned—all of which is lost when parents find themselves on the wrong end of a pariends relationship.

Children of today need their parent(s). They will, throughout their life, have plenty of friend relation-

ships, but only one opportunity to have a parent relationship.

Developing a pariends relationship is a very well-intentioned trap that parents fall into. Parents find themselves wanting to over-relate to their children, sharing inner-personal thoughts and feelings of which a child is not emotionally nor intellectually prepared to comprehend.

Parents have a serious responsibility to develop their children into productive citizens that value respect for themselves and those around them. This is lost in a pariends relationship, as a child misconceives the relationship. Children begin to believe that their parent is their friend, of which the expectation is now for the parent to act the part (as a friend). When the parent gets forced into this role, the child is then left to feel as if they can make their own decisions, as no parent is now present in their life. Guidance is lost. Respect is only given when the relationship is harmonious and going well. A lack of respect is present when the relationship goes sour, as it eventually does with many friends.

The biggest problem with pariends is all the unforeseen consequences. Pariends tend to only look at their desired outcome, such as wanting to be emotionally and physically enmeshed in their child’s life. Pariends don’t look at the unforeseen consequences, such as the child’s inability to form appropriate



boundaries with their same-age friends and lack of respect for authority that develops.

There is a difference between **autocratic** parenting—showing love, providing adequate supervision, allowing for free will—and pariends parenting. Every child deserves a parent who is open to communication, shows an interest in their interest, has fun with them, and promotes their health and well-being. All of which can be accomplished without relinquishing their role as a PARENT.

DROWNING IN DEBT

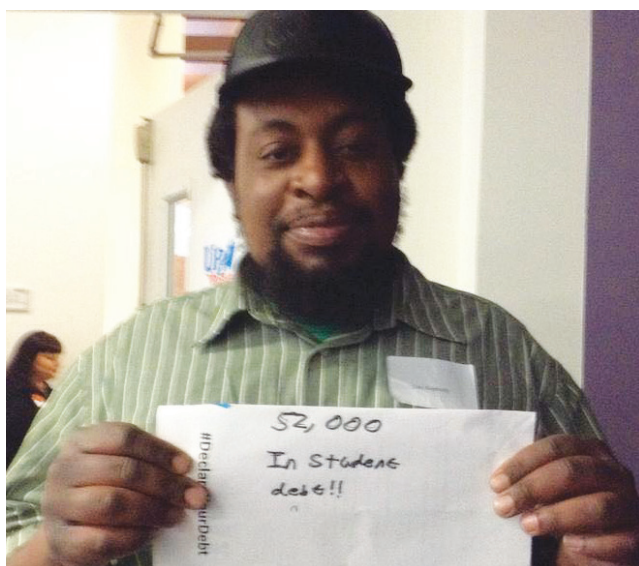
Eric Kennedy did what he was supposed to do. He went to college, studied hard, and graduated from Eastern Washington University in 2008 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Communication Studies and a minor in African American Studies.

Eric’s goal was to work in radio, and with his degree in hand, he was able to land an internship at the radio station on the EWU campus, but they weren’t hiring, so Eric set out to look for a job. He is still looking.

Since his graduation, like many college graduates in the past decade who needed student loans to be able to afford college, Eric has been working minimum wage jobs, telemarketing and janitorial, and “anything else he can find”, to make ends meet, while he tries to manage a student loan debt that he cannot afford to pay back.

Eric’s situation is not uncommon. A story in the NY Daily News reports that Americans owe 1.2 Trillion dollars in student loan debt (a stack of one trillion dollar bills, according to astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, would reach the moon and back again four times). The article goes on to say that

student loans have become the second largest source of personal debt in the United states, and according to the Federal Reserve Bank’s Household Debt and Credit Report, 11.3 percent of student loan debt was at least 90 days past due in the fourth quarter of 2014.



Eric moved from California to Spokane in 1995 because he said he was “getting into trouble and didn’t want to be a statistic.” He says he was looking for a better life and he has worked hard for it, but with

the debt hanging over his head, he says he can’t seem to get ahead.

“I’m not trying to say that we shouldn’t pay the debt,” Eric says, “but with the work that I am able to get, it just seems that there is no way to get out from under it. In a way it feels like extortion, like I got money from a loan shark.”

Eric is part of a growing movement around the country that is trying to address what has become a student loan debt crisis, and organizations like the non-profit studentdebt-crisis.org are trying to reform the way that higher education is paid for in this country.

MAKING WAVES: KIRISHA MARSHALL

Continued From Page 7

While studying abroad the conservative nature of our constitution was highlighted by comparing it to the “progressive” South African constitution.

Kirisha’s focus is on the criminal sector and her goal is to perhaps be a Prosecutor. Although the job of Prosecutor has a negative reputation, Kirisha points out that it is from this position that she could significantly influence the lives of others and perhaps offer some valuable breaks for people who would otherwise not be afforded them.

“It is important to have African American Prosecutors, they decide what people are charged with, and I can say, ‘I don’t want to ruin your life, let’s see what we can do’ ”.

