

THE

BLACK LENS

SPOKANE

TM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

ERIN JONES: From Spokane to Olympia Changing the World Through Education

Erin Jones was born in Minnesota. Her adoptive parents were white and she and her brother were the only Black kids in their community, which made it interesting for her interracial family. Erin's parents decided to see what it would be like to live overseas, so they applied for and ended up getting teaching jobs at the American School of the Hague in the Netherlands and Erin moved there when she was five years old.

The result of that move meant that Erin was now surrounded by ambassador's kids, and Microsoft Europe kids, and the children of other high powered parents. What that meant for Erin, she says, is that from the age of five on, "I was sitting next to people whose parents were running stuff in the world." At a really young age Erin knew that she wanted to be a "world changer" because she "saw world changers every day." And she says she knew that just because she wasn't rich or she wasn't white, "that wasn't going to stop me." She always had a notion that if she just worked really hard that she "could change the world somehow."

Erin imagined that she was going to change the world through law. She grew up about a mile from the United Nations World Court and she thought that was how she was going to change the world. She would go to law school and then come back and work as a lawyer at the World Court, or she would become an interpreter because she spoke four languages, or something else in the United Nations. But whatever direction Erin's path to changing the world would take her, she was convinced that her path would not involve education. She was not going to be a teacher. She was not going to be like her parents.



What Erin saw of the teaching profession when she was growing up was parents that she believed worked "way too hard." Her dad, she says, is quite possibly the hardest working math teacher that she has ever known. Every test he gave was a unique, handwritten test that he wrote himself. She felt that both of her parents were so invested and worked "so hard for so little." As a young person, Erin says, she wanted to change the world, and she didn't see her teacher parents as world changers.

Isn't wasn't until Erin moved back to the United States in 1990 to attend college that she had a revelation and realized that her parents, as teachers, were in fact changing the world. They were "training and teaching kids who now run countries around the world." While attending college, Erin also recognized that there was a difference between her and the other students who looked like her. They hadn't had the same experiences that she had and they "didn't believe that they could be great." There was "so little hope," she says, the systems in Philadelphia were segregated and she noticed the disparity between the resources. "Kids who looked like me were obviously getting the raw end compared to the rich white kids," and Erin says it was that realization that caused her to change the direction of her career path and make a conscious choice at nineteen years of age. "I knew then," she says, "this is how I must change the world. I must be a teacher. I have to use all of the education that I have received to become a world changer one kid at a time."

Coming to the United States for college was an eye opener for Erin. She discovered very quickly how different things were from how her life had been in Europe. "Not once was I called Black there. Not once was there ever any suggestion that being Black was a negative thing at all. Not once in my growing up did anyone ask me why are your parents white and you are Black. Nobody ever questioned that. But my first day in America it became really obvious that race mattered in that being Black was not perceived as a positive thing. My first day in America."

Erin recounted an experience from her first day on the college campus.
Continued on Page 7

THE RISE OF BLACK WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Given the pioneering success of Madam C. J. Walker, America's first self-made Black woman millionaire, people wanted to know how she got started in business ownership only decades after the end of slavery in America. Her answer was short and simple: "I got my start by giving myself a start."

As for her astronomical success as owner of an Indianapolis-based hair and skin care factory, Walker had yet another pithy saying: "Perseverance is my motto."

More than a century later, these morsels of wisdom still work - at least according to economic experts and advocates who have observed the historic rise of Black women entrepreneurs over the past 18 years.

According to an American Express Open study released in 2015, there has been a 322 percent growth in Black female-owned businesses since 1997, making Black women the fastest growing entrepreneurial group in America.

The same self-start, perseverance and faith employed by Walker is still motivating Black women in 2016, says Julianne Malveaux, an economist and former president of Bennett College for Women.

"African-American women have earned degrees, have moved up the ladder, and have found corporate America sometimes wanting and have found the mainstream difficult," Malveaux says. "Therefore, the 322 percent increase is a function of people being very skilled

and talented and not finding space for themselves in the traditional pipelines. And so they are going into creating their own."

Margot Dorfman, CEO of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, agrees. "Women of color, when you look at the statistics, are impacted more significantly by all of the negative factors that women face. It's not surprising that they have chosen to invest in themselves," Dorfman told Fortune magazine.

Yet, Malveaux points out, it is crucial to note that despite the growth of Black women entrepreneurs due to their talent and tenacity, they are still a huge minority when compared to white women.

Continued on Page 18

SUPPORT THE BLACK LENS

SUBSCRIBE • ADVERTISE • CONTRIBUTE • SHARE

WWW.BLACKLENSNEWS.COM OR 509-795-1964

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR



by Sandra Williams

The Power of a Dream

“I am not free while any woman is un-free, even when her shackles are very different from my own.” — Audre Lorde

I have been a dreamer for as long as I can remember. When I was a kid I would spend the better part of many days locked away in my bedroom with my dolls and my actions figures and my brother’s G.I. Joes, imagining adventures that would take me on fantastic voyages to far away worlds somewhere beyond the stars.

When I was on those journeys, I was unstoppable. I was invincible. There were no boundaries. No barriers. No rules, unspoken or otherwise, about what I was capable of doing, or being, because of who I was or because of how I looked or because of the color of my skin.

I think it was because of those bedroom journeys, when I imagined myself to be the general of my bedroom armies or the emporer of my bedroom kingdoms, that I developed the courage to dream in the world outside of my bedroom.

I think sometimes we underestimate the power of dreams. We sometimes laugh at our children when they tell us what they want to be when they grow up, because it doesn’t make sense to us. We sometimes punish them for daydreaming about goals that may seem implausible to us, and then we lovingly steer them towards something more “reasonable”, or more “sensible.”

