

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

BLACK POWER AT THE BALLOT BOX

Black Voters Push Doug Jones to Victory in Alabama Election

By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Alabama's Black voters carried the day, pulling off a stunning victory for Democrat Doug Jones in his contentious race against Republican Roy Moore, accused of sexual misconduct with teenage girls when he was in his 30s.

Moore, who also recently said America was last great during slavery, has refused to concede the Dec. 12 election, which Jones won by at least 20,715 votes (671,151-650,436).

Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill says the votes will be certified between

Dec. 26 and Jan. 3 and that it is "highly unlikely" that Moore will advance to win. Merrill says some overseas and military ballots will now be added, but not hardly close enough for a Moore win.

African-Americans reportedly voted for Jones with 96 percent, according to CNN, higher than the Black vote for President Barack Obama in 2012, which was approximately 92 percent. Blacks made up 29 percent of the overall vote, Whites made up 66 percent of the vote and Latinos, 3 percent. Women with children voted 66 percent for Jones.

Selma, Ala., an 80 percent Black populated hub of the civil rights movement, which was among the last to report results, appeared to have carried Jones across the line.

"Selma, Alabama turned Alabama into a blue state," declared CNN contributor Bakari Sellers.

Those votes can largely be attributed to Black women says Melanie Campbell, president/CEO of the non-partisan National Coalition for Black Civic Participation and convener of its Black Women's Roundtable.

"Black women gave 97 percent of our vote for Doug Jones in Alabama," says Camp-



bell. "We're not just turning out the vote. We're not just showing up at the polls. We're leading from a grassroots perspective on up. So we have to make sure we leverage that vote, leverage that leadership. That's what we have to do as Black women. We've always been the backbone. But we don't get the credit."

Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez also gave credit to Black wom-

en, saying they voted 98 percent for Jones. Despite Moore's refusal to give in, saying he is waiting on God, even President Donald Trump has conceded the race, sending a congratulatory Tweet after Jones victory speech Tuesday night.

Trump fought vigorously for Moore, despite the numerous sexual misconduct allegations against him.

Continued on Page 18

Tarana Burke and the Silence Breakers

Creator of #MeToo Movement Missing From Time Magazine Cover



By Dr. Jeanne Baynes

On October 5, 2017, The New York Times published a series of allegations against producer Harvey Weinstein from women who alleged that he sexually harassed them.

Since those initial accusations came to light, a floodgate seems to have opened, with many people coming forward to discuss their experiences of sexual harassment and/or assault, and the hashtag #MeToo used to demonstrate the prevalence of harassment and assault within our culture.

"The Silence Breakers", the vanguard of a global movement by millions of women to share their stories of sexual harassment and abuse, was revealed on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 to be Time Magazine's Person of the Year.

Among the many women featured inside Time's story, (although notably absent from the cover photo), is African American Tarana Burke, the #MeToo movement's creator.

Continued on Page 19

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Me Too vs
Me Too

When I talk about how the Black Lens got started, I tell people about my original plan for the publication, which was to create a paper filled with soft news. A paper that basically just told lighthearted and happy stories about the Black people living in Spokane. That was what was in my head as I unknowingly set off on this newspaper journey.

Well, I didn't even make it through the first issue before it became abundantly clear that soft news, although I am happy when I get the chance to share it, was not going to be the purpose or function of The Black Lens. In fact, as the clock has ticked by over the years, the news that I am conveying to my readers each month seems to increasingly be anything but soft.

I am thinking about that revelation again because this month my intention had been to write a lighthearted and happy column here to celebrate the Black Lens' Third Anniversary, to thank and celebrate and give a shout out to all of the wonderful people who have supported me and this work for the past thirty-six months. That was the plan. And I hope those of you who have supported this paper know that I am grateful for you, for your ads, your subscriptions, your donations, and for your persistent support and encouragement.

What I am feeling in this moment, though, instead of a desire to celebrate, is the need to give voice to a frustration that many in the Black community have shared with me over the past few weeks.

Let me start by saying that I am thrilled that, finally, attention is being paid to the inappropriate, and in some cases criminal, actions and behaviors of some men. It's about time.

I would hazard to say that the majority, if not all, of women in my life could claim the hashtag #MeToo, having, at the very least, been the victim of unwanted, uninvited and un-welcomed advances by men, with many experiencing far worse. To watch cracks form in the wall of silence that has long perpetuated and encouraged the pervasiveness of disgusting behaviors by privileged men has been astounding, and it is long past time to begin witnessing appropriate



consequences being attached to those behaviors. I believe it is the only way that there will every truly be a shift in our culture.

That having been said, the frustration that I am currently feeling is best symbolized by the omission (whether intentional or unintentional) of Tarana Burke, the founder of the #MeToo movement, from the cover photo of Time Magazine's celebration of the "Silence Breakers" as the 2017 Person of the Year. (See story on page 1).

When the issue of Ms. Burke's absence from the Time Magazine cover was raised loudly by the Black community and the response from many progressives and feminists was to note that she was included "inside the magazine", or in other words, what's the problem, what got triggered for me was the realization that Black folks claim a #MeToo hashtag as well. Racism. Bias. Discrimination. Being dismissed. Discounted. Overlooked until you're needed to win an election. #MeToo.

In the same way that sexism has created a culture that privileges men and de-values women, leading to rampant sexual misconduct. Racism has created a culture that privileges white folks and de-values people of color, particularly Black folks, leading to rampant inequity.

The problem though, and the reason that myself and others have been a little hesitant to jump aboard the women's empowerment train that seems to be sweeping the country right now, is that many of the same folks, both women and men, who are currently championing the #MeToo movement and aggressively demanding accountability from men, all men, are the same folks who take a step backwards when the issue of race is raised.

Often embedded in and supported by the systems that perpetuate racism, these impatient and tenacious fighters for gender equality will insist that truly addressing racial inequities "is going to take some time." I agree. But it will take a lot less time if #MeToo truly becomes #UsToo.



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THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

"BLACK IDENTITY EXTREMISTS"

Co-Intelpro Revisted: FBI Labels Black Activists a Threat to Nation

Special to the Black Lens News Wire from NorthStarNews-Info.com

By Frederick H. Love

Tuesday Wine.com - The Trump administration, FBI and police unions have labeled Black men and Black women who are concerned, angry and distressed about the steady stream of news stories about White rage shouting in death threats Black men and not being held accountable for their actions, as possible terrorists who need watching because they may resort to violence in retaliation.

The FBI labeled the Black men and Black women who are outraged over the death of George Floyd, "Black Identity Extremists" (BIE), reported Foreign Policy magazine, which broke the story titled "The FBI's New U.S. Terrorist Threat: Black Identity Extremism."

Law enforcement calls it a violent movement. "Criminals call it a riot," Jim Wines and Shaun Wassinger wrote the article.

published in Foreign Policy's October issue. Foreign Policy reported Black Identity Extremism is a new term first appearing in government documents since days before the White supremacist march in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 11, where a counter demonstration was meted by a Alt-right supporter.

The FBI "suspects it is very likely that Black Identity Extremist perception of

police brutality against African Americans spurred an increase in premeditated, retaliatory violent actions against law enforcement and will likely serve as justification to such violence."

Except there is no "BIE movement" but in the federal mind of those within the Trump Administration, reports The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School, which covered the Foreign Policy

article. The Brennan Center's article was written by Andrew Cohen. "No journalist or academic has discovered and characterized such a movement. No such leaders have come forward to say they are part of a movement. No one has lifted a sign in the name of such a movement. The only citations to the movement, the Foreign Policy piece tells us, come from internal law enforcement writings made over the past two months," wrote the Brennan Center.

Knowledge about the alleged movement comes after Trump supported white racists who marched in Charlottesville, Charlottesville. Trump called Black Nationalist Football League players who took a knee during the national anthem "sons of bitches" who should be fired because he claims they are disrespecting the American flag and members of the U.S. military, which was far from the truth.

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Michael Slager Sentenced to 20 Years for Shooting Death of Unarmed Walter Scott

(Source: Steve Osunsami and Emily Shapiro, abcnews.go.com)

On December 7, former South Carolina police officer Michael Slager was sentenced to 20 years in prison for the deadly shooting of unarmed Walter Scott.

U.S. District Judge David Norton ruled that Slager committed second-degree murder and obstruction of justice, when he shot and killed 50-year-old Scott in 2015. The second-degree murder ruling came with a recommended 19 to 24 year sentence.

Michael Slager shot and killed Walter Scott on April 4, 2015, while Slager was an officer with the North Charleston Police Department. Slager claimed self-defense, but a witnesses cellphone video, that surfaced shortly after the encounter, showed the officer fatally shooting Walter Scott



in the back as the unarmed man ran away. He was fired from the force after the shooting.

Michael Slager was charged in South Carolina with murder and pleaded not guilty. During the state murder trial, Slager’s attorney said his client shot Walter Scott because he was in fear for his life.

In 2016, the case ended in a mistrial. The state retrial and

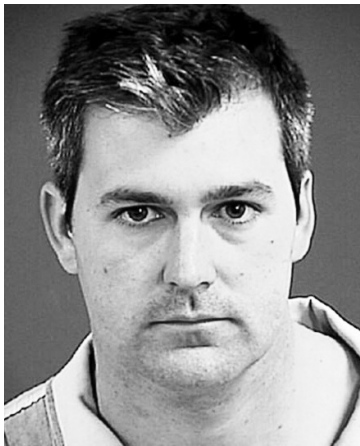


federal trial were expected to take place in 2017, but instead, in May, Slager pleaded guilty to violating Walter Scott’s Civil Rights in federal court, which ended the federal case against him and also resolved the state charges that were pending after the mistrial.

Rodney Scott, one of Walter Scott’s brothers, told the court that the death of his brother the worst day of his life and that he wanted

Slager to pay for his actions. Before hearing his sentence in federal court, Slager called each of the Scott family members out by name and apologized, thanking them for forgiving him. “I wish this never would have happened,” he said. “I wish I could go back to the day and change the events, but I can’t.”

At a news conference after the sentencing, Rodney Scott said his family is



“pleased.” Scott continued, “we got justice,” and added that his family is “thankful for the justice system that worked on our behalf,” but added that “a lot of work” still needs to be done in the justice system.

Another of Walter Scott’s brothers, Anthony Scott, thanked Feiden Santana, the witness who filmed the shooting, for being “brave” enough to film what he saw.

United Nations Poverty Official Tours Alabama’s Black Belt



(Source: Connor Sheets, <http://www.al.com/news>)

A United Nations official who tours the globe investigating extreme poverty said in December that areas of Alabama’s Black Belt are suffering the most dire sewage disposal crisis of any place he has visited in a developed country.

“I think it’s very uncommon in the First World. This is not a sight that one normally sees. I’d have to say that I haven’t seen this,” Philip Alston, the UN’s Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, said as he toured a Butler County community where raw sewage flows from homes through exposed PVC pipes and into open trenches and pits.

Alston was in Alabama on Thursday to bear personal witness to the poverty, lack of access to basic services and civil rights struggles that have plagued poor, mostly African-American residents of the state’s Black Belt region for generations.

Named for its rich soil and located in the southern half of the state, Alabama’s Black Belt is part of a ribbon of counties that stretches across the South and has a long history of poverty and racial discrimination. The visit is part of a 15-day tour of the U.S. that Alston and his team are conducting to gather information for a report on poverty and human rights abuses in America that they expect to release in spring.

Malcolm X’s Daughters Launch Clothing Line to Honor Their Father and his Principles



(Source: Sequoia Blodgett, <http://www.blackenterprise.com>)

Ilyasah Shabazz, Qubilah Shabazz, Attallah Shabazz, Gamilah Lumumba Shabazz and Malaak Shabazz have all teamed up with the tech company Hingeto to create a clothing line that pays homage to their father’s legacy. The line, dubbed Malcolm X Legacy, features items that are inspired by the activist’s twelve principles which stressed the importance of human rights, education, economic independence, cultural pride, and justice. The collection features hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, and will soon include artwork.

Leandrew Robinson, the CEO of Hingeto, told Black Enterprise that a clothing line like this is more fitting now than ever with all of the turmoil that has been happening within our country. “It was clear Malcolm’s principles are as relevant today as ever. We all thought it was imperative to represent his message and today’s human rights movement as a brand that people can outfit themselves in daily,” said Robinson. He also added that Colin Kaepernick has cosigned the new brand and has taken to Twitter to share info about the line.

The new line can be found at <https://malcolmxlegacy.com>.

Nina Simone and Sister Rosetta Tharpe Inducted into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame



(Source: <https://www.rockhall.com/2017-induction-class>)

The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame proudly announced the 2018 class of inductees. Five artists were included in the Performer Category: Bon Jovi, The Cars, Dire Straits, The Moody Blues and Nina Simone. One artist was recognized with an Award for Early Influence: Sister Rosetta Tharpe. The inductees are nominated and voted on by over 900 musicians, journalists and critics. The artists and bands have made their permanent mark on music and continue to influence up-and-coming performers today.

Nina Simone’s unapologetic rage and accusatory voice named names and took no prisoners in the African American struggle for equality in the early 1960s. Her triumphant voice sang what it meant to be young, gifted and Black in a sometimes unjust and troubled world. **Sister Rosetta Tharpe** was the first guitar heroine of rock and roll. Her heartfelt gospel folksiness gave way to a roaring mastery of her trusty Gibson SG, which she wielded on a level that rivaled the best of her male contemporaries.