“In ten years,” says Kirisha, “I see myself hopefully with a successful career, but more importantly, building a family. It has always been instilled in me that family is the most important thing. So it’s important for me to create a balance between success and family, because I don’t think that you can have one without the other. Without my family, I wouldn’t have pushed to make it where I am, so I know it’s important to keep that foundation, and add to it if God blesses me with that.”

From growing up in Spokane, Kirisha says she learned that “being different is ok, and when people don’t realize that, its purely ignorance, and how you respond to it can profoundly change your life and theirs. I was always the ONLY black person in classes, on my soccer team, on my cheer squad, on my gymnastics team, in orchestra, in choir, etc. But instead of shying away because I was different, I realized that my difference is beautiful, and everyone’s individual differences are what make them beautiful and interesting people. And I think growing up in that situation has made me handle different issues that I have faced with race in a calmer manner, because I’ve seen first hand that most people don’t face situations like me and instead are scared of something that is different. Growing up in Spokane has taught me the importance of being a coffee bean. If you place salt in hot water it dissolves; sugar in hot water it dissolves; chocolate in hot water it dissolves... but if you place a coffee bean in hot water it maintains its essence while still creating something wonderful. That is how I try to live my life. No matter the adversity, no matter the situation, I always want to change the world for something better, even if I am in hot water, and not let it change my core.

Kirisha has found great success, but insists that her path was one of vast ups and downs. She offers this parting advice to her community “no matter where you’re at right now, you can do what you want. I’ve made huge mistakes. Make your mistakes, own them, learn from them and do what you want to do. You can still do amazing things.”

IN THE SPIRIT

SPOKANE MINISTER'S FELLOWSHIP PRESENTS:

HOLY WEEK AND SUNRISE CELEBRATIONS

This year's Holy Week Services, presented by the Spokane Minister's Fellowship, are scheduled from Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 3, 2015. All services will be held at Holy Temple Church of God In Christ, 806 West Indiana Spokane, WA and will begin at 7:00 pm. Superintendent Elder Ezra Kinlow is the Host Pastor.

Holy Week Schedule:

Monday, March 30, 2015

Reverend Amos Atkinson, Jr., Calvary Baptist Church, Master of Ceremony Reverend Dr. C.W. Andrews: Subject: "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

Tuesday, March 31, 2015

Pastor Walter J. Kendricks, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Master of Ceremony Reverend Earon Davis: Subject: "This day thou shall be with me in Paradise." Luke 23:43

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Pastor Lonnie Mitchell, Sr., Bethel AME Church, Master of Ceremony Reverend Archie Henderson, Holy Temple COGIC: Subject: "Women, behold thy son." John 19: 26-7

Thursday, April 2, 2015

Pastor A. S. Rhodes, Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Masters of Ceremony Reverend Donnie Stone; Mt. Olive Baptist Church: Subject: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Mark 15:34 (Matthew 27:46)



Friday, April 3, 2015 (Good Friday)

Pastor Happy Watkins, New Hope Baptist Church, Master of Ceremony Pastor Otis Manning: Subject: "It is finished."

Easter Sunrise Celebration (Easter Sunday)

Sunday, April 5th @ 6:30am

Superintendent Elder Ezra Kinlow, Holy Temple COGIC, Mistress of Ceremony Dr. Roberta Wilburn

BETHEL A.M.E. 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is grateful to be celebrating its 125th Anniversary of serving the Spokane region. Organized April 6, 1890 by Rev. A. C. Augustus, the theme for the anniversary celebration is "Seasons of Blessings - 125 Years of Praise", Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. That's 125 years of joy, hope and being the "cathedral of love, where everybody is somebody and Jesus is the center of attraction".



Pastor Lonnie Mitchell, Sr. and Bethel A.M.E. Church members invite the Spokane community to "help us celebrate our history, our present, and our future." Anniversary activities include a no-cost Vintage Fashion Show and Comedy Hour on Saturday, April 18, from 4-6 p.m. at the Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Court, featuring Christian comedian James Stephens III and Michael Bethely of Bethely Entertainment as the MC. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served and seating is limited.

On Sunday, April 19 at the 11 a.m. worship service, the Presiding Elder of the Pacific Northwest Conference, Rev. Spencer Barrett will be bringing the anniversary message. Dinner will follow.

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For more information contact Bethel A.M.E. Church at 509-534-3007 or email BethelAMESpokane@Comcast.net.

PASTOR HAPPY WATKINS
AND FIRST LADY ETTA WATKINS
CELEBRATE 25 YEARS
AT NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH



New Hope Baptist Church
Pastor Happy Watkins

409 S. Greene Street, Spokane WA 509-535-1336
11am Sundays www.NewHopeSpokane.com



EDUCATION



FIRST IN THE FAMILY

Supporting Our First-Gen College Students

By Randy C. Corradine

First generation college students are defined as undergraduate students whose parents did not complete a four-year degree and are the first in the family to pursue a post-secondary education.

To be the first at anything can be a challenge. As a pioneer trekking into new territory, your sons and daughters are the first in their family to trail-blaze a path and earn a college degree. This accomplishment will be the beginning of a new legacy not only for them, but for the rest of the family as well.

However, adjusting to the academic rigor of college and becoming familiar with university resources, first generation college students face unique challenges that may not be encountered by their peers. For example, students may enter college with little to no preparation for the expectations of academia or understanding campus culture—not to mention silent barriers like cultural conflict and culture shock. Many first generation students will experience culture conflict of straddling two cultures, the tug-of-war of family obligations and scholarly responsibilities. Relocating to college in a different setting may also expose your students to culture shock.

I vividly recall my experiences as a first generation student facing many barriers and challenges. I remember often feeling like I was doing cartwheels uphill in the classroom due to my inadequate academic preparation and experiencing the anxiety of navigating two very different cultures. For me, it often felt like I was balancing one world on my back, while also trying to maintain my balance on the revolving surface of a completely different world. It was tough!

On campus I felt isolated next to my peers, who often had the benefits of being well traveled and versed in etiquette as they were children of college graduates.

On visits home, it was difficult to help my friends and family understand my college experience. My openness to share my new ideas, interests, and new connections was met with disapproval. I would say things like, “Check out what I learned about,,” and “I went to this event where I learned that...” Instead of curiosity and/or interest, I heard things like, “You forget where you came from?” And, “So what, you think you’re better than me?”

Throughout my freshman year the pressures of navigating two worlds nearly broke my spirit. I seriously

thought about quitting school. I felt out of place on campus and like I no longer belonged in my community. I felt like an imposter in both worlds and I was ashamed of the badge of first in my family. I tried to blend in and normalize my greatest asset—that I was different!

Once I realized that my edge was having the best of both worlds, I leveraged this advantage and everything changed. Reflecting back on my undergraduate experience, I realize that my saving grace was my wealth of cultural capital: the accumulations of my worldview, experiences, subjective and objective cultural knowledge were utilized to make meaning of the world/academia, and useful language for both me, my family, and community to engage in common dialogue, and to advance as a leader on campus.

Many studies show that first generation college students are less likely to have parental guidance in their post-secondary experience. Parents of first generation students need to make a commitment to actively participate in students’ college experiences. Parents, family and community support play a significant role in the success of many first generation students.

Continued on Page 14



April 20 - 26
getlitfestival.org

**Readings, workshops,
 poetry slams and more!**



Persons with special needs may make arrangements by calling Get Lit! Programs at 828.1498 by April 3.

Readings By

**Sherman Alexie
 Walter Kirn
 Gary Copeland Lilley
 Tod Marshall**

**Benjamin Percy
 Sharma Shields
 Shawn Vestal
 Jess Walter**

With Musical Guest
Cami Bradley

Featured events include:

Tuesday, April 21

Alice in Wonderland
 theater production
 7 p.m., doors at 6:30 p.m.
 \$10 adults, free to children
 Lincoln Ballroom,
 The Lincoln Center

Wednesday, April 22

Sherman Alexie & Jess Walter
 7 p.m., doors at 6:30 p.m.
 Spokane Community College,
 Lair Auditorium
 Free, open to the public

Thursday, April 23

Into the Wilderness
 Featuring Benjamin Percy
 and Sharma Shields
 7 p.m., doors at 6:30 p.m.
 \$15 general, free to students
 (with valid high
 school/college ID)
 Riverside Place,
 Commandery Room

Friday, April 24

*In Conversation with Walter
 Kirn and Shawn Vestal*
 7 p.m., doors at 6:30 p.m.
 \$15 general, free to students
 Riverside Place,
 Commandery Room

More at getlitfestival.org

Tickets available through TicketsWest online,
 in-person, or by calling 1-800-325-SEAT.

OUR VOICES

THE NEXT JIM CROW: Felony Discrimination & Disenfranchisement

By Joseph Martin King

Globally, people are struggling, slavery still exists in some parts of the world, and we continue to talk in a language that divides us. There are lots of people who discuss race these days, but race is just a cloak to hide and keep the system of class in place. If we look beyond color we will see that there are systems of disenfranchisement that resemble the barriers African Americans faced over 50 years ago.

Just to add context to my personal position in this struggle, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is my grandparents' generation. My parents were teenagers during the Civil Rights Movement. During the fight for Civil Rights and the dismantling of Jim Crow, it was my parents' generation who indulged in the gains that the generation before them struggled to achieve. Because of this, a large number of them abandoned the struggle to enjoy the benefits of gaining entry into the middle class.

This abandonment has caused many of us to forget about the struggles of others who face the current forms of discrimination.

A great 20th century philosopher by the name of Michel Foucault believed that every time society destroys an oppressive system, society tends to create a new one to replace it. If we look at the genealogy of slavery, we will see the institution of slavery being replaced by the Black Codes, and then the system of Jim Crow replacing the Black Codes. We have Supreme Court cases that represent the eras of each system: *Scott v. Sandford* (Black Codes); *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Jim Crow); and *Brown v. Board of Education*, which helped to dismantle Jim Crow. We have become celebratory over the dismantling of Jim Crow and the 50th anniversary of Civil Rights activities, but yet another system of disenfranchisement has emerged.