The 33rd Annual Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, presented by Klipsch Audio, will take place on Saturday, April 14, 2018 in Cleveland. The Ceremony will again have its television premiere on HBO, and a radio broadcast on SiriusXM. Broadcast details will be announced in early 2018.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Keisha Lance Bottoms Becomes Atlanta Mayor in Close Election

(Source: Jason Johnson, <https://www.theroot.com>)

The city of Atlanta, GA, considered one of the fastest-growing, wealthiest and culturally important cities in America, held a non-partisan mayoral election on Tuesday, November 7, 2017. Democratic Mayor Kasim Reed, who has been in office since 2010, was ineligible to run for re-election due to term limits and a field of a dozen candidates competed for the majority of the votes.

No candidate received a majority, so on Tuesday, December 5, 2017, a runoff election was held between the top two finishers, Atlanta City Council member Keisha Lance Bottoms and City Council member Mary Norwood.

The runoff, which pitted two Democrats against each other, one white and one Black, was decided by less than 800 votes in a city of millions. Norwood ultimately conceded despite earlier calls for a recount.

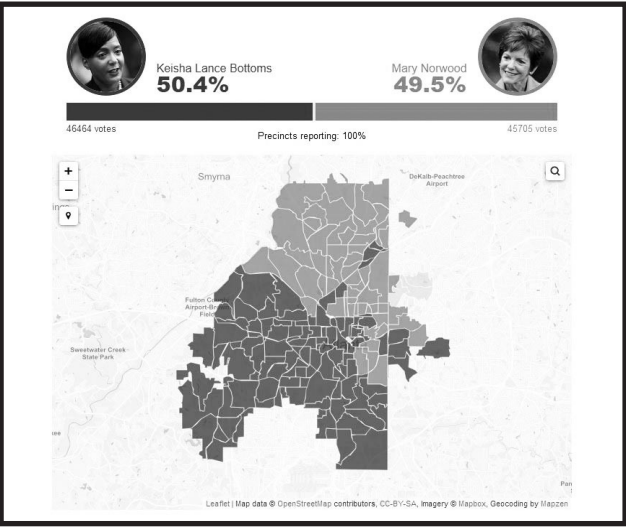


Race was a key factor in the election results. According to online publication, The Root, “the northern, whiter parts of Atlanta voted for Norwood; the southern, Blacker parts of Atlanta voted for Lance Bottoms.” Andra Gillespie, a political science professor at Emory University told The Root, there is still a racially polarized North-South divide that still holds in the city... the question going into the future is looking at East Atlanta and Southwest Atlanta, that are gentrifying.”

This was Norwood’s second attempt at becoming Mayor of Atlanta, and her second loss by a narrow margin. In 2009, Norwood ran against Kasim Reed. She won the mostly white DeKalb County, 51 percent to 49 percent, and Reed won the larger, mostly Black Fulton County, 51 percent to 49 percent. This year, Norwood won DeKalb by a margin of 58 percent to 42 percent, while Bottoms won Fulton County, 52 percent to 47 percent.

According to The Root, Gillespie also pointed to the fractured power dynamics amongst Atlanta’s Black leadership as another factor in the election results. “Black leadership was pretty divided,” Gillespie said. “The first Black female mayor of Atlanta and current Mayor Kasim Reed’s predecessor Shirley Franklin, as well as City Council President Ceasar Mitchell and a host of other high-profile Black and white former candidates and politicians all endorsed Norwood. “But black voters were pretty cohesive,” Gillespie noted. “They made decisions on their own regardless of what leadership was saying.”

With the Mayoral election determined, attention now is turning to the Governor’s race where history seems to be repeating itself, with two Democratic women, African American Stacey Abrams (Former House Minority Leader) and Stacey Evans (State Representative) competing for the vote in 2018.



Sean “P. Diddy” Wants to Buy the Carolina Panthers, Both Steph Curry and Colin Kaepernick ‘Want In’



(Source: <https://www.bet.com/news/sports>; Greg Moore, [azcentral.com](https://www.azcentral.com))

NFL Carolina Panthers owner Jerry Richardson announced on December 17, after a Sports Illustrated report that he had reached settlements with at least four team employees over accusations of work misconduct, including using sexually charged language and aiming a racial slur at a Black scout for the organization, that he would put the team up for sale at the end of the season.

Hip hop mogul, Sean “Diddy” Combs, a grammy winning artist and multi-millionaire businessman, responded to Richardson’s announcement with an announcement of his own. That he wanted to buy the Carolina Panthers. Diddy tweeted: I would like to buy the @Panthers. Spread the word. There are no majority African American NFL owners. Let’s make history.

Just over an hour later, Steph Curry, millionaire player for the Golden State Warriors, let it be known that he wanted to be part of an ownership group with Diddy by tweeting: I want in! Kaepernick followed suit by tweeting his desire to be part of the ownership group as well.

Richardson’s controlling stake in the Carolina Panthers is projected to be at about \$1.2 billion. If Diddy buy the team, he would be the only African American majority owner in the NFL, a league where seventy percent of the players are African American.

Kia Patterson: Compton’s First Black-Owned Grocery Store



(Source: Julia Wick, <http://laist.com/2017>)

Thirty-Six-year-old Kia Patterson made history in April when she took over ownership of Grocery Outlet in Compton—making it the first Black-owned grocery store in the city of Compton which was declared a “food desert” by the USDA in 2013. Patterson, a Compton native, said she aims to bring quality food at low-cost price points to the community.

In a video posted that she posted to Facebook, Patterson said she was able to take over the store because of her extensive experience in the industry. After years of working at the grocery store, Smart & Final, Patterson was recruited by Grocery Outlet to help with their L.A.-area expansion. According to the L.A. Sentinel, Patterson began training with the Grocery Outlet in June 2016, and after gathering her investments and setting up a business plan, she took over ownership of the store on April 1, 2017.

“This store is really good for the community,” Patterson said in her Facebook video. “The most important thing is we sell a lot of organic products at a bargain.” Patterson told the L.A. Sentinel that she made the decision to own the grocery store, “so that I could have the freedom to be able to do what I want to do and not be pigeon-holed to anything. Now I have the ability to set my own destiny.”

The Compton Grocery Outlet store is located at 2175 W. Rosecrans Avenue in Compton and is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day.

Harvard Introduces Gullah Language Class Taught by a Charleston-born Artist



(Source: Adam Manno, <https://m.charlestoncitypaper.com>)

Charleston native and performance artist Sunn m’Cheaux spent the fall semester at Harvard teaching an introductory version of a course on Gullah, a language often described as a combination of English and Central and West African languages. Gullah, referred to as a “pidgin” language, originally allowed enslaved African people from various tribes to communicate with each other and with their overseers. It is still spoken by African-American communities across coastal regions of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

The Gullah class, which came to fruition after a graduate student requested a Gullah course, is the first of its kind at the Ivy League school. It is part of the African Language Program within the Department of African and African American Studies.

Dr. John Mugane, head of the language program, argues that offering Gullah, along with the 44 other languages taught in the program, increases students’ chances of accurately portraying different communities.

M’Cheaux uses the few Gullah reference books and literature available as course materials, but has largely stuck to developing his own curriculum throughout the semester, which includes video chats between students and native speakers.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey (jbaguart@yahoo.com)

Maggie Lena Mitchell

Maggie Lena Mitchell was born on The Van Lew Estate in Richmond Virginia July 15th, 1864. Prior to this it was the Van Lew Plantation which Maggie's mother Elizabeth Draper worked on as a slave and cook. Maggie's birth was the result of her mother's relationship with an Irish-American journalist working for the New York Herald named Eccles Cuthbert. But it was a plantation butler named William Mitchell who married Elizabeth and produced Maggie's half-brother John Mitchell in 1870.

The family moved near the Medical College of Virginia, but in February of 1876, William Mitchell was found dead under suspicious circumstances which left the family in dire poverty. Fortune sent Maggie to the newly created schools for African Americans in Richmond in 1883. First Lancaster School, then Richmond Colored Normal School.

On September 14th 1886, she married Armstead Walker Jr. eventually producing three sons and a daughter (Russell, Armstead, Melvin, and Polly). Maggie started her career as a teacher, but educational policies wouldn't allow for married teachers, so she quit teaching and reaffirmed her efforts as a member of The United Order of Saint Luke, a mutual insurance and charitable organization that aided the infirmed, provided burial expenses, and supported the financial aims of her people locally. Eventually Walker became grand deputy matron and poured herself into the success of the Order.

On August 20, 1901 she delivered the message of a new enterprise for the order: a newspaper would be formed, an affordable department store catering to her people run by her people, and a chartered bank managed by Order members. In less than five years she would see all three come to fruition. In 1902 the St. Luke Herald was established, in 1903 the Saint Luke Penny

Savings Bank, and in 1905 a department store called the Saint Luke Emporium.

Early on The St. Luke Emporium struggled financially and eventually closed in 1911. But it was Maggie Walker's entrepreneurial temperament that exemplified her standard when she said – "Let us put our moneys together; let us use our moneys; let us put our money out at usury among ourselves, and reap the benefit ourselves ... Let us have a bank that will take nickels and turn them into dollars."

Walker became the first women ever in the history of America to become a bank president. For many in the community she offered the first opportunity to have bank or savings accounts. From those bank accounts equity was established and from equity came a more stable local economy and eventually an unheard of increase in home purchases amongst middle-class Asiatics.

Through these enterprises Maggie Walker established a sense of ownership and financial control for people who had been disenfranchised and used since before Emancipation. While the Great Depression devastated many economic structures in the country, Walker skillfully merged St. Luke Penny Savings with two other bank holdings and created The Consolidated Bank and Trust Company in 1929. This bank withstood the Great Depression, lasted through the turn of the century and to this day represents the oldest bank in American history that was entirely developed, owned, and managed continuously by Moors.

Walker was aggressively civic-minded, organizing such a successful protest against the Virginia Passenger and Power Company with their segregated seating policies that the company went out of business within a year. Though confined to a wheelchair from diabetes and ill health in her final years, she unsuccessfully dabbled in politics but maintained her civic loyalty



and dedication to her people, supporting causes such as the anti-lynching campaigns and Janie Porter Barrett's Home for Wayward Girls.

Through her twenty-five years of effort The Order of St. Luke's boasted a hundred thousand members in more than twenty states, and collected more than three million dollars to help the community. Maggie Lena Walker passed from diabetes complications on December 15, 1934 and

was eulogized at her home church – First African Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia. Her home is listed as an historical site on the National Parks Registry and on July 15, 2017, Maggie Lena Walker was commemorated with a statue of her likeness on Broad Street in Richmond, Virginia, home to the Confederate Capitol.

Source: enclonopediaivirginia.org/Maggie_Lena_Walker_1864-1934#start_entry nps.gov/museum/ehibits/Maggie_Waler/

ART SHOW: "Nights Over Egypt (KMT)" featuring the art of Bertoni Jones Bey at the Kress Gallery in River Park Square - January 2018

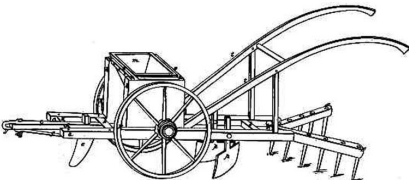


Thomas L. Jennings: First Black to Receive a Patent

Reprinted from www.blackpast.org

Thomas L. Jennings was the first Black man to receive a patent. The patent was awarded on March 3, 1821 (US Patent 3306x) for his discovery of a process called dry-scouring which was the forerunner of today's modern dry-cleaning. Jennings was born free in New York City, New York in 1791. In his early 20s he became a tailor but then opened a dry cleaning business in the city. While running his business Jennings developed dry-scouring. The patent to Jennings generated considerable controversy during this period. Slaves at this time could not patent their own inventions; their effort was the property of their master. This regu-

lation dated back to the US patent laws of 1793. The regulation was based on the legal presumption that "the master is the owner of the fruits of the labor of the slave both manual and intellectual." Patent courts also held that slaves were not citizens and therefore could not own rights to their inventions. In 1861 patent rights were finally extended to slaves. Thomas Jennings, however, was a free man and thus was able to gain exclusive rights to his invention and profit from it. Jennings was a passionate abolitionist who used the income from his invention to free the rest of his family from slavery and fund abolitionist causes. He served as assistant secre-



tary of the First Annual Convention of the People of Color which met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in June 1831. Thomas Jennings died in New York City in 1856. Sources: Mary Bellis, Thomas Jennings: Thomas Jennings was the first African American to receive a patent, <http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bljennings.htm>; Joan Potter, African American Firsts (New York: Kensington Publishing Group, 2002); Contributor: Manos, Nick, University of Washington, Seattle; Photo Credit: By Henry Blair [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

What's Going on America?

By Evelyn Anderton

First, I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2018!

This will be my first year on the east coast, but no matter where you are in these United States, the past 12 months have been unbelievable. It seems everything and anything is acceptable in today's society. I only wish I could explain why we the people stopped caring for one another.

In the early 1970's soulful song writer/singer Marvin Gaye had a hit song asking the question WHAT'S GOING ON? During that time America was fighting a war in Vietnam, discrimination was fast and furious, and our justice system was anything but just.

Now fast-forward 47 years later the song still has a profound message to what is really going on in America today and throughout the world.

We again are involved in a war we can't win because we keep making the same mistakes. We most definitely need to find a way to solve this problem and war is not an acceptable solution.



Why do we the people keep voting these senators and congressman in to office? It is obvious they are not voting our interests or concerns. Too many voters just don't bother to vote. Please vote, there is power in your vote. If you don't believe me ask the new democratic senator in Alabama. What's going on America?

Unfortunately, discrimination has been a silent voice for too many years. I never thought in a million years we would see a demonstration as we witnessed in the state of VA last summer.

Growing up in the south we experienced the hate groups marching in the parades with their hoods and at least they didn't want to be seen, but now they are so proud they just don't care. I know they don't care, but can you help me figure out when we the people stopped caring. What's going on America?

What is justice in the U.S.? Depending on who you ask, where they live, their ethnic background, gender, or their economic standard. Each one of these groups will give you a different answer. Unfortunately, justice isn't as blind as we thought. The average person is not looking for any favors, they only want an equal playing field. What's Going on America?

It is as if someone has stepped out of a time capsule and sees no changes. Many people want to blame the Democrats, some blame the Republicans, some blame the president, some congress, and some have the nerve to blame me and you. No matter who you want to blame, we the people desperately need to find a way to bring some understanding to the situation and stop pointing fingers.

Everything seems to improve with time, but mankind has yet to get the memo. We must try to find a way to bring peace, love, and happiness in this world.

It should not matter which political party you are affiliated with, or what your ethnicity is to do the right thing. What's going on America? It's not that hard to Love one another!

Heads Up (Spokane)

By Kiantha Duncan

2018 The Year we're giving Jesus and nem' a break.

One of the things I love about the turn of the new year is that it offers all of us the opportunity to reset the clock, start over, forget the old and start with the new. I mean who wouldn't want to forget about all of the missteps and bad decisions from the previous year? The turn of the year gives us the chance to silently sweep last year's mistakes into nice piles and scoop them up as we prepare for all the new year rituals we hope will lead us into a prosperous new year. Now don't get me wrong, I am not implying that the new year is not a time to celebrate last year's victories, however, we all know celebratory parties are far shorter lived so we don't need to spend too much time talking about those.

Let's see, December 31st, here is a sampling of the typical to do list from Black folks between the ages of 20-100, in no particular order. Some folks will do multiple items on the list, some will do one, but most of us can relate or will read this list and think about people we know who have personally indulged in items on the list.

- Prepare a special meal that consist of Greens (for wealth) and Black-Eyed Peas (for luck).
- Attend Watchnight Church Services (You want to be in the presence of Jesus to guide you into and through the new year).
- Read articles in magazines like "O Magazine" to hear from the Gurus as to what they are suggesting we do to have a successful year.
- Write lists, lots of lists. To-do lists. To-Don't list's...just lists and lots of them.



• Pray to Jesus, lots of prayer. Pray that he does everything you need. Pray that he helps you in every situation in your life. Pray that he fixes every problem. Pray that he removes every obstacle from your life. Pray that you have less hardship than you did the year before, but the theme is PRAY THAT "JESUS" does "IT" for you.

• Make Vision Boards. Find old magazines with images and words that illustrate the life that you want for the upcoming year. This is the "if you see/dream it" you can call it to yourself theory.

• Set lots of Goals, realistic goals, unrealistic goals. Weight-loss goals, employment goals, family goals, health goals, many, many goals.

Of course, there are many more ritualistic things that we do to prepare ourselves for the new year and understandably so. We all want to be successful. We all want to go into the new year with a sense of hope that things can be better than they were. We are all looking for a miracle. We are all looking for the easement of our hardships and for the silver lining. We all want to succeed and we all want to know that we have done our due diligence in stacking the deck for a successful new year.

This year I propose we try something different. I say we try giving Jesus and nem' a break (nem' being O magazines, lists, etc....). Why? Because the answers to everything we need to have a successful year is inside of us.

Of course, in our highest selves we know, what brings us financial success during the year has nothing to do with cooking delicious collard or turnip greens. Your financial success has everything to do with hard work, proper planning, making good financial decisions and taking good financial risks. In no way am I suggesting that we not hold fast to those religious beliefs that have gotten us through some of our toughest life moments, but what I am suggesting is that those spiritual principals and beliefs have been embedded in our hearts and spirits and this year it's time we trust what we know, take responsibility into our own hands. Everything we need to have a peaceful, grace filled year in which our victories outweigh our challenges is inside of us.

It's been implanted and now it's time to be applied. In 2018, trust your highest self-more, trust your instinct, trust all that the universe, your ancestors and God/Jesus has already taught and told you, and lastly, give Jesus nem' a break.



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NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com



By Kurtis Robinson
Spokane NAACP President
NAACP AOWSAC Criminal Justice Chair

The New Spokane NAACP

In the last 60 days our Executive Committee has doubled in size and probably is historically bigger than it’s ever been since its Inception. We are your New Spokane NAACP Branch #1137.

Before I introduce your new Executive Committee members, we are sad to bid farewell to **Jan Baker** as our Political Action Committee Chair, who at the behest of her lifetime partner, has decided to retire her chair. Jan has served this position and this organization faithfully for a great many years and although her leadership and experience will be sorely missed, she promises to stay intimately involved and to continue to mentor some of our newer EC members. We Thank you for your service Jan.

And speaking of our Political Action Committee, we are proud to have **Stacey Wells** step up and into that position. Stacy brings with her a vast experience, not only in working with Jan, but from her

professional work at the Next Generation Zone, working with a great many of our challenged youth. Welcome aboard Stacie. We’re glad to have you!

And speaking of Sharon... What? We weren’t talking about Sharon? Well we are now, and who isn’t talking about **Sharon Randle**, our newest Vice President? When we talk about someone who is dedicated and motivated to not only help, but to push this organization forward, with the ability and desire to serve our populations, especially with youth engagement and in a leadership position... that would be our Sharon. She not only took on the Vice President role, but also was gracious enough to be the Chair of our Youth Works Task Force which is targeting how to engage Our Youth and impact the racial disparities in discipline and attendance. We are so lucky to have you!

In our criminal justice area, we are enthusiastic and appreciative in presenting to you **Devon Wilson**. Yes that Devon! The significant other of our newest councilwoman Kate Burke. Devon brings a tremendous level of enthusiastic insight and experience. Not only was he a Psychology major, but also a Criminal Justice minor in college. We anticipate, and have experienced already, a great number of insights, perspectives and dedication that Devon has brought to the table. He has already brought so much of his many talents to issues like the Youth Works Task Force, every student counts, SCAR, and a recent issue with Coyote Ridge Corrections. We anticipate many more great things from this young man.

And speaking of insight and dedication, nobody outshines are newest Member-At-Large and Legal Redress chair **Tony Wilson**. Tony is a formally incarcerated person that has dedicated his life and career and

professionalism to working with our impacted populations. He is a Chemical Dependency Counselor and working on his Master’s Degree. Not only has Tony taken on these dual challenges, but I’m sure as you have seen, he has been featured in local papers and in the news several times as he has pressed on to being a vital voice for the impacted, for recovery, for reentry, and is one of the greatest examples I have ever seen of what our populations are capable of. We are privileged to have him on our team and another one who we expect to see great things from.

And speaking of great things, let’s talk about **Elin Zander**. Not only did this sister just retire from being a career dietitian, but that was on top of her being a retired firefighter with the forest service, and you all know how I feel about that!! (bonus points) But we also have the extreme privilege of having her serve now as our Health Committee Chair. From that perspective with a dedication and desire to start helping move our communities to a further place of education and health ability awareness. Also she has already brought much-needed perspective and experience to several situations including some special meetings we’ve had, and ones with Gonzaga Black Student Union. Thank you for coming aboard Aileen we so need you, and appreciate you.

And talk about moving forward, this young lady, **Elizabeth Porter**, doesn’t seem to know any other way but to keep it moving forward! As our new Membership Chair, Elizabeth has brought not only her vast experience, but also her previous knowledge from being a prior intern with the Spokane NAACP. She has already jumped right in and helped us in navigating our membership information base and has participated insightfully and enthusiastically in our

special meetings, focus groups, and Gonzaga BSU engagements. Great things are what she’s all about and what she’s already brought to the table. We know she will continue to help us all move our effectiveness to serve are populations forward. Thank you Elizabeth! We are so grateful to have you rejoice in us.

And then there is **Dora (Duaa) Williams**. You might ask where is Dora? Dora is right here with us as our new Economic Chair. I have had the extreme privilege of knowing her for quite a while. She has engaged wholeheartedly and enthusiastically in many of the circles I have been privileged to be involved with, such as I Did The Time, The Black Prisoners Caucus and Friends and Family of the Incarcerated. Dora has also been intimately involved with our Political Action Committee along with Stacy and Jan. She has been and continues to be a very powerful voice for the female platform, especially from the Muslim perspective. This sister is steadfast, tenacious and dedicated to working with our populations and we are beyond honored to have her step up at this level! And again, another one that we look forward to seeing great things from in advocating for our impacted.

Now, all this is not to outshine our steadfast and immovable Core Executive Committee members: **Dirk Vastrick**, Second Vice President; **Wesley Gardner**, Third Vice President; **James Mohr**, Education Committee Chair; **Dorothy Webster**, Treasurer; **Fay Baptiste**, member-at-large, and **Deborah Cano**, the backbone of the organization, our secretary.

I, myself, **Kurtis Robinson**, as your local president am proud to introduce you to your new Spokane NAACP #1137.

Moving it forwards together.

Friends and Families of Incarcerated Individuals

We are Fighting for the Rehabilitation Not Punishment of our Loved Ones

By Rosemary Maxwell Jones

Friends and Family of Incarcerated Individuals was established to be an outside advocate for our loved ones who are on the inside, and often have no voice out in society.

Our mission, as an organization, is to actively participate alongside our family members or loved one, to ensure that prison is not just a “warehouse” to store our loved ones, without offering them any resources or programs to assist them in the process of their eventual reentry back to society.

We, as family and friends are invested in the successful outcome of our parents, spouses and children returning to us with the tools and resources necessary to prevent them from ever going back to prison. If we can work together from the outside, organizing around responsible corrections, we can no doubt change the current prison culture, which in recent times has become a “warehouse” mentality, then, we can take an active role in ensuring our loved ones come home to us with the skill sets, release plans, and a new outlook on how to not recidivate once they are free.

In most cases, the families have no voices when it comes to their interactions with DOC, and their input is not received or welcomed. The families are often derided and spoken down to by prison administrators, as if they are criminals that have been convicted of a crime. This is unacceptable, and if we as tax payers, who pay these public servants salaries, are not respected or heard when we offer solutions to some of the problems which so often affect us, then the culture needs to change so that it is one of inclusion and cooperation.

Our goal is to support, not only our loved ones, but also to support the objective and initiative of the Governor, who has made it a priority going forward to reduce the rate of recidivism in the State of Washington.



It is high time we become a vocal and active partner in this aspect of criminal justice reform, as we, the families, have the most to lose in not having intervened!

We welcome anyone who has a vested interest in seeing the prison system return to what it was originally designed to do, and that is to rehabilitate and give men and women the opportunity to transform their lives so that they become productive members of society.

Together we can achieve our objectives; in our unity is our strength! Our voices matter and we are on the right side of history! If you or anyone you know would like to be involved, and take part in making a change through participation, we would love to hear from you. Your support is invaluable.

Contact us for more information and/or updates at: friendsandfamily2017together@yahoo.com or P.O. Box 1247, Richland, WA 99352 .

Statement from Friends and Families:
“Friends and Family of Incarcerated Individuals came together simply to fight for friends and families of incarcerated individuals to ensure that others have a voice. We all deserve to be viewed as more than a doc number, more than a prisoner’s wife, more than a sad story. But rather, as a human being that has rights. We all have a story and some are much tougher than others. Many are so quick to judge, but act as if compassion and respect is expensive. It’s not, it’s free. So, we strive for change so that we can all hold are heads up high. We recently addressed issues with one of Washington’s correctional facilities. We met at Dept. of Corrections with their Program Administrator and Superintendent and asked for them to listen to our concerns and work with us on some changes. The meeting went well and some of the concerns are being addressed. This was the first of many meetings we plan to have for those in our community that have been ignored or disrespected or their rights violated. We encourage everyone to continue to fight with their minds, their words until they are heard and taken seriously. We welcome anyone like-minded to join us. United we can achieve anything.”

-Rosemary Maxwell Jones
Director, Friends and Families

THE BLACK PRISONERS CAUCUS

Reflections from Behind the Razor Wire

**Coyote
Ridge**

Reach Out and Touch Somebody's...

*By: Harry "Brocq" Whitman and
Joseph "Broadway" Kennedy*

Today our sister Sandra Williams has provided a voice to the incarcerated brothers to reach beyond the razor wire of the modern day high tech plantation to touch the hands, the hearts, and the minds of the community from which we came and will return. First, to express our sincere apologies and regret for having allowed ourselves to become a part of our problem instead of the solution, abdicating our responsibilities as men to our children and the women we were created to guide.

Through much reflection we have recognized that what led us to this condition was a failure to realize our potential. Failing to challenge each other with the questions: What dreams do you have that are just waiting to be fulfilled? What gifts and talents are inside you that are dying to be drawn out and developed? We have now learned that the gap between each of our visions are aligned and the need for change and then maximize our potential.

And so our dialogue with you begins with this message, the theory of society on which the majority's idea rests is false. We do not live in the Matrix, nor do we live in the spectacle. The world that we live in is in fact much more prosaic. It consists of billions of human beings, each pursuing some more or less plausible conception of good, trying to cooperate with one another and doing so with varying degrees of success. There is no single over-arching system that integrates it all. There is only a hodgepodge of social institutions, most tentatively thrown together, which distribute the benefits and burdens of social

cooperation in ways that sometimes we recognize to be just, but that are usually manifestly inequitable.

From the standpoint of social justice, the big gains that have been achieved in our society over the past half century have all come from measured reform within the system. The Civil Rights Movement and the Feminist Movement have both achieved tangle gains in the welfare of disadvantaged groups, while the social safety net provided by the welfare state has not vastly improved the conditions of all citizens. But even these gains have not been achieved by unplugging people from the web of illusions that governs their lives. They have been achieved through the laborious process of democratic political action, through people making arguments, conducting studies, assembling coalitions and legislating change.

Rooted in the Black experience and condition, we stand on the shoulders of our predecessors, The BPC (Black Prisoners Caucus), the cornerstone of activism. From the tombs of Washington State's largest prison (Coyote Ridge Correctional Center), we reach out politically, economically, culturally and spiritually, offering words of reflection, instruction and introspection.