Because it is no longer acceptable in our society to discriminate against a person based on race, it has become acceptable to discriminate against an individual based his or her criminal background. Michelle Alexander has coined this system of felony disenfranchisement as the "New Jim Crow". Today, around 65 million Americans of working age have criminal records. America's racial caste system has been modified to remove the assumption of race. What was once illegal 50 years ago—discrimination in housing, employment, education, voting, etc.—is now legal under this new system of felony disenfranchisement.

Do you know someone with a criminal record? Many of us do, but still fail to see the parallel world that felony disenfranchisement creates for individuals with criminal backgrounds. This group is an invisible population. What makes felony disenfranchisement



harsher than the previous system is the negative stigma that causes a lack of support from one's own community.

It is my belief that people are not the sum total of their worst mistake. We must keep in mind that felony disenfranchisement is a societal issue that affects us all. Collectively, we have the power to end this form of discrimination, which will significantly reduce recidivism and ultimately lead to the dismantling our generation's oppressive system.

BLACKS VS NIGGERS: Trials of an Undying Loyalty

By Romeal Watson

"God...I hate niggers, but I love black people. Honest, hard-working, law-abiding black people. Niggers like you, you make me sick." Charles Dutton, *First Time Felon* (HBO, 1997)

Those are rather poignant words of Mr. Calhoun in the biographical drama *First Time Felon* (directed by Charles S. Dutton). While this sentimentality is nothing new among many of our White citizens, it is important to note that Mr. Calhoun was a Black man, with a staunch belief in this notion of Black enculturation.

It's a particular behavior that has been reflected in our social and political structure since the early 1800's. Six months before the murder of Tyron Lewis, which ignited the St. Petersburg riots, Chris Rock launched a comedic bit from his 1996 HBO Special, *Bring the Pain*, spiraling into a tirade of uninhibited jibes about the Black underclass.

"I love black people, but I hate niggers."

"I hide my money in books. Why?! Because niggers don't read."

"Can't have shit in your house! Why? Because niggers will break into your house."

According to the November 2014 Alternet.org article, "Why Do African-American Superstars Like Chris Rock and Bill Cosby Go Out of Their Way to Stigmatize the Less Fortunate?" written by Mychal Denzel Smith, the joke is that "there is a subset of Black people that are gleefully uneducated, take pride in their criminal activities, and serve as the clumsy sidekick in Black America's plan for liberation. If it weren't for them, the niggers, we'd all be free."

And while many, out of similar frustration, were able to embrace the antics of Rock's comedic routine, our failure was in our inability to recognize the provisional boundaries that would further reinforce the division of all Black folks; well, at least the Black folks on the fringe of the elite circle (i.e., Sharpton, Cosby).

In light of their fruitful analyses of Black excellence in America, even W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington were susceptible enough to make bold statements on the conditions of the Black underclass. So much so that it opened the doors for individuals like Margaret Sanger, in creating what we know as the "Negro Project."



"The mass of ignorant Negroes still breed carelessly and disastrously, so that the increase among Negroes, even more than the increase among Whites, is from that part of the population least intelligent and fit, and least able to rear their children properly." W. E. B. Dubois ("Black Folk and Birth Control," *Birth Control Review*, 1932)

Because, of course, the cause of Black urban decline is due to all the Orcish heathenry, frenzied sexual appetites and unhinged hyper-masculinity, right? Never mind, as Lawrence Otis Graham expressed in his book, *Our Kind of People: Inside America's Black Upper Class* (1999), the decades of alienation from the economic accretion by the Black upper class

(and the aspiring alike). Never mind the hoarding of economic resources, spineless political leadership, and the constant selling-out of media figures (i.e., Don Lemon). Even the Eurocentric manipulation of the Black church must be accounted for. Many of these folks had been propped up by these very same communities and "in their idolization and fantasies of the house nigga, they forgot about the beast in the field that's been doing all the plowing," as once said by a dear friend and fellow inner city "heathen," no pun intended.

While these are only a few examples, there is much evidence to support the fact that throughout much of our struggle for Black liberation, there has been a caste system predicated on class, light-skinned privilege, gender, and internalized White colonialism—all of which continues to stifle our solidarity in one of the most vulnerable times ever. No, we shall not overcome "someday," not if we continue to ignore the billions of dollars that circulate from Black suffering. This is a truer look into that which is not seen, according to Frédéric Bastiat who in 1850 wrote the essay "That Which Is Seen and That

Which Is Not Seen: The Unintended Consequences of Government Spending."

Now, this isn't to say that excellence shouldn't be strived for, but rather, in our attempts to build Black achievement, we must also understand the dangerous mythology of "acceptable" Blacks and the rift it has caused in our society. We must rid ourselves of this notion that "these Blacks" are "making the rest of us look bad" and try to think introspectively about the conception of that analysis. We must break from this undying obsession for White approval.

Twelve to sixteen years of Eurocentric education, and another ten to twenty years of brain-drain into predominantly White institutions, and the only constructive advice for the Black poor is to "pull your pants up," and "stop having so many babies"? How should the Black poor react? Why would any Black person accept that as a viable solution, given the hypocrisy of such a pretentious nation? You're not vanquishing ignorance; you're being a stooge for the Anglo elite.

Continued on Page 14

OUR VOICES

AFTER THE CHANTS:

“There will never be a Nigger at SAE” Can be a Teachable Moment at OSU

Dr. Julianne Malveaux



(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Just a week or so after Black History Month concluded, the civil rights movement experienced a special commemoration. Tens of thousands thronged to Selma, Alabama for a historic march across the Edmond Pettus Bridge, marking March 7, 1965, the fiftieth anniversary of Bloody Sunday when armed police officers attacked peaceful marchers attempting to walk to Montgomery, the state capital. More than ten thousand people were attacked in 1965, including Congressman John Lewis (D-GA), whose powerful eloquence puts the entire protest movement in context.

President Obama was there, delivering one of the best speeches of his presidency, correctly asserting that there has been much change in the last fifty years. Not

only is the President correct, but also his speech reminds us that we spit on our ancestors when we say that things are the same as they were fifty years ago.

Still, the YouTube recording depicting members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon at Oklahoma University gleefully engaging in racist chants, was disgusting, chilling and informative. The fraternity, whose mantra is “The True Gentleman”, was founded before the Civil War and brags of its founding in the “Deep South”. One of its early twentieth century handbooks limits its membership to those of the Caucasian race. While many in these United States have moved at least a bit from the country’s racist foundations, the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, at least at Oklahoma University, has not much moved from theirs.

OU President David Boren was absolutely right to remove Sigma Alpha Epsilon from the campus. I also agree with his decision to expel the “ringleaders” in the chant, Parker Rice and Levi Pettit. Will there be consequences for the rest of those on the bus, those who were enthusiastic in participating in the chants? Who birthed these young people? Who raised

them? Who instilled no sense of right and wrong in them? Who let them know that lynching is not so funny as to be included in an already-racist chant?

What kind of history is taught at Oklahoma University? Do American history classes at OU touch on our nation’s history of lynching? Alternatively, are students required to take African American history (which really are American history) classes? Has the fact that people in the United States pointedly ignore our collective history of lynching empowered young fraternity members to treat lynching casually. As reported in the New York Times in early February, the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) in Montgomery, Alabama, inventoried the nearly 4000 lynchings that took place in a dozen Southern states between 1877 and 1950. Their report showed a pattern of terrorist intimidation directed at African American people.

These lynchings were an institutional attempt to keep black people in our place. We were lynched because white men feared interracial sex (civil rights leader Ida B. Wells wrote that white women’s virtue was an excuse to cover the real reason for lynching, an as-

sertion that caused angry whites to put a price on her head). We were lynched for challenging the status quo, for refusing to yield a sidewalk to a white person, or failing to address a white person by an appropriate title. We were lynched when we were accused, but not convicted, of crimes as petty as minor theft. We were lynched when we were organized and protested mistreatment or demanded economic equity. We were lynched because we had too much money.

White folks treated these lynchings as celebratory affairs with, according to EJI, vendors selling food, and photographers producing postcards of lynching victims. So-called “decent” white people (early twentieth century versions of Parker Rice and Levi Pettit) posed for pictures with lynched bodies. On some occasions, they had their children and young neighbors pose with them. These “Christian” people came together to watch black people tortured, mutilated, dismembered, and burned. They vied for their body parts – toes, fingers, bones, and even genitals -- as souvenirs, sometimes bidding on them.

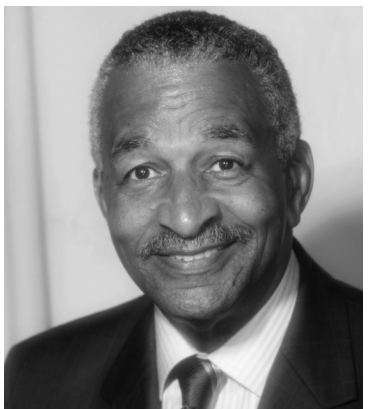
Oklahoma University President David Boren might turn the Sig-

ma Alpha Epsilon incident into a teachable moment if he were willing to insist that all students at OU learn about African American history, either through including a required class on race and resistance in the South, or by expanding and requiring that all students take an African American history class. He might take it a step further by establishing an internship program with OU students and EJI, and providing a significant contribution to the organization. Finally, as a condition of reinstatement to OU as students in good standing, Parker Rice and Levi Pettit could be required to spend a semester or year working with EJI to help document lynchings through the monuments EJI would like to erect at the sites of lynchings in the South.

It is easy to decry the ignorance that fueled the ugly racist chants that have now come to light. It would be far more substantive if President Boren were to use this opportunity to encourage (or require) his community to learn why casual references to lynchings are so heinous and unacceptable.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based in Washington, DC.

THE ECONOMICS OF SELMA - 2015



By James Clingman

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - I remember back in 1999 when my daughter came to me crying about something she had seen on TV. It was the movie, “Selma, Lord, Selma!” She was distraught, even at six years old, at the mistreatment of Black folks in Selma in 1965.