Located here in eastern Washington (Connell, WA), the BPC is an organization created by incarcerated individuals that stands as a testimony to the potential of the African American community to promote and create a healthier future for ourselves while improving the relationships with the communities we are absent from, but still belong too. Our primary goals are to incorporate productive principles in everyday living, assist members, advocates and sponsors in establishing purpose, focus and self-demonstration as we maintain faith in a responsible collective work.



In view of this country's turmoil, recognizing its moral collapse, economic inadequacies and blatant racism, we must therefore cling to the ideas of our collective power, joining forces to ensure that we elevate our consciousness and mobilize in the face of adversity. We call all of our brothers and sisters and like-minded citizens to fight. Gone are the days of pacifism, The Time Is Now!

As we move forward striving to create and support a progressive movement towards reformation of our criminal justice system, with our eyes on restorative justice, reducing the state's prison population, developing a meaningful statewide re-entry program, reducing recidivism and a host of other causes, with the aim of returning our sisters and brothers home from the "War on Drugs and Crime", we can no longer ignore the fact that incarceration and legal slavery in America are interconnected to so many points of economic, political and social life, and to so many aspects of the U.S. government, corporate America and their core institutions. Ensuring that the public is aware of these interconnections is simply not in the state's interest, but maintaining the public's ignorance of them is.

We cannot ignore the fact that our country's movement towards criminal justice reform, in theory, has taken a huge step backwards in practice given the current administration's stance on bail reform, mass incarceration and the monitoring of police departments by the federal government. Nor can we remain blind any longer about today's "prison slavery" as being a direct outgrowth of the 13th amendment and its enslavement exception clause as being a direct outgrowth of the pre-chattel slavery period. We can analyze the differ-

ent periods of transition from convict leasing, black codes, Jim Crow, Nixon's War on Drugs, to Bill Clinton's 1994 crime bill to see architectural designs that were developed to maximize profits through the "in-justice" system's criminalization of generations. (More of this in the next issue)

On July 15th, 2017 the BPC held our second annual Summit at CRCC (Coyote Ridge Correctional Center). In attendance were organizations representative of proactive social change, these included: NAACP Spokane Chapter, NAACP Regional, I Did The Time, The Black Lens, Seattle Urban League, Washington Community Action Network, BPC-East and local religious leaders. It immediately became apparent amongst everyone in attendance that we represent the requisite tools for the mobilization and organization of the masses. For we can articulate their desires and the collective aspirations of the people, our people. We must rebuild our communities via our God consciousness by uniting with like-minded individuals to elevate and organize during this unique time when people are paying attention.

Thus, it is clear, that if we as Black folk are to move forward in our struggle for liberation, we must confront the legacy of un-reconciled grief, for it has been the breeding ground for our profound nihilistic despair. We must collectively return to a radical political vision of social change rooted in a love ethic of ourselves and seek once again to convert masses of people, Black and non-Black, to finally destroy the institution of slavery for once and for all, in all of its manifestations.

Any comments or questions contact us at: www.bpceast@gmail.com



SPOKANE NAACP CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE IS ASKING FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

CALLING ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

The Spokane NAACP Criminal Justice Committee released its first Community Survey. The survey provides respondents with the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns on issues occurring within the Spokane area.

"We're looking to see where the energy is both within our membership and throughout Eastern Washington. We expect 2018 to be a big year and we want anyone who is interested to be a part of it."

-Devon Wilson, Committee Chair

The NAACP is hoping that you will take the time to fill out the survey. It will be available online through the month of January at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2ZCYNR5>.

For more information contact the NAACP at spokanenaacp@gmail.com or (509) 209-2425.

FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Talks to the Black Lens About Her Background, the FCC and the Vote to End Net Neutrality

Tell me about your background?

I started out my professional career, to be honest with you, being put in charge of a weekly newspaper in Charleston, SC. My newspaper was African American focused, owned and oriented. I spent 14 years publishing the paper, and I believe it helped shape and reinforce the importance of informing communities, of there being a diverse voice that captures, transmits and takes the pulse of those communities that majority publications or media outlets have a tendency to ignore. We don't make the top of the headlines often. You know the old adage, "if it bleeds it leads", and if there are some great things or important or significant things going on in the African American Community, we often don't make the front pages or we don't make the headlines, so I thought it was important to be a voice, to bridge the information gap in the communities and I did that for 14 years.

I got a different type of lifeline toward the end of my career at the newspaper to be a part of a Public Service Commission and stayed there for the next 11 years. There I got to see and interact with individuals. I heard from people who were at different stages of economic promise and wealth. I got calls from individuals who needed a little bit more time to pay that bill, for various reasons, whether it was because of inferior infrastructure and their bills were \$800 a month, but they still had to pay. I heard from them, and I believe that gave me some of the sensitivity that you may hear and sense now.

So, for the past 8 years, I got an appointment from the last administration to be a part of the FCC, a federal agency, and I brought those sensitivities and those experiences that I got from that weekly newspaper and from that state public service commission. The voices of those that are seldom heard. I still listen and seek feedback from them. Individuals who might not be a part of the decision making equation, I do everything in my power to make sure that they are. That indeed the decisions take their interests and needs into account.

I've only had three jobs over this 55 year lifetime, but each of them building blocks to the reinforcement of my public service leanings and tendencies.

Can you talk about the FCC, because it's my experience, and myself included, most folks don't know much about it, and why the Black community, in particular, should be interested in the FCC as an entity and what it does?

I always jokingly say the FCC is one of the most important agencies you've never heard of, and rarely hear of unless there's a wardrobe malfunction during the Super Bowl or your favorite DJ says something that someone complained about and there might be some kind of fine or complaint levied. But this agency is singularly responsible for 1/6 of our nation's economy. Because when you think of communications and technology and that intersection there, you can't think of anything that we do in life that's not dependent on that infrastructure, that ecosystem.

Everything we do, everywhere we go has that type of communications, public safety, technology underpinning, and the FCC has some role in every part of it. When you talk about when a signal is transmitted there is an FCC footprint or fingerprint somewhere along that plane. So its an agency, when it comes to how we function, it is integral and interwoven into our economy and our everyday lives.

When it comes to African American in particular, the FCC has the option and the opportunity to be an enabler of opportunities or a stifler of opportunities. It has four universal service programs:

- One, the largest, is what we now call the Connect America Fund, (We used to call it the High Cost Fund). Which has a budget of \$4.6 B per year that goes to mostly small telecommunications providers that also provide internet service for many in our communities.

- Second, the Universal Service Fund, which directly effects all communities, is what we call E-Rate or the school and libraries program. That's 3.6 B per year program that enables broadband opportunities, internet connections (you know, opportunities) for our nation's schools and libraries in communities all over this country.

- The third largest program is the only program that we have that directly impacts, what I would call, the affordability side of the equation. That is the Lifeline program. It is a program that was started about 30 years ago under Reagan administration that provided direct subsidies for individuals who could not afford a voice service.

- the fourth (and this is a very small program) is the Health Care Connect Fund. This program right now is capped at \$400 M per year and that program seeks to bridge with a 60% contribution or a 60% match you could say, for rural healthcare centers. We will pay up to 60% of the broadband, communications infrastructure or services for those healthcare communities.

So those are the four programs that if they're in line in keeping or answering the needs of individuals in the communities, they could make the difference between someone having a dial tone, access to healthcare, broadband-- at home, at school. A seamless means of having connectivity or not. All of it depends on our priorities and how we address and adjust those programs in place.

So let's talk about Net Neutrality. First of all, can you give me sort of a 101 explanation for those of us who don't understand what the fuss is about and then why are you so passionate about it?

I'll give you the 100-level course explanation. Net Neutrality is a concept that people like you and me, businesses large or small, that we should be able to reach the online applications and services of our choice without interference from our internet service provider. It means that all data, all legal traffic that travels over the internet, should be treated equally. That in its essence is what the principle of net neutrality is all about. All data, all access should be treated equally.

The question for me is a simple one, will you control your online experience or will your service provider? Will your broadband service provider be able to charge you more to access your favorite website? Will they be able to stifle innovation if you are a small business or a start-up that is dependent on an online platform? Will you have to pay large tolls or pay more than someone or some entity that might have a business interest? Will that provider be able to play favorites?

That to me, that's what the fuss is all about. That's the 100-level explanation of what it is. It is that I shouldn't have to pay a toll or be treated differently than anybody else when it comes to my online experience and access.

I was watching the live stream of the meeting where the vote went to eliminate net neutrality, and you've been very passionately outspoken against that. I think your first statement was I dissent. So, in terms of people understanding your passion against what the FCC just did, can you explain that?

What the FCC voted to do was to repeal the 2015 net neutrality rules and what they did was take away consumer



choice and certainty. The majority just gave your broadband service provider permission to block or slow down or to favor other services or traffic or companies or entities over yours. They eliminated or weakened your consumer protections that we had in place. They have created what I can call a regulatory-free zone. Where you don't have an agency of clear authority there to protect you if something goes wrong.

Why is that so important, when it comes to your broadband internet access services or options at home? Most of us only have one high-speed internet access provider where we live, and so you do not have a competitive market. Now the one agency that was best positioned to protect you, if you were harmed, if you got blocked or slowed-down, or if someone exacted a toll, or attempted to prioritize or de-prioritize depending on what their business interests are, the FCC has said "we think you'll be ok", that we will punt to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

But what the majority didn't tell you was the FTC has no clear legal authority here. They have no experience or background when it comes to net neutrality, and the FTC can only help you after the harm is done. After you blocked me. After you slowed down my traffic. After you disadvantaged me through exacting or erecting a toll or barrier to entry. Then I have to prove two things--unfair or deceptive business practices. But here's the catch, the FCC also said that the Internet Service Provider (ISP) has to disclose in your contract what they will and will not do. So, I can say, I am your ISP, I'm gonna block you, I'm gonna throttle your traffic, I'm gonna engage in prioritization, and if I have that in your contract and you sign it, then it's not deceptive.

In the little fine print that no one reads?

Right! In paragraph 25, at 6 font. That I haven't been able to read since I was two years old. So as long as I disclose, the company can do it. There's no real ability for consumers to be protected. That creation of fast lanes and erecting tolls, only benefits those who have money.

And for those readers that you serve, this has a potential to restrict activism, because if you eliminate an open and free use of the internet, how do we best tell our stories? I often talk about Ferguson, MO. No one was paying attention to Ferguson, MO until somebody had their mobile device and uploaded something online, a hashtag started trending, then and only then did the major media outlets pay attention.

But in our community, that groundswell in terms of letting people know what was going on, we found out about it because of an open online platform. If that is somehow threatened, then movements and enterprises, concepts, stories, all of those things could be (as long as its disclosed) disadvantaged. Will it happen? I don't know. But before the vote on Thursday, you had an agency that said "No" that ISP cannot do that, after that vote on Thursday, it's a "Mother May I" type of experience. That in and of itself is why you hear the passion and the concern.

Part two of my interview with Commissioner Clyburn will be published in the February issue of The Black Lens.



IN THE SPIRIT

Minister's Wives and Widows Fellowship Hosts Revival and Concert at New Hope

The Spokane Minister's Wives and Widows Fellowship hosted a three day revival from November 29 - December 1 at New Hope Baptist Church in the Spokane Valley. The theme of the this year's revival was "Unity with God," and the services lived up to the theme by bringing together pastors, choirs and congregations from across Spokane to worship and fellowship together.

Speakers for the revival included Elder Anthony Foster of Restoration Church, who spoke on Wednesday, Nov. 29; Rev. Jeffrey Whitman of Refreshing Springs Church of God in Christ, who spoke on Thursday, Nov. 30, and Rev. Robert Robertson of Calvary Baptist Church, who spoke on Friday, Dec. 1.

Lady Willie Lee Davis, President of the Fellowship, opened each evening's service with a greeting and offered closing remarks at the

Following the revival, the Minister's Wives and Widows Fellowship hosted a musical on Saturday, December 2, to close out the year. The musical was titled "Praise God in Unity" and it included both choirs, praise teams and soloists who all joined together to lift their voices in praise.



Southeast Daycare Raises Funds By Tasting Coffee

The League of Women for Community Action (LWCA) hosted a coffee tasting event on December 9 as a fundraiser to benefit the Southeast Daycare Center.

The Center, which is located at 2227 E Hartson Avenue, is a valuable resource for the East Central neighborhood, serving children from 1 month to 12 years of age.

The fundraiser, held at Indaba Coffee Roasters (1425 W Broadway Ave),

a locally owned coffee shop, offered participants the opportunity to learn from Indaba's founder, Bobby Enslow, about several of Indaba's imported coffee brands and sample them as well:

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Nicaragua, El Retiro

From the El Retiro Farm in Nicaragua. Our biggest seller with yummy notes of hazelnut, caramel, and earthiness.

Participants who donated to support the Southeast Daycare Center were able

to take home a complimentary bag of SEDC Signature Coffee as a thank you.

The League of Women for Community Action is raising money to support the programs and services of the Southeast Daycare Center. Donations are still being accepted.