My daughter related to Jurnee Smollett and Stephanie Peyton in their portrayals of Sheyann and Rachel, two young girls growing up in Selma during that time. That being a teaching moment, she and

I had a talk about Selma and other issues pertaining to injustice toward and mistreatment of Black people in this country.

Adding to the title of that movie, by making it “Selma, Lord have mercy, Selma!” captures my effort to highlight and reemphasize not only the historical tragedy of Selma but also its current political and economic condition in light of the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

Last week, March 3-7, 2015, tens of thousands of people converged on Selma, including politicians, of course, celebrities and corporate executives. Selma enjoyed the national and world spotlight for a brief time, but I wondered if those folks would leave Selma without addressing current critical issues that exist there. Daily life in Selma includes a 40 percent poverty rate, high unemployment, low median family income, crumbling infrastructure and building facades, and closed businesses.

I can only pray that some of the folks who visited and made speeches also left some money there, maybe to start a micro lending fund, an equity fund, or even invested in a business in Selma. I hope the politicians who say they hold Selma in such high esteem went back to their respective offices committed to allocate funds to help the city that some refer to as, “The Third World of Alabama.”

As Representative Terri A. Sewell (D-Ala) said, “We have to move beyond the bridge.” Along with all the crying, preaching, inspiring speeches, and marching back across the bridge, I trust that on this 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday the folks living in Selma received more than just well wishes.

During our family visit there in 2001, former head of the National Voting Rights Museum and Institute, Joann Bland, gave us a tour (Even though it was past closing

time); she told her personal story of being in the march at 10 years of age and shared her wealth of knowledge with my then 8-year old daughter. My eyes were opened to the history and the present state of Selma, a city still waiting for change, especially economic change.

Fifty years since 1965 that famous bridge, named for Edmund Pettus, a former U.S. Democratic Senator, chairman of the state delegation to the Democratic National Convention for twenty years, and Grand Dragon of the Alabama Ku Klux Klan, has even greater meaning. Back then it symbolized the struggle for voting rights; today it is a guidepost for a new struggle, the struggle for economic justice and empowerment.

Those who walked that bridge in 1965 won their battle; we must be as strong and as determined as they were then to win the battle we face today.

Obviously the political environment has changed in the city that elected as its Mayor the sheriff who supported the beat-down in 1965, and kept him in office until 2000. Selma leaders like Terri Sewell know, however, that political change is not enough; they know change must also come in the form of economic empowerment and federal support.

Is it enough to have gone to Selma simply because it was the 50th anniversary? Albeit a treasured occasion, for some it has become more symbolism than substantive, a photo-op, just as the 50th anniversary of the famous March on Washington was in 2013.

Today our words and activities in Selma must result in progressive and appropriate action, so that next year we can celebrate the victorious culmination of that revered freedom march, rather than lamenting our continued frustration over the fact that 50 years later, as some of the dignitaries

Continued on Page 14

Educating Humanity through a Black Lens: Celebrating the Legacy and History of the African American Press

By Lawrence Burnley, PhD

The power and influence of the media – print, video, audio, television and social media to name a few – in influencing our thinking cannot be overstated. Other than formal schooling, public and private, from kindergarten through graduate level education, dominant and mainstream media plays an extraordinary and powerful role in shaping and informing the manner in which we interpret our past and our present, which inevitably influences our capacity to imagine a more hopeful and promising future.

Today the large majority of the population in the U. S., intergenerational in age, continues to depend on “news-papers” – in print or electronic forms – as a primary “authoritative” source of information about the world around them. In 1827, a group of free African American leaders from cities along the Northeastern seaboard gathered in the home of Bostin Crummell in New York City to address several issues of mutual concern. Among these issues was the lack of control they had in expressing their views, perspectives and solutions to the myriad of social, economic and political conditions and challenges facing their communities. According to Dr. Clint Wilson II, a professor of journalism at Howard University in Washington, D. C., these Black leaders were concerned with “. . . the fact that elements of the established press routinely denigrated African Americans in print, even to the extent of questioning both the integrity and morality of the entire race.”

Today while we celebrate “freedom of the press” many within the African American community are very much aware of the fact that diverse interpretations of their history, culture, and analysis of contemporary issues such as access to quality education, politics, employment, healthcare and the distribution of wealth are not equitably presented in the dominant/mainstream press. Events that directly impact persons of African descent in the U.S. are often



marginalized and/or totally excluded from the “headlines” signaling yet another example of the devaluation of Black life.

A recent example of such devaluation and marginalization of Black life in the press is the recent massacre of 2,000 Nigerian men, women and children at the hands of the extremist group known as Boko Haram. This horrific and unimaginable act of violence occurred during the time of the tragic acts of violence in Paris at the office of The French newspaper Charlie Hebdo and its aftermath. The developments in Paris dominated the press. Conversely, the killing of 2,000 African people was reduced to virtual invisibility by dominant and mainstream outlets of the “free press” in the United States. Did you read about the Boko Haram Massacre in Nigeria in the local or national press? Where was the coverage? Why was this human atrocity in Nigeria deemed unworthy of the level of attention as developments in France?

How does the press in the U.S. in general, and Spokane in particular, either challenge and deconstruct or perpetuate and reproduce persistent stereotypes of persons and/or groups connected with particular social identities? How does dominant mainstream press either challenge or reinforce constructions of abusive power relations and legacies of socioeconomic inequities which disproportionately impact communities based on racial, gender, religion and other identities?

These are questions about sources of knowledge and about what we are required to learn and read; how these required educational experiences shape and inform how we view ourselves and others, and the implications these perceptions have with regard to our ability or potential to realize the “beloved community” reflected in Dr. King’s dream; the kind of community to toward which God calls us.

In 1941, John Sengstacke of the Chicago Defender convened a meeting in Chicago of African American publishers from across the nation. During this meeting representatives from 22 publications formed the National Negro Publishers Association. Today, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (the name was changed in 1956) has a membership of 200 Black Newspapers in the U. S. and the Virgin Islands.

In providing the Spokane community with an alternative educational resource and perspective on both historic and contemporary developments, the Black Lens News is firmly rooted in the conviction of Rev. Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm, attendees at the 1827 meeting in New York City of free African American leaders, when they said “We wish to plead our own cause.”

Dr. Lawrence Burnley is the Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Intercultural Relations and Assistant Professor of History at Whitworth University.

First in the Family

Continued from Page 11

The essential support of my family and community was invaluable. Even if my family and community did not know much about the college journey, their faith, love, and willingness to participate in my college experience helped me push through all the challenges and barriers to earn my diploma.

As a parent of a first generation college student, you too face challenges. You may be uncertain of the college experience and at times feel unsure about how to be a resource to your son or daughter. You may want to support your child as a student but do not know how to do so. My suggestion is simple—take part.

Your participation is very important to your student’s college success. Be a partner in your student’s college experience, but also partner with your student’s college or university as a first generation parent. I encourage you to visit campus multiple times throughout your student’s tenure at their college or university and familiarize yourself with all the support services and resources available to both your student and you as a first generation parent.

You have to be comfortable with the change too. Ask many questions. (No question is silly, or absurd.) This is a first time event for you as well. Ask your student how involved they want you to be in their decisions making process. Honor their position and then guide them from the side. Let your students lead, as you facilitate in a less direct way as they are now young adults and need to navigate their own responsibilities.

For example, at Eastern Washington University, where I work as Admissions Advisor and Diversity Outreach Coordinator, I often advise my first generation parents to take part and introduce themselves to the plethora of resources that are available on the campus. The Eastern community, like all colleges and universities, is fully committed to engaging the student and family and ready to go above and beyond to help all students succeed.

Finally, your support and guidance contribute to your students attending college, staying in college, and graduating with a degree. Continue to remember: their success is your success and this can transform family history by starting a new legacy.

Randy C. Corradine is the Senior Admissions Advisor & Diversity Outreach Coordinator at Eastern Washington University. For more information contact Randy at rcorradine@ewu.edu or 509-359-4879

THE ECONOMICS OF SELMA

Continued From Page 14

said, “Our march for justice continues.” Selma needs much more than an annual celebration. It needs economic development, businesses, employment, and revitalization. It should be valued well beyond the platitudes, pretentiousness, and pontification proffered by politicians and their pundits. That city, so important to our history, should be held in the highest esteem by Washington D.C., the State of Alabama, and the rest of us. In addition to an annual spotlight, we must keep it on the political radar screen throughout the year, until it is given the assistance it certainly commands and truly deserves.

The culmination of true freedom is economic freedom. Selma citizens and those who endured the batons, horses, dogs, and those who were murdered leading up to and during the march, are certainly deserving of more than 50 more years of “We ‘shall’ overcome.”

James Clingman is the former Editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper and the founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. His weekly syndicated newspaper column, Blackonomics, is featured in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. <http://www.blackonomics.com>

Blacks vs Niggers

Continued From Page 12

Given all of the attempts the Black poor have made, if at the very least we cannot be a bit more supportive, then perhaps it is us that need to engage in a little truth telling. If we are scared, embarrassed or ashamed, then just say that, but let’s not keep carrying on with confused animosity and cowardice, when the ones that should be questioned are the ones profiting off this foolishness.

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APRIL EVENTS

APRIL 5

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Presented by the Spokane Minister's Fellowship

Sunday, April 5
6:30am

Holy Temple Church of God In Christ
806 West Indiana Spokane, WA

Superintendent Elder Ezra Kinlow, Holy Temple COGIC speaker, Mistress of Ceremony Dr. Roberta Wilburn

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship is presenting a series of Holy Week services, Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 3. All services will be held at Holy Temple Church of God In Christ, 806 West Indiana Spokane. See page 10.

APRIL 5

GOD'S HARMONY

WSU Gospel Choir Concert and Miracle Healing Service

Sunday, April 5
10:00am

Word of Faith Christian Center
4001 N. Cook, Spokane, WA

For more information contact Pastor Manning at 509-891-5253.