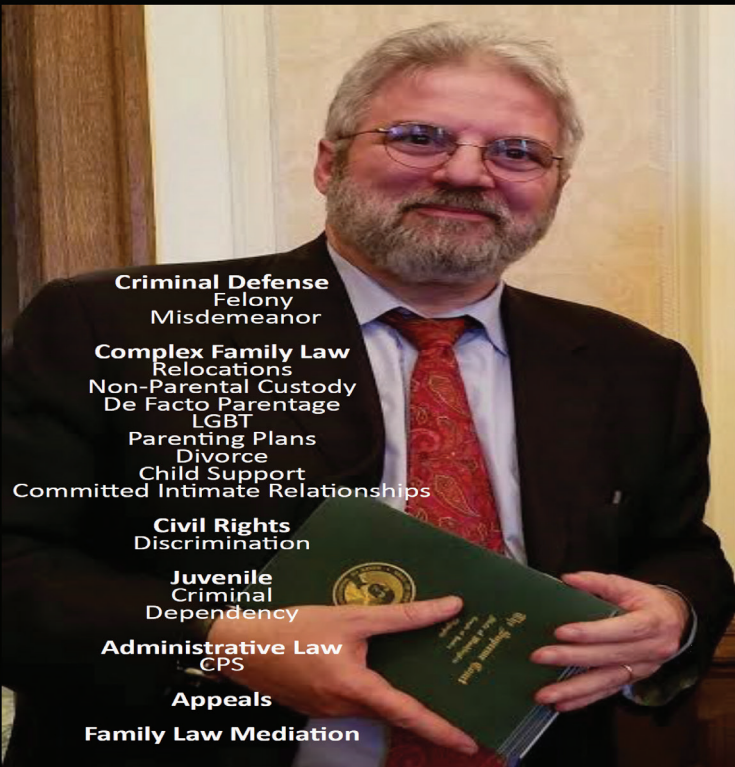
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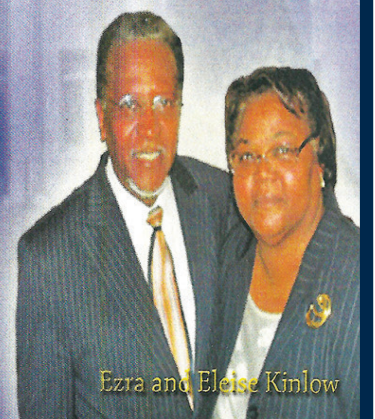
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Ezra and Eleise Kinlow

Damion Anthony: Bronx Reggae Artist

Editor’s Note: During my travels to New York, I came across this talented young man working hard to make it in the music industry. I asked him to share his story with Black Lens readers. Here is an excerpt of that interview.

Damion Anthony is an Indie Pop Reggae Artist, born in Kingston Jamaica, who came to the U.S. in 1989 when he was five years old. He was raised in The Bronx, NY. Damion studied at the Amas Musical theater Academy & the Lee Strasbourg Theater and Film Institute.

Damion has done a variety of shows with artists such as Will Traxx, Peter Gunz, The Legendary “Slick Rick”, Reggae Artist “Kranium” & From the HBO Series Power, “Rotimi”, Ayo Jay, and Corey Gunz. He was a Special Guest artist @ Club Republic hosted by Love & Hip Hop NY’s Skye Landish, and performed for Charlene McCray, wife of New York Mayor Bill De Blasio. Having performed in over 58 shows last year, Damion Anthony is well on his way.

Were you always interested in drama, art, performing?

Yes, since I was little. I’ve always done it. My passion for singing and dancing at the theater really came when I was in junior high school. We took a trip to the Apollo Theater (in Harlem). I was in the sixth grade. They asked all of the kids, because

the Apollo was very popular at the time, to go onstage and do a little scene or skit or whatever. I went onstage and for some reason, I started singing. I was off-key, off-pitch, but everybody just loved it because we were just all supportive of each other.

I realized how much I loved singing, so I started taking classes and vocal exercises, and joined the chorus and it helped.

Then one of my teachers, his name is Tyrone Stanley, (he’s a great gospel singer and choir director, and he does musicals and shows), he brought me into this theater program called the Amas Musical Theatre.

The Amas is a theater academy which was created by Rosetta LeNoire. If people are not familiar with her, she’s a famous theater actress who passed away in 2003. She’s known for her role on the TV series, Family Matters. She’s Grandma Winslow.

She created a program and it had kids from all over, from different backgrounds: Black, white, Hispanic. She called us the children in her garden, like a flower, or different flowers. They trained us. They taught us how to sing and dance. We took courses that lead up to an Off-Broadway production, where we would do musicals and shows. I’ve gotten to work with other Broadway stars in the benefit shows. I got to work with Leslie Uggams, and Vivian Reed. I’ve gotten to meet a lot of great Broadway actresses doing benefit shows.



Were you a shy kid?

Yes, because I was never gifted. I never really considered myself to be very gifted. My talent was learning things very fast and picking up on it. I feel like when you have a gift, it’s a natural gift from above, from whatever God you believe in. It just comes without rehearsal, without practice, you just do it. And then there are those that are talented, who learn and master the craft, and they just become the best at it, if they practice. That’s how I learned the difference between those two.

So you think you’re talented, and not gifted?

Yes, I don’t think I’m gifted, because I’m around so many gifted people. These people are like my peers that are doing shows. They just do things so natural. I never envied them, but I always admired my friends

and I was just like, “wow, they sound so good. They’re so much better than me.” But that energy motivated me to practice.

What are your aspirations?

Right now? I’m fulfilling them, which I’m grateful about. I always dreamed about being a recording artist and doing shows in front of thousands of people, or hundreds of people and just performing my own original music. As of two years ago, I started artist development and now I have a single released online. I’m doing pop reggae music. I have a team of dancers and I’ve come across a lot of celebrities, which I never thought I’d do.

Damion can be reached on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/DamionAnthony>. Damion’s Dance Reggae Single, “Move, Dont Stop” is available via Spotify, iHeartRadio, iTunes, Google Play, Tidal etc.



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Note: The Black Lens is organizing a Black-Owned Business Showcase for February. Date and location to be determined. Stay tuned for more information.

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The Fuzz: SPD Completes Its Work On Collaborative Reform

The Spokane Police Department (SPD) is proud to present the agency’s work on Collaborative Reform over the past few years.

SPD satisfactorily completed all of the Collaborative Reform recommendations from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ COPS) in 2017, having successfully negotiated several mandatory subjects of bargaining with the unions.

Not only did SPD implement every recommendation, the department went above and beyond DOJ’s suggestions in many instances; in the areas of community outreach, training, and policy review.

The initial project involved an extensive assessment of various units, policies and training curriculum throughout the organization. Community members were also widely involved in various facets of the assessment, providing honest feedback and constructive input to guide the department along the way.

The focus of the COPS Office and CNA review aligned around the following aspects of SPD’s use of force: policy



and procedures, training and tactics, investigation and documentation, civilian oversight and community outreach.

Additionally the COPS Office endorsed the City of Spokane’s Use of Force Commission recommendation to examine the culture of SPD. The Spokane Police Department has made substantial, lasting changes in all of these focus areas.

Since the DOJ COPS Collaborative reform began, all patrol officers have been issued body worn cameras, all commissioned personnel have been

formally trained in de-escalation techniques and implicit bias training, and SPD policies are now routinely reviewed and updated. SPD’s efforts to listen to and engage with the community have been consistent and the department is constantly seeking ways to improve that relationship.

In the last four years, SPD has seen a 62% decrease in complaints against officers and a 29% decrease in uses of force (despite the addition of several categories to mandatory use of force reporting requirements in 2016). There is

no doubt that the collaborative process assisted in these reductions.

Strong relationships of mutual trust between police agencies and the community they serve are crucial to maintaining public safety and effective policing. The Collaborative Reform process helped SPD initiate and enhance relationships with many community organizations and groups. Strengthening and expanding these relationships will help SPD deliver more efficient and effective service to the community.

In October 2017, SPD received notice that a final DOJ COPS Office Collaborative Reform report would not be issued for the agency. This decision was not unique to Spokane but was a policy decision made at the national level involving other agencies as well.

In order to provide the best possible service to its citizens, SPD believed it was important to inform the community about the improvements made and has completed a report on the Collaborative Reform Process.

To review the report in its entirety visit www.myspokane.org/police and click on the Accountability icon.

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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears



R-E-S-P-E-C-T

One of my first graduate school courses in Theology was Christology. Christology is the theological study of the ministry, acts and teaching of the historical Jesus, and the nature of The Christ. On the first day, the professor asked us to share our understanding, and experience of Jesus. This was not meant to be a confession of Faith, but Theological Reflection: The practice of individual or group reflection on personal experiences in relationship to the tenets of a Faith tradition. I have no idea from where inside me it arose. I don't think I'd ever consciously had he thought before that moment, but I said, Jesus loved and respected women. The professor, a theologian and Catholic priest, seemed intrigued by the answer. He asked me to elaborate. The Gospel story of the Woman at the Well came to mind.

For those not familiar with the Christian Tradition, the story is found in the New Testament of the Bible, in the Book of John, Chapter 4, verses 4-29. Jesus was out and about in the countryside teaching and preaching. His disciples went off to a nearby village to buy provisions leaving Jesus to wander around. He comes to sit by a well. Soon a woman approaches the well to draw water. This is not just any woman, she's a Samaritan woman. Jews and Samaritans were two cultures that shared much of the same blood line, but despised each other. It was an ancient rift.

Jesus asked the woman to draw him a cup of water. The woman is shocked! This was a gross social faux pa on Jesus' part on so many levels. In those times, a Jewish man would not even speak to a Jewish woman without her husband present, and to speak to a Samaritan, and a woman at that, was beyond the pale. Adding insult to injury, Jesus proceeded to have what is described as his longest, one-on-one conversation in all of scripture with this female tribal enemy! And not just any conversation, but a theological discourse. He didn't do all the talking—she argued back! In the end, Jesus won her heart and her mind. She became the first Evangelist, returning to her village to tell everyone about her encounter with Jesus. Of course, upon their return, seeing Jesus talking with this woman, the male disciples were dumbfounded.

Over the course of Christian history, powerful men have shaped the Gospel stories to diminish the role of women in the ministry of Jesus and the life of the church. It is men who decided which original writings and interpretations of those writings about the ministry and nature of Jesus, would make up the Christian Canon—the approved books of the New Testament, and which ones were heretical and

had to be destroyed. Power and politics played a large part in their decisions. As it happens, some of those writings deemed heretical, significantly elevated Mary Magdalene, and illuminated the role of other women in Jesus' ministry. The patriarchy continued throughout the centuries to distort the role of women in scripture, casting them as either virgins or whores; saints, or witches. Misogyny and sexism in the Christian church is ancient and systemic.

However, if we study and interpret the canonical gospels through something other than a patriarchal lens, we will find that women simply could not be written out of the story! Women were valued, and even revered in Jesus' ministry. Women were the most faithful and dedicated followers of Jesus. They never abandoned him as did his closest male disciples. Over and over again in the Christian scriptures, we find evidence of Jesus' compassion, admiration, trust and honor of women. In a gospel account well known to most Christians (Mark 14: 3-6), Jesus defends and highly honors a woman in the presence of his male disciples whom, he publicly admonishes for their disrespect of her, and their inability to comprehend the profound meaning of her actions.

In 2018, women are accorded more respect in Christian Churches, but there is a long way to go. The Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant churches still will not ordain women. Women in leadership positions in religious institutions, such as universities and seminaries, still struggle to be accorded the respect and recognition that male in leadership receive in those institutions. Women are the backbone of many congregations, but they are too often only tacitly recognized for their contributions.

In December of this past year, Time Magazine recognized as Persons of the Year, the women who dared to speak out and publically name prominent men in entertainment, politics, journalism, and the corporate world who had serially, sexually harassed, sexually assaulted, publically humiliated, and threatened them with retaliation, and ruin of their careers if they did not comply.

This is not a secular issue alone. Women have been discredited, diminished, harassed and abused for centuries in Christian churches and institutions. There are women of every Christian denomination that have been, and continue to be victims of sexual predation by men in their congregations, and men in church leadership—most heinously pastors and priests. As in the secular world, serial sexual misconduct by a pastor is sometimes an open secret. As in the secular world, when confronted with allegations of sexual predation, the perpetrator simply denies it, and the women (and men) who sought to expose the behavior are

not believed, and often shunned. The behavior goes on unabated.

No matter where it occurs, sexual predation is about power and control. A well-known quote keeps reverberating in my mind: ...Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority. This was first written by an English historian and politician in a letter to an Archbishop in 1887.

Most people in powerful positions in Christian Churches are men. Leadership in the church is, by Jesus' example, to be servant leadership. The Clergy, male or female, are there to serve the people—to guide them and not to manipulate them, not to intimidate them, not to abuse them in any manner.

Power is seductive and addictive. When leaders of any church begin to consciously or unconsciously accept the notion of their superiority, they are out of integrity with their Call. That is why it is vital that church leaders, particularly men, and most particularly clergy, examine their consciences honestly, prayerfully, and often to avoid misuse and abuse of power.

It is the irony of ironies that the Christian movement, founded upon the example and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, who throughout his ministry upheld the dignity and intelligence of women -- honored their compassion, praised their faith, and entrusted them to carry his message -- should have become an institution built upon sexism and misogyny.

I pray that a true cultural transformation is taking place in our society as women publicly tell their painful stories of sexual predation, and powerful men are held to account for their actions and behaviors. I pray for these men in hopes that they experience a personal transformation out of their personal tribulation.

I especially pray that those of us who are Christians will humbly examine our own hearts and actions, and that we will name and call to justice those among us who misuse and abuse their power to harass, humiliated and prey upon those we are called to serve. And I pray that we will be faithful followers of Jesus, who exemplified a new way to be in the world in relationship with God, and in relationship with each other—most notably in relationship with women.

Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity who currently lives in Northern California.



SPOKANE HOMELESS CONNECT

7th Annual Homeless Connect, Jan. 25th

The 7th Annual Homeless Connect will take place Thursday, January 25th, 2018 from 10AM to 2PM at the Salvation Army Community Center, located at 223 E. Nora Avenue in Spokane. This annual FREE event offers a wide variety of services under one roof for anyone experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

"It's a one stop shop for people struggling with homelessness," says Patty Norton, Homeless Connect vendor coordinator and Women's Hearth employee. "It's an opportunity for them to get all or most of their needs met in one day, instead of taking weeks or even months."

Homeless Connect brings together volunteers and case workers from a wide variety of local non-profits and service providers who serve the common goal of ending homelessness. Modeled after the San Francisco Homeless Connect, which started in 2004, services available on-site during the event include emergency shelter referrals, housing assistance, medical and dental screenings, ID restoration, cold weather items, and DSHS benefits assistance.

"We'll even have a Veterinarian available for animals, as well as food bank items that don't require a kitchen to prep," says Sabrina Bukowski, Homeless Connect Volunteer Coordinator and CHAS outreach worker. "There will be nurses available for foot care, along with cold weather items, and much more."

This year's "Warrant Fest" will feature an opportunity for the homeless to work with an Assistant Public Defender, on location, to discuss getting their outstanding warrant(s), both felony and non-felony, recalled. Outstanding and unresolved warrants are often a barrier which prevents the marginalized and homeless of our community from access services ranging from housing to employment. "Our goal is to help them move forward, rather than continuing to hide in the shadows", said Superior Court Judge Maryann Moreno. "The eventual outcome of each case will depend on many factors, but we are here to help and we want everyone with an outstanding warrant to participate. No one is excluded."

This year's event offers many opportunities for community involvement in the form of business sponsorships and in-kind community donations. The Spokane Homeless Coalition wants to support and network with local businesses in an effort to bridge the gap between the non-profit and business worlds. Our goal is to work together to make Spokane a healthy and vibrant community.

Last year's 2017 Homeless Connect featured 50 service providers who served more than 300 attendees. The Spokane Homeless Connect is a subcommittee of the Spokane Homeless Coalition, a community Coalition of more than 700 individuals and 200 agencies, ministries and churches serving the homeless and marginalized throughout Spokane County. The planning committee is seeking sponsorship partners to cover the cost of putting on this event, and represents a contribution of \$25 or more, which will help cover event-related costs such as food, (a free lunch) and STA bus pass for attendees, host site expenses, utilities, etc.

For more information contact Renée Norris, Catholic Charities Spokane at (509) 340-9329 ext. 105 or rnorris@ccspokane.org.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Study: Blacks Work At Jobs At High Risk of Automation

Jobless Rate Could Explode If Automation Not Properly Implemented



By Frederick H. Lowe

(TriceEdneyWire.com) Black men and women consistently suffer the highest unemployment rates compared to other racial and ethnic groups, and it’s about to get worse.

Joblessness among Blacks is expected to go even higher because 30 jobs Blacks work in are at high risk of automation, according to a study by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington D.C. based think tank for Black elected officials.

“Twenty-seven percent of African-American workers are concentrated in 30 occupations at high risk of automation. By comparison, these 30 occupations account for 24 percent of all white workers and 20 percent of all Asian-American workers,” according to the report “Race and Jobs at High Risk of Automation.”

African Americans are one-and-a-half times more likely to be cashiers, cooks, combined food preparation and serving workers, fast food workers, production workers, laborers, freight/stock material movers, security guards, bus drivers, taxi drivers and chauffeurs.

For example, there 3.3 million cashiers and 580,000 are blacks or 3.22 percent of he African American workforce

compared to 1.92 percent of the white workforce and 2.54 percent of the Asian workforce.

There are 500,000 taxi drivers and chauffeurs and 143,000 are African American or 80 percent of the Black workforce compared to 21 percent of the white workforce and 87 percent of the Asian workforce.

“While automation will create new types of jobs, the African-American community faces a unique combination of well-documented challenges that make it particularly vulnerable in labor-market transitions,” the report said. “These challenges include: an average household net worth that is one tenth of whites, making periods without income particularly difficult.”

The study also noted that automation could increase the African American unemployment rate from 7.5 percent to more than 20 percent.

On the other hand, economic disruption, if properly harnessed, can create new opportunities that address long-standing social inequities, the study reported.

The U.S. Bureau for Labor Statistics reported that November’s unemployment rate for Black men and women was 7.3 percent compared to whites at 3.6 percent, Hispanics at 4.7 percent and Asians at 3.0 percent.

Gang Members Become Entrepreneurs To Make Difference in Their Community



By Kamilah Tom
Howard University News Service

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Howard University News Service,

(TriceEdneyWire.com) – Three former gang members are using their pasts to provide a safe place for the youth who are facing challenges familiar to them. “Check It,” the only documented Black gang in the United States for members of the LGBTQ Community now has an incorporated business, known as “Check It Enterprises.”

“Our main priority is to reach the youth because we remember how we were back then,” said 27-year-old Star Bennett, co-founder of “Check It Enterprises” and former leader of “Check It Gang.” “Some are still out there doing their thing, and we want to have a program in our office for the youth.”

The Check It Gang was founded 12 years ago when being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender was not widely accepted. There were over 200 members who were a part of the gang to create a family and protect each other from the assaults they experienced in and out of school.

The co-founders of Check It Enterprises want their business to be a catalyst for change amongst youth who are walking the same path they once took. They want to be able to provide a center where the kids can come to look for a job or a place where they can feel comfortable to talk.

Five years ago, community activist and youth advocate Ronald Moten decided to work with members of Check It when no one else in the community would work with them. “Star came to me for help. She was a leader committed to change and helping others,” said Moten. It was then that the trans-

formation from Check It Gang grew into Check It Enterprises.

Although Moten does not identify as a member of the LGBTQ community, he faced hardships as a youth while growing up in the inner city of Washington, D.C. “It was the same way with me during my transformation. All I needed was direction and opportunity and I could do the rest,” said Moten. Despite naysayers he provided the now Check It Enterprises with the same guidance, wisdom and opportunity that was extended to him.

Moten and his co-founders use outreach as a way to help the youth, specifically those who are a part of the LGBTQ community. Some days, members go to Gallery Place and Chinatown, an area with a strong Check It presence, to create an open line of communication between themselves and the people they are hoping to mentor and assist.

“We went to Gallery to talk to them and put them on the right path to prevent them from going the wrong way like we did,” said Bennett.

Chaheed Hines, 20, joined the Baby Check It, a group for younger members of the gang, around the age of 13 because of the negative stigma that came with being gay in D.C., but then he met Erica Briscoe, another co-founder of Check It Enterprises.

“Erica stuck with me through thick and thin, especially during the times I was doing bad things and doing what I wanted,” said Hines. “She encouraged me to pursue my goals. I consider Check It Enterprises family.”

In addition to providing a program for youth, Check It Enterprises is a clothing store that sells clothing with their brand. “If anyone is to say anything about Check It, it’ll be positive,” said Bennett.

The Call

By Afaria McKinney

Poets Definition

What is the definition of poetry?

Does it need to rhyme, does it need to instill a sense of urgent social awokeness, or does it require that you suffer a heavy burden that is clinically at its very core a method of therapy allowing for you to vent your feelings to those who either are willing to listen, or comment on what they sense from the very words you echo. None of you should be able to answer that.



In fact the reality of poetry is by definition literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas by the use of distinctive style and rhythm.

How can we categorize the mutual feelings of others into basic verbal nouns and adjectives. Are we not savage creatures of habit that adapt to our environment.

There is a point to this long winded speech, so please listen as I teach to all those listening I hope my words will reach. We should not hinge our limitations on the ability to not comprehend.

We need to allow ourselves to feel the thrill that comes from adverse oppression. This is not natural selection, so why do you look at life as if it is some sort of boring lesson?

When was the last time you did something for fun without the requirement of an app, or money, or the influence of a legal/illegal substances?

I challenge you, to unplug from everything if possible for an entire day. Consider it minimalistic 101.

If at all you can detect a positive change for the better then that means you have some huge life choices to make.

But if nothing changes and you remain in the same state that you currently are in, what does that mean about you as a person.

This is not some great truth or holy grail that i am tasking you with, i just want you all to see, life is a journey never be scared if so just simply count back from 3,2,1

Margo Wheeler Willis

First African American President of WA Realtors Talks Real Estate

Margo Wheeler Willis, President of Washington Realtors, was the keynote speaker for the Women’s Council of Realtors Spokane Luncheon on November 15. The Black Lens sat down with her for an interview after the luncheon.

Can you tell me about your background?

I’m originally from Philadelphia, was born and raised there, went to school there, and then I joined the army. I turned 21 in basic training. I was also married at that time. Had two children. The funny thing is I joined because my husband and I had talked about it and we felt as though with little kids, we could enjoy traveling, and I could continue my education and also possibly have a career path. At that time, I hadn’t thought past my three year or maybe six years. Well, by the time I graduated from basic training and then my additional training and went to my first duty station, which happened to be overseas, my husband decided that he did not want to travel after all. So, needless to say, me and my children pretty much got to travel around the world. I was stationed in Maryland, and NC and SC and PA, not too far from home, and then I was also stationed in Korea and Germany and Japan. So we just traveled around. I spent 20 years in the military. My last duty station happened to be Joint base Lewis McCord. At that time it was Ft. Lewis. I thought it was beautiful. It was fantastic, centrally located as far as the state is, with the weather. You can get to the mountains, and to the beaches, all of that, and beautiful green, and I had no desire to go back home permanently to live, so that became home. I retired and I’ve lived there for 25 years now.

How did real estate happen? Was it something that you’d been thinking about or was it something that showed up for you?

Well actually it showed up in one way, but I thought about it. I had a whole year to think about it because at that time I was married and my husband retired a year before I did

and went into real estate. So he did it for a year and I got to see the challenging part of it, as well as the rewarding part. Your first year is more challenging than rewarding.

For me it really made sense because in real estate what I realized is that in a second career I wanted to find something that gave me the flexibility of hours and scheduling that I did not have in the military because it was very regimented. I also wanted to be able to put myself in a position where I could get paid for the work I did, and I felt as though real estate would give me that opportunity, because if you work hard and you work smart then you can be very successful financially in the business. And I was used to taking care of people. I was used to taking care of families in the military and so helping families to find housing and understanding the challenges and the stress that they go through was really easy.

So what was the most challenging part when you got started?

For me the most challenging part was, I would say, the fact that when you enter into a second career you’re competing with individuals who have been working for a number of years in that career, so you have to make sure that you’re competitive very quickly, it is by taking additional education, certification, classes, or by making sure that you’re networking, which is why when I talk about joining the Women’s Council of Realtors, as a new Realtor, that gave me a referral base that was national. So, the challenge was competing against individuals that had been in the business much longer than me. However, the longer I’ve been in the business, I’ve realized, you really don’t compete against anyone except yourself. That’s about it.

You’re very successful, some people are and some people are not, what do you think it is about you, that has allowed you to excel the way you have?

I started out my talk early on by saying, show up. We have 1.3 million Realtors nationally, but you only have a hand-



Photo Credit: Tom McArthur

ful that are actually engaged and involved. So first of all, it is showing up. Being visible. Wanting to gain knowledge and learn what our organization really was about. Women’s Council gave me that path and from Women’s Council, it led me to the path for my association, which led me to the President for the Tacoma Association after my local Women’s Council. It also gave me the opportunity to get involved with my national organization.

I would say quite often we don’t show up. For WA Realtors, I would say that I’m the first African American woman that was President. I would say, I’m a worker bee. I have no problem getting involved, getting engaged and I want to know what’s going on. So I think that individuals who get involved, individuals who are in leadership, they appreciate those individuals.

For people of color in particular, for real estate as a career, what are the things that would make it a good career choice or a good thing to explore?

I think that what makes real estate still a good choice is the fact that you can set your own hours. Now, when I say that, you have to set hours. You have to show up to actually work. We can say we have flexible schedules, but it can’t be so flexible that we don’t go to work. You’ve gotta go to work. You have to have a business plan. Also, working with company that will help you get the initial training and support system is really important, and going to conventions.

I have to say, I started going to conventions my third year in the business and nothing has ever surprised me in the industry because when you go to a national convention you get the see all of the vendors that have all of the products, all of the services, all of the education. You get to see them and you also get to talk to other individuals. Before I got my ipad, it used to be something else, the palm. We used to have a table at Women’s Council National where people would talk technology, and if someone else had it, they’d say, this is what I’m using it for, this is how I’m using it. So, having those other experts that will always be willing to share with you, I think all of that is important.

Continued on Page 22



Photo Credit: Tom McArthur

Black Voters Push Doug Jones to Victory

Continued From Page 1

Trump, who has denied similar allegations from women, said the Republicans needed Moore’s vote to maintain their razor thin, 52-vote margin in the Senate.

Meanwhile, it was clear during election returns Tuesday that Black voters would be needed for the Jones victory and that without them, he could not have won.

Former President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden recorded phone calls for Jones. Basketball star and native Alabamian Charles Barkley, a Black conservative, campaigned vigorously for him.

Jones is also known as the lawyer who successfully prosecuted the two Ku Klux Klan members behind the bombing of Birmingham’s 16th Street Baptist Church that killed four black girls in 1963.

The result, according to CNN, was that African-Americans voted at a level higher than they did for Barack Obama, America’s first Black president, in 2012.

Barkley said in a CNN interview, “I’m just so proud of the people of Alabama for rising up.”

U.S. SENATE - ALABAMA EXIT POLLS

SEX BY RACE

WHITE MEN

26%

72%

WHITE WOMEN

34%

63%

BLACK MEN

93%

6%

BLACK WOMEN

98%

2%

ALABAMA
SENATE 99% IN



✓ APPARENT WINNER
DOUG JONES

MSNBC

Tarana Burke

Continued From Page 1

The women’s rights activist coined the term while working with sexual violence survivors more than a decade ago, although she has not always received full recognition.