APRIL 7

BOOK GROUP: Literature by African Americans

Join in the discussion of "Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina" by Misty Copeland

"In this instant New York Times bestseller, Misty Copeland makes history as the only African American soloist dancing with the prestigious American Ballet Theatre."

– Barnes & Noble.com

Tuesday, April 7

6-8pm
Forza Coffee Company
Large Conference Room
2829 E. 29th Ave.

Lincoln Heights Shopping Cntr

For information contact Jeanne at 509-255-6013 or Tracy at tpoindeintercantan@gmail.com.

APRIL 15

WHITWORTH UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S FORUM

Featured Speaker: Bryan Stevenson,
Director of the Equal Justice Initiative

Tues., April 14

7:30 – 9 a.m.

Spokane Convention Center

Pre-registration is required for this event.

Tickets: \$25/Person; \$250/Corporate Table (10 seats per table)

Questions? Call 509.777.3449, or email iaevents@whitworth.edu.

APRIL 18

MLK CENTER

2015 DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION

Saturday, April 18

5:30-7:30pm

Spokane Convention Center
Centennial Lobby Ballroom

Tickets \$40 per person

All proceeds will be used to continue and expand services offered to area families at The Martin Luther King Jr. Family Outreach Center.

For more information contact: (509) 455-8722 or varguello@mlkspokane.org

APRIL 18 & 19

BETHEL A.M.E. 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION 4/18

Fashion Show and Comedy Hour

Featuring James Stephens III and Michael Bethely

Saturday, April 18

4:00-6:00pm

Emmanuel Family Life Center
631 S. Richard Allen Court

No Cost: Free will donation encouraged
Seating is limited.

4/19

Anniversary Worship Service

Rev. Spencer Barrett, Presiding Elder of the Pacific Northwest Conference will be bringing the anniversary message. Dinner will follow.

11:00am

Bethel A.M.E Church

645 S. Richard Allen Court

For information call 509-534-3007.

APRIL 25

19TH ANNUAL AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION CEREMONY

The African American Graduation Ceremony honors students of African and African American descent as they celebrate graduation.

Saturday, April 25

1-3pm

Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University

To reserve your seat to participate in the graduation ceremony RSVP online at <http://bit.ly/1JnUZKV> or visit the facebook page - African American Graduation Spokane

Contact: aagradspokane@gmail.com or call 509-244-3237 for more information.

APRIL 25

MISSION POSSIBLE 2015

Paying It Forward Conference

MC - Dennis Mitchell

Feeling stuck? Tired of living your life less than what you deserve or really want? Learn strategies to take you life to the next level.

Cost: Free

Saturday, April 25

12-5pm

The Elks Lodge #228
2605 N. Robie Road
Spokane Valley, WA 99206

For information contact: Dennisspeaks@gmail.com or visit www.payingitforwardconference.com



"PAY 2 PLAY is the best documentary about speaking truth to power since The Big Lebowski"
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JOHN WELLINGTON ENNIS
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VAN JONES • JACK ARABAMOFF • JERRY SPRINGER
MARGE BAKER • MARK CRISPIN MILLER • BOB EDGAR
RASHAD ROBINSON • ROBERT WEISSMAN • KATHAY FENG

TIME: 7:00 pm
DATE: April 16th 2015
PLACE: The Magic Lantern Theatre
ADDRESS: 25 West Main Avenue
Spokane, Washington
RSVP TO: WAMEND, Stacy
Cossey_scossey@robertcossey.com

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[Pay2PlayTV](https://www.facebook.com/Pay2PlayTV)

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2nd Annual Inland Northwest MALE SUMMIT

Brotherhood • Leadership • Education

Register and info at:
ewu.edu/malesummit



SAVE THE DATE

The EWU Male Summit is a FREE Leadership program serving young men, 6th - 12th grades, specifically first generation, low income, and multicultural populations in the greater Inland Northwest.

Purpose: To empower and motivate our young men to excel in academics and social achievement. Participants will acquire tools for personal development, confidence and academic success.

Saturday, May 16, 2015, 10am - 3pm on the EWU Campus, Cheney

Contact Randy C. Corradine or Lori Hunt: rcorradine@ewu.edu or lhunt@ccs.spokane.edu

BETHEL AME 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
**FASHION SHOW AND
COMEDY HOUR**

***Featuring Comedian James Stephens III
and Michael Bethely of Bethely Entertainment as MC***



James Stephens III is an absolutely brilliant and hilarious Christian Comedian who has previously performed on HBO's Def Comedy Jam, as well as T.D. Jake's Potter's House. The vintage fashion show will showcase clothing from local shops and designers to celebrate the legacy in fashion throughout the decades.

Saturday, April 18th

4:00PM – 6:00PM

Emmanuel Family Life Center

631 S. Richard Allen Court

Light hors d'oeuvres will be served prior to the start of the event.

No Cost: Free will donation encouraged

Seating is LIMITED, please show up early enough to get a seat.

For more information contact Bethel AME Church at 509-534-3007 or email BethelAMESpokane@Comcast.net.