“This is just the start,” Ms. Burke stated. “I’ve been saying from the beginning it’s not just a moment, it’s a movement. Now the work really begins. I could never have envisioned something that would change the world. I was trying to change my community.”

Burke continued, “#MeToo is a movement that was founded in 2006 to support survivors of sexual violence, in particular Black and brown girls, who were in the program that we were running. It has grown since then to include supporting grown people, women, and men, and other survivors, as well as helping people to understand what community action looks like in the fight to end sexual violence.”

There are 45 or more men who have been named in allegations of sexual abuse, molestation or rape. Along with Kevin Spacey, Actor; Matt Lauer, ex-Co-host of Today; Charles Rose, ex television host; and Mario Batali, Chef, there are many others. African American men named in similar circumstances were Tavis Smiley, talk show host; John Conyers, U. S. Representative from Michigan; and Russell Simmons, Co-Founder of Def Jam Records. Some have denied the allegations.

Nearly all of the people Time interviewed about their experiences expressed a crushing fear of what would happen to them personally, to their families, or to their jobs if they spoke up. Those most at risk of retaliation are often the most vulnerable in society—immigrants, people of color, people with disabilities, low-income workers and LGBTQ people.

Black women have been screaming about famous predators like R&B singer R. Kelly, who allegedly preys on Black girls, for well over a decade to no avail. Anita Hill, thanklessly, put herself and her career as a law professor on the line more than 25 years ago to publicly name Clarence Thomas for sexual harassment who was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1991.

Rape of African-American women goes back to before they reached the Americas. Slave women were routinely raped by crew members during the transatlantic voyage. There were few consequences for rapists—regardless of race. In 1859 a Mississippi judge overturned a guilty verdict from a lower court in a case involving two slaves. The victim was less than 10. The judge wrote in his decision: “The crime of rape does not exist in this state between African slaves, [because] their intercourse is promiscuous.” His ruling reinforced the belief that African-American women are naturally hypersexual beings.

Unfortunately for Black women, Emancipation and Reconstruction did not stop their sexual victimization. From the end of the Civil War to the mid-1960s, no Southern white male was convicted of raping or attempting to rape a Black woman; yet, the crime was common. Black women, especially in the South or border states, had little legal recourse when raped by white men, and many Black wom-

en were reluctant to report their sexual victimization by Black men for fear that the Black men would be lynched. African American women do not fit into the general stereotypes of white women. They are portrayed in several stereotypical categories: Mammy, Jezebel (or sexual siren), Sapphire (or Matriarch), and the Welfare Mother (Queen). The behavior and dispositions embodied in these stereotypes can have damaging influences on and perceptions of African American women.

There is also the stereotype within the African-American culture that women are to remain strong no matter the circumstance or situation. In her book “Behind the Mask of the Strong Black Woman,” Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant argues that strength is a core characteristic of Black womanhood, but that it ignores the array of Black women’s real experiences of suffering, anger, or acts of desperation. (“Why Are Black Women Less Likely to Report Rape?” By Allante Adams in City Paper, June 9, 2016.)

A 2005 Justice Department study, “Criminal Victimization in the United States,” showed that in the general population, Black victims reported at much lower rates than white victims. While 44 percent of white victims report the crime, only 17 percent of Black victims do. For example, Black women are less likely than their white counterparts to see their attacker penalized if they press charges—especially if the attacker is white. A study has also shown that men found guilty of raping Black women receive shorter sentences than men found guilty of raping white women. These are just some of the deterrents women of color face when deciding if they should come forward. (You Are Not Alone.” Uncovering the Dark Secret of Black Women and Sexual Abuse, March 29, 2017 by Aabye-Gayle Francis-Favilla in Intersections.)

Ms. Tanara Burke states: “It is painful to hear the stories of what these women have endured at the hands of these predatory men. One of the most powerful things about #MeToo has been its ability to allow people to expand the conversation beyond celebrity. What history has shown us time and again is that if marginalized voices — those of people of color, queer people, disabled people, poor people — aren’t centered in our movements then they tend to become no more than a footnote. I often say that sexual violence knows no race, class or gender, but the response to it does. “Me too.” is a response to the spectrum of gender-based sexual violence that comes directly from survivors — all survivors. We can’t afford a racialized, gendered or classist response. Ending sexual violence will require every voice from every corner of the world and it will require those whose voices are most often heard to find ways to amplify those voices that often go unheard.”

Tarana Burke is currently Senior Director of programs at Girls for Gender Equity in Brooklyn, NY (<http://www.gg-enyc.org>). Follow her work at @metooMovement

Sources:
Time Magazine: Persons of the Year are the Silence Breakers;
Post Nation by The Washington Post: #MeToo was started for black and brown women and girls. They’re still being ignored;
Estelle B. Freedman “Women’s Long Battle to Define Rape.” Washington Post, August 2012.

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault Fact Sheet:

- African American girls and women 12 years old and older experienced higher rates of rape and sexual assault than white, Asian, and Latina girls and women from 2005-2010.

U.S. DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010,” 2013

- 40-60% of Black women report being subjected to coercive sexual contact by age 18.

Black Women’s Blueprint, “The Truth Commission on Black Women and Sexual Violence,” 2012

- “Stereotypes regarding African American women’s sexuality, including terms like ‘Black jezebel,’ ‘promiscuous,’ and ‘exotic,’ perpetuate the notion that African American women are willing participants in their own victimization. However, these myths only serve to demean, obstruct appropriate legal remedies, and minimize the seriousness of sexual violence perpetrated against African American women.”

Women of Color Network, “Communities of Color: African American Women” 2014

- A study found that college students perceived a Black victim of sexual assault to be less believable and more responsible for her assault than a white victim.

Donovan, “To Blame or Not to Blame: Influences of Target Race and Observer Sex on Rape Blame Attribution,” 2007

- Some African American women’s decisions not to report their sexual assaults may be influenced by the criminal justice system’s history of treating European-American perpetrators and victims differently than perpetrators and victims of color.

Women’s Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights, “The Treatment of Women of Color Under U.S. Law: Violence,” 2001.

DISCRIMINATION
IN AMERICA:

EXPERIENCES
AND VIEWS OF
AMERICAN WOMEN

December 2017



Report: Differences Between White and Black Women in Perceived Gender Discrimination

Source: *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, <https://www.jbhe.com>

A new study commissioned by National Public Radio, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University, examines the extent of discrimination faced by women in the United States.

The researchers compiled data from more than 3,400 women in the early months of 2017. The data was also broken down by race.

Here are some of the findings:

- Half of Black women reported that they had experienced gender discrimination in salary or job promotions. For White women, 41 percent reported gender discrimination.
- Some 40 percent of Black women said they were subjected to gender discrimination during the job hiring practice, compared to 30 percent of White women.
- Some 27 percent of Black women reported gender discrimination in housing, compared to 14 percent for White women.
- Nearly a quarter of Black women reported gender discrimination in dealings with police. This was twice the percentage for White women.
- Some 42 percent of White women reported that they had been sexually harassed, compared to 35 percent of Black women.

The full report, “Discrimination in America: Experiences and Views of American Women, may be downloaded by visiting the following site: <https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2017/12/NPR-RWJF-HSPH-Discrimination-Women-Final-Report.pdf>

OUR VOICES

Scrooged!!!

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.

(TriceEdneyWire.com) — One of my favorite Christmas past-times is looking through my television content guide, finding a scheduled airing of A Christmas Carol and tuning in to watch. I don’t know how many iterations of this movie classic have been made, but I’ve viewed multiple versions made from the 1930’s to the recent past. It seems like each generation produces a film with a modern twist designed to keep the message of the movie fresh for new viewers.

Among recurring literary classics that are currently aired, I find that this story and its original message maintain a relevance that doesn’t diminish with age. For clarification, it’s NOT a scary story written for one of the most joyous holidays of the year, and it’s much more than the simple story of the renewal and redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge. Its message is, in fact, a social commentary by the author, Charles Dickens, that provides a critical analysis of the social order of Victorian England. In it, I find the parallels with contemporary United States to be uncanny.

Written in 1843, approximately six-years into the reign of Queen Victoria, the author, Dickens, was extremely critical of the established social order of Great Britain. Observers suggest that during that period, people were either financially secure or poor - with little room in between. Describing conditions with the use of the contemporary term “Income Inequality” would not be incorrect. Poor families suffered and, as is always the case with the vulnerable, the children of poor families suffered most.

Like modern public housing, workhouses were established to house those who couldn’t independently afford living space. Men and women were physically separated to prevent “breeding.” The physical separation of children from their parents contributed to the dissolution of the nuclear family unit. Debtors prisons were common to the times and required inmates to work off the cost of their debt AND the expense of their imprisonment.

Dickens was greatly disturbed that those least capable of correcting these social ills - the poor and uneducated - were given that task. Scrooge symbolized the greed, avarice and indifference of the wealthy class to the masses. He famously offered these solutions to the problems of the times, “Are there no prisons?” and “If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.”

That same Scrooge-like indifference seems to be baked into the Republican psyche. They have illustrated this with their unsuccessful, hysterical efforts to “repeal Obamacare,” remove millions of Americans from the only healthcare insurance they’ve ever known, and throw the remaining masses back into a commercialized, profit-driven system run by insurance companies.

Approved by only 29% of Americans, their recently passed “Tax Scam” offers questionable temporary tax relief to the masses of earners while giving major corporations permanent relief. Under this plan, the top tax rate for corporate income will be lower than the top tax rate for ‘labor’ in-



come. Although the standard taxpayer deductions are increased, deduction for state, local and property taxes have been capped at \$10,000.

Time will reveal the full implications of this “Tax Scam,” but, from where I stand, I now see Ebenezer Scrooge incarnate!

This article will probably be my last that you will read in 2017. I’m always mindful of this as a period of renewal and of a coming-together of humanity. I urge all who read this to remember that the differences that divide us are far fewer than the commonalities that could unite us, if we give them a chance.

The birth of our New Year serves as a starting point from which we all can use to work for the betterment of our nation and our world. I pray for your prosperity and health throughout the coming year.

Dr. E. Faye Williams is National President of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. www.nationalcongressbw.org. 202/678-6788

Kwanzaa - An Antidote to Insanity

By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The sickening sight of smug sycophantic Republicans celebrating the passage of their tax bill on the White House lawn was the Scrooge-like move to drop a lump of coal into the stockings of the 13 million Americans likely to lose health insurance coverage thanks to the move. Of course, corporations are so ecstatic that some – AT&T and Comcast among them – are offering employee bonuses because they will benefit so much from the tax plan.

As disgusted as I am, there is, to quote the Bible, a “balm in Gilead”, or an opportunity to heal the many wounds inflicted by 45 and his callow and kleptomaniacal administration. Yes, kleptomaniacal, stooping so low as to propose regulations that will give restaurants control of employee tips.

Still, there is a balm in Gilead, good things, good news that has happened this year despite the utter depravity that has shaped this administration.

My balm comes at the end of the year when we celebrate Kwanzaa, the African principled-holiday invented by Maulana Karenga, the celebration of seven unifying principles for African descendants around the world, a time to be unapologetically Black. And it is important to be unapologetically Black in a nation that has decided that we can be prosecuted for our very Blackness, broadly defined as “Black identity extremists” because we fail to humbly embrace the possibility of assimilation, because we dare believe that Black Lives Matter.

Kwanzaa – the celebration of the **Nguzo Saba** (Seven Principles), **Umoja** (Unity), **Kujichagulia** (Self-Determination), **Ujima** (Collective Work and Responsibility), **Uja-**



maa (Cooperative Economics), **Nia** (Purpose), **Kuumba** (Creativity), and **Imani** (Faith), is a time for renewal and repurposing.

It makes the end of the year something to look forward to, and this year all the more so. Everybody doesn’t celebrate Kwanzaa, but this is a year when balm is especially needed.

We have seen a civil rights hero (Congressman John Lewis) disparaged by a “President” unfit to empty his garbage. We have seen courageous football players who took a knee for their beliefs being cursed by a “leader” who called them “sons of b--tches”, insulting both them and their mothers. To list every verbal assault (not to mention legislative assaults) that 45 has unleashed against Black people, women, Latinos, disabled people, and others, is to write a series of columns. It is sufficient to point out that after this

barrage of assaults, there is a balm in Gilead, healing for the wounds. For me, that balm is Kwanzaa.

There are also moments and memories that provide some balm. The activist year began, for me, with the Women’s March. The young women leaders who drew a million or more women to the nation’s capital deserve high praise, and while relations between Black and white women are not smooth, the moment of unity was powerful. And it was exhilarating to celebrate the moment with new Democratic women Senators like Kamala Harris (CA), and Catherine Cortez Mastio (NV), who have offered pointed and principled leadership during this tumultuous year.

Moments, memories, and victories include the stunning rebuke to Republicans delivered by Democrats in Virginia, New Jersey and most recently Alabama. They include some local races, and also the anticipatory smiles that come from those who have stepped up to run for office, despite the odds, like Stacey Abrams (Georgia) and Maya Rockeymore (Maryland). These candidates are balm because their focused candidacies and furious optimism provides hope for all of us.

Notably, both Rockeymore and Abrams have received the support of the progressive women’s PAC, EMILY’s List, which suggest this organization has come a long way from 1992 when they were very late to the table in former Senator Carol Mosley Braun’s primary race for the Illinois Senate (they supported her earlier and more enthusiastically in the general election race).

As 2017 comes to an end, I am among those who will lay my weapons down for a few moments, to refresh and renew for the battles ahead, especially around the upcoming 2018 elections. Kwanzaa is balm in the middle of this madness, an antidote to 45 and his insanity!

OUR VOICES

Omarosa You Gonna Get This Draggin’ And Rightly So

Editor’s Note: Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters that Omarosa Manigault Newman resigned Tuesday, December 12, “to pursue other opportunities” and will leave her position as Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison on January 20, 2018. There were reports that the former Apprentice star had to be physically removed from the white house, refusing to believe that President Donald Trump would actually fire her. Omarosa denies those reports. This editorial was written in response to Omarosa’s abrupt exit which has sparked a good deal of conversation in the Black community.

By Hannah L. Drake

Let’s get this out at the outset of this blog, Omarosa, you’re gonna get this draggin’. And you deserve it. However there is an opportunity for you to redeem yourself.

You have been arrogant, rude and self-serving at best. You cared more about proximity to power than how the person that possessed that power would use it to harm People of Color like yourself.

You went on national TV and tooted a horn for a man whose oppressive policies disproportionately affect the very people that look like you. You remained silent as this man sought to restrict transgender individuals from serving in the military. You didn’t bat an eye when this man said, “Grab em by the pussy.” You turned your head when this man stood at a podium and implied that NFL Players (mostly Black) are “sons of bitches” for protesting police brutality and injustice.

You stood by as this man said, “There were good people on both sides” after Heather Heyer was murdered by a White supremacist in Charlottesville, Virginia. You said nothing when this man stood at a podium and encouraged police officers to “rough up” suspects when they place them in custody, even after knowing how the murder of Freddie Gray rocked this nation.

You walked into a Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, where just this year a Black man named, Jeremy Jerome Jackson was beheaded. A town in which I was told when I was visiting Mississippi, “Do not drive through Jackson because we cannot guarantee your safety.” And in 2017 my daughter and I drove into Mississippi afraid to stop to even go to the bathroom. And this is the place where you stood with a man that has no regard for the history and sacrifice of Black people during the Civil Rights Movement.

You, Omarosa, in your silence have blood on your hands.

The reward for your deafening silence was the title Director of Communications for the Office of Public Liaison of President Trump, with an annual salary of approximately \$180,000.

You, like many people, did not listen when we warned you about Trump. You walked into the Oval Office with dreams that you would be the next Olivia Pope. And even on Scandal Olivia was warned.

Apparently, you missed that episode of Scandal because, after the election that rocked Alabama and the astronomical number of Black Women that voted for Doug Jones, it was announced that you were terminated. (I understand that you say “resigned.”)

Life is not without its irony. Everything always comes with a price.

My question for you today, Omarosa, was the price that you paid for standing on the wrong side of history, worth it?

The person that has the ear of the king can rule the nation. You had an opportunity, as a Black woman with a strong personality and convictions, to sway legislation, to stand up for others, to be a voice for those that will never have the opportunity to speak directly to the President of the United States of America.

And what did you do? You flaunted your proximity to power; you took wedding photos at the White House for Twitter, you smiled smugly on Frontline and told people, “Every critic, every detractor, will have to bow down to President Trump.” You forgot that meant you too. Trump didn’t give a second thought about placing his foot on your back.

You are the scapegoat for the loss in Alabama.

And the blowback from your choice to serve in an administration that doesn’t value the fundamental aspects of humanity has been brutal. Admittedly reading some of the comments, I felt sympathy towards you. Even sharing a comment or meme, I felt a little guilty.

However, for all the reasons I listed above, and many more, I believe you have earned this criticism. This is a punishment that you are going to have to take. Sometimes the medicine doesn’t taste good going down, but you need to swallow a heaping tablespoon of humility.

Your comments about “my community,” “my people” and the obvious strain to bring forth tears as you cried about



how difficult your life has been for “just trying to help” was an insult to everyone that is fighting against this administration.

You turned your back on your community and your people. You turned your back on women, particularly Black women. And now, even in your termination, you are not concerned about “your community” or “your people,” but your true motivation is an inevitable book deal. I am certain it will be marketed as a tell-all book since you are already branding yourself as the, “only Black person that served on the senior staff of this administration.”

In the age of internet fame, I understand the need for branding, however, let me be clear with you, Omarosa, in 2017 to say you are the only Black person in a position of leadership at the White House, is not a badge of honor. It is not “just words” for your rebranding ambitions. It is an embarrassment to this nation and speaks to the lack of concern about having all voices at the table to have input on the policies that will ultimately affect the lives of many People of Color.

You have stated on The View that, “You are a proud American.” You cannot deny that America is weeping. If you are truly concerned about the state of this nation, you would shout everything that you know from the rooftops.

Take a lesson from history, as an enslaved girl stood in the dining room of Melrose Plantation in Natchez, Mississippi pulling the string of a punkah to fan the flies off her White slavemaster’s food. When I saw a punkah in person, my heart shattered knowing that a young Black girl was enslaved simply for White people to avoid having flies land on their food.

And the Black tour guide reminded me, “Do not be dismayed. She had a job to do. While they think she is just there fanning flies, her ears are tuned into the frequency of freedom. And her job is to GO BACK and TELL her mother EVERYTHING she has heard. Especially if she hears the master will be leaving the plantation because it is then that they will run for freedom!”

If you are genuinely about liberation then your work has just begun. Your job, Omarosa is to come back and tell everything you know, not for your monetary gain but because a nation is SHOUTING for FREEDOM!

For more from Hannah L. Drake, visit her blog at <https://writesomeshit.com>



Margo Wheeler Willis

Continued From Page 18

So making sure that they understand that you do have the flexibility of time, you do have the ability to make the money that you want to make. This is an industry where you can set goals and you can attain those goals, and it's all about networking, building up relations, and some of them you already have.

So, talk to young people. One of the things that I try to do is reach out to young people and talk to them about what they a need to do to be successful. Do you have any thoughts on that?

I think that an industry that they want to consider is real estate. There are many facets to this industry. There are the escrow offices, there are the title companies, there are the lenders, the banks, things like that, where you can learn the business and get paid a salary. And then there's the industry. There are some colleges that offer real estate courses, which is phenomenal, because then they might consider going into the commercial side. And I will say, if I was brand new, getting out of college, I would think commercial because there aren't many folks of color in commercial. It takes time to gain the expertise, but if you can have a mentor and go into a company that will do the training and support you through that training, if you go that route, it's a phenomenal route.

But of course, I'm residential, and I would say most of the time you're going to go to a franchise because they have a training program ready for you that will help you take those first steps. I would say, explore the real estate industry as a possible career path. And I will tell you, the millennials that I know, they come in with a business mindset. They can set goals and they can achieve them. So you just have to come in with a business mindset and you can be very successful in this industry.

How has being in this profession changed you from the person you were when you got out of the army to the person you are right now?

Number one, it's given me an appreciation for the time that I did serve. It gives me an appreciation for those who have served and continue to serve that have given me the ability to enjoy the freedoms that I choose and I work for a lot of military, even today.

It also has given me a sense of the importance of giving to my community, to my industry, all of those things have been fostered from the fact that I served. When I say duty, honor, country, and what that means to me internalized, it helps to support the aspirations that we have as Realtors. We have a code of ethics. The first portion of it is aspirational. If we abide by it, then we do such great things for our community, for our members, for our association.

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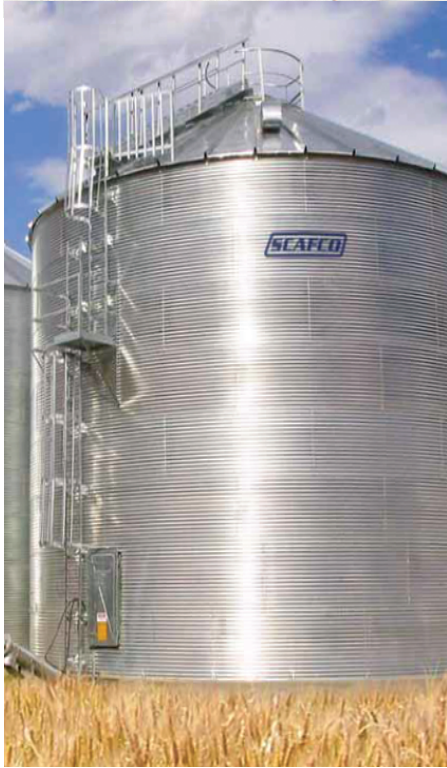
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www.SCAFCO.com and/or CWalla, our authorized distributor of SCAFCO products www.CWalla.com to fill out an application.

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

Benefits Package Includes:

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To advertise your employment opportunities in the Black Lens call 509-795-1964 or e-mail sandy@blacklensnews.com



Parents, do you have a child in middle school or high school?

WSU College of Nursing is conducting a project to find out more about how youth perceive marijuana use. We want to gain input directly from youth about their opinions, beliefs and knowledge of youth marijuana use. This project will *not* be asking about your child's own individual marijuana or drug use.

Participation in this study involves:

- One time interview (approximately 30-60 minutes long)

Eligibility for this study includes:

- Youth ages 12-18 who are in middle or high school
 - Be willing to talk with us
 - Speak English

***Participants will receive a \$30 gift card**

Thank you!

Call Nurse Researcher: Michele Shaw, PhD, RN: Phone (509) 951-7066
michele_shaw@wsu.edu

This study has been approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board

JANUARY EVENTS

JANUARY 7

SECOND ANNUAL MLK JR. FAMILY OUTREACH CENTER PRAYER BREAKFAST

Celebrate the life and legacy of the Dr. King and the work of Spokane's Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Outreach Center.

9:00am - 10:30am

Hemmingson Center, Grand Ballroom

730 E Desmet Ave, Spokane, Gonzaga

Cost: \$25.00

For more information contact MLK Jr. Family Outreach Center at 455.8722. To purchase tickets, visit Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mlk-day-prayer-breakfast-2017-tickets-30312265803?aff=erelexpmlt>

JANUARY 10

FUSE BOOK CLUB - MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

January's selection is any book written by Martin Luther King Jr., not about him. Books written by King include: "Strength to Love," "Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story," "The Trumpet of Conscience," "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?" and "Why We Can't Wait."

6:00pm - 8:00pm

Spokane Public Library (Downtown)

Level-up Classroom

906 W. Main Street, Spokane

Free, inclusive, welcoming, open to the public.

For more information contact Erin Pringle-Toungate at EJToungate@gmail.com.

JANUARY 14

MARTIN LUTHER KING CHURCH SERVICE

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship will be celebrating the legacy of Dr. King with a community church service.

4pm

Holy Temple COGIC

806 W Indiana Ave, Spokane, WA

For more information contact Morning Star Baptist Church at (509) 534-4878

JANUARY 15

MLK ANNUAL MARCH AND RESOURCE FAIR

10:00 am (Unity March), 11:00 am

(Resource Fair)

Spokane Convention Center

334 W Spokane Falls Blvd, Spokane

Cost: Free and open to the public

For information contact the MLK Center at (509) 455-8722 or www.mlksokane.org

JANUARY 15

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

7:00pm

Community Building - Lobby

35 W. Main Street, Spokane WA

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

JANUARY 17

POETRY RISING

Produced by Stephen Pitters, host of Spokane Open Poetry. This month features Black Lens contributor Afaria McKinney.

6:30pm - 7:30pm

Barnes and Noble Booksellers

Northtown Mall, 4750 N. Division

Free and open to the public.

JANUARY 27

EASTERN WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Gathers people from the faith and non-profit communities to learn about issues before the state legislature.

9am - 3pm

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

316 E 24th Ave, Spokane

Suggested donation is \$20. Organized by The Fig Tree, Catholic Charities, Faith Action Network, the NAACP Spokane, and more. For more information: 509-535-4112 or info@thefigtree.org

JANUARY 27

BLACK LENS THIRD ANNIVERSARY PARTY

We made it to our third year!!! Join The Black Lens to celebrate our success!

4-8pm

House of Soul

20 N. Wall St, Spokane, WA

Cost: Donation at the door

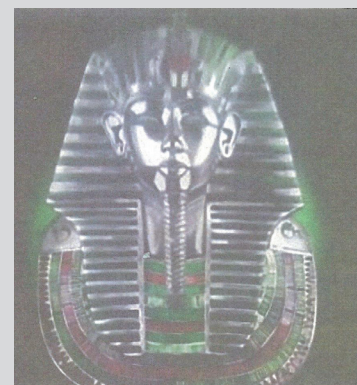
For more information call The Black Lens at (509) 795-1964 or sandy@blacklensnews.com

ART SHOW

"Nights Over Kemet"

Featuring the Work of
Bertoni Jones Bey

(Black Lens Column, Art and History by Bertoni)



January - February 2018

Kress Gallery
River Park Square
3rd Level
808 W. Main Avenue
Spokane, WA

Send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com or call 509-795-1964.



Dreaming a DREAM Bigger Than Me

Friday, January 19th • 7 pm

Rogers High School Auditorium

1622 E Wellesley, Spokane

FEATURING ERIN JONES

Inspirational speaker and award winning educator

- White House "Champion of Change," March 2013
- Washington State Milken 2008 Educator of the Year while teaching at Rogers High School
- First African American woman to run for statewide office in Washington
- Addressed more than 80,000 students and trained more than 10,000 adults in 2017

From abandonment at birth to an award-winning educator honored at the White House, Erin Jones has overcome rejection and discrimination by choosing to live life as a victor, not a victim. She is living proof that it doesn't matter where you start. What matters is where you finish. Come learn her three key principles for changing your life.

This event is sponsored by the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative, a nonprofit corporation.

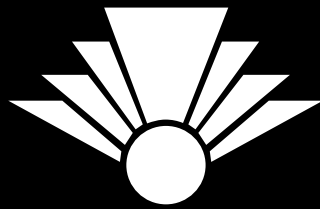
Donations will be accepted the night of the event.

For further information, go to: www.spo.fi.org or email info@spo.fi.org.



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50TH ANNIVERSARY 2018

The Legends of Soul



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7:30 PM

MARTIN WOLDSON THEATER AT THE FOX

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