My daughter is a dreamer too. She inherited that from me. When she was in elementary school, she told me that she wanted to be a fashion designer. Elementary school. What could a fourth grader possibly know about fashion? But I think the spark that I saw in her eyes when she talked about the clothes that she was going to create reminded me of my dreams, when I would run around with my dad’s super 8 movie camera declaring that I was going to be the next great filmmaker. I didn’t know how it was going to happen. But I was absolutely positive that it was going to happen. I still am.

So instead of steering my daughter in a different direction, or talking to her about the careers that she could pursue that would be much more lucrative and a lot less competitive. Instead of sending her to a guidance counselor so that she could review her options with a “career expert”. Instead, while she was still in elementary school, I began taking my daughter to community workshops and lectures about how to start a clothing business. I scheduled appointments with local colleges where she was able to sit and talk with admissions counselors about what she needed to do to be able to get into their schools, and I told my daughter to do the research on her dream and find the college that she wanted to go to. She did. In New York. And with the help of my family, we sent her there.

It has been a long and rocky road, this journey towards my daughter’s dream. And there were many, many, many days when the both of us thought that maybe we were both just a little bit crazy for not turning back. But there is a power that exists in dreams. A power that can uplift, that change a life, that can repair a community, or in the case of Dr. Martin Luther King, it can change an entire world.

I watched last week as our community rallied around a young woman who also has a dream, a dream of becoming a nurse. There weren’t many of us in the audience, but the feelings and the emotions were powerful. Hers is a hard dream too, one that will be difficult accomplish. But I believe that every time one of us is able to grab on to our dream, like my daughter has, then all of us become a little bit braver and stronger and closer to doing the same thing.

ART & HISTORY BY BERTONI

Queen Tiye (Tai)



Art and Article by Bertoni Jones (jbaguart@yahoo.com)

Queen Tiye (Tai) was queen and co-regent of the Eighteenth Dynasty rule of Amenhotep III in ancient Kemet (Egypt) approximately 1399 BC. Although she was born a commoner, her father Yuya was royal commander for chariot divisions and her mother Tjuya was a high priestess for the Gods Amun and Min. With her marriage to Amenhotep III she became queen consort to the royal throne and was given the title “Great Royal Wife” and “Mistress of Upper and Lower Kemet”.

To honor his queen, Amenhotep III had a large lake built (6,400 feet wide and 1,200 feet long) in the span of fourteen days. He and his queen took pleasure cruises on this private lake in their boat, “The Gleaming Aten”. She bore at least six children for the pharaoh including Amenhotep III’s successor and son. Akhenaten.

The artistic depictions of Queen Tai are unlike any other queen in the history of Kemet. She was always depicted at the same scale and size as her husband, suggesting that she sat side by side, sharing power with the pharaoh as an equal partner. She is depicted as an equal because she took an active role in the politics of her lands, dealing personally with domestic political details and foreign emissaries. Queen Tai’s renown was so great that the temple of Sedeinga in Nubia was established in her name.

One point of note is that Queen Tai was the maternal grandmother of the 18th Dynasty Pharaoh Tutankhamun. In the Kemet custom the pharaonic lineage was passed on through the mother’s bloodline, not the father’s. So it was often said that the queen’s son would become pharaoh, not the king’s. And through her image one can immediately recognize that Tutankhamun could not have been an Arab, Persian, or Caucasian, as is so often falsely depicted in television and movies. He was of African ancestry through the bloodline of his mother’s mother Queen Tai. Her image should leave no doubt as to the ethnicity of any of the members of the 18th Dynasty Family under her lineage.

Evidence leads us to believe that the body of Queen Tai was laid to rest around 1338 BC in The Valley of the Kings, near the western banks of the Nile River. Queen Tai represents one of the greatest female figures ever in the history of Kemet. Unfortunately Germany helped itself to the statue this image is based on and shipped it from the African Continent to the Neues Agyptisches Museum in Berlin, Germany.

Sources:
When Egypt Ruled the East – George Steindorff, Keith C. Seele
The Anvil of Civilization - Leonard Cottrell
Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs - Zahi Hawass
<http://euler.slu.edu/~bart/egyptianhtml/kings%20and%20Queens/Tiye.html>
<http://www.ancient.eu/tiye>

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

Contact Information:
Square Peg Multimedia, 1312 N. Monroe St, #148, Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 795-1964, sandy@blacklensnews.com

Subscription: Delivered monthly by mail - \$45/year
Submission/Advertising Deadline: 15th of the month prior to publication.
www.blacklensnews.com; Facebook: blacklensnews; Copyright (c) 2016

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

BLACK WOMEN AND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Reprinted from: *African American Women and Suffrage - National Women's History Museum* - <https://www.nwhm.org>

Women's suffrage, or the legal right for women in the United States to vote, was established over the course of several decades, and granted nationally in 1920.

Many African American women were highly active in the women's suffrage movement. Sojourner Truth, a former slave, became famous as both an abolitionist and an advocate of woman suffrage. Other black women suffragists included Margaretta Forten, Harriet Forten Purvis, and Mary Ann Shadd Cary.

Black women participated in the American Equal Rights Association, and later in both the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association. Historian Rosalyn Terborg-Penn argues that black women were drawn more to the AWSA than the NWSA, as the AWSA also supported the enfranchisement of black men.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Black women, like their white counterparts, began to form woman's clubs. Many of these clubs included suffrage as one plank in their broader platform. In 1896, many of these clubs affiliated to form the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), with Mary Church Terrell as president. From its founding until the passage of the 19th Amendment, the NACW included a department that worked for the advancement of woman suffrage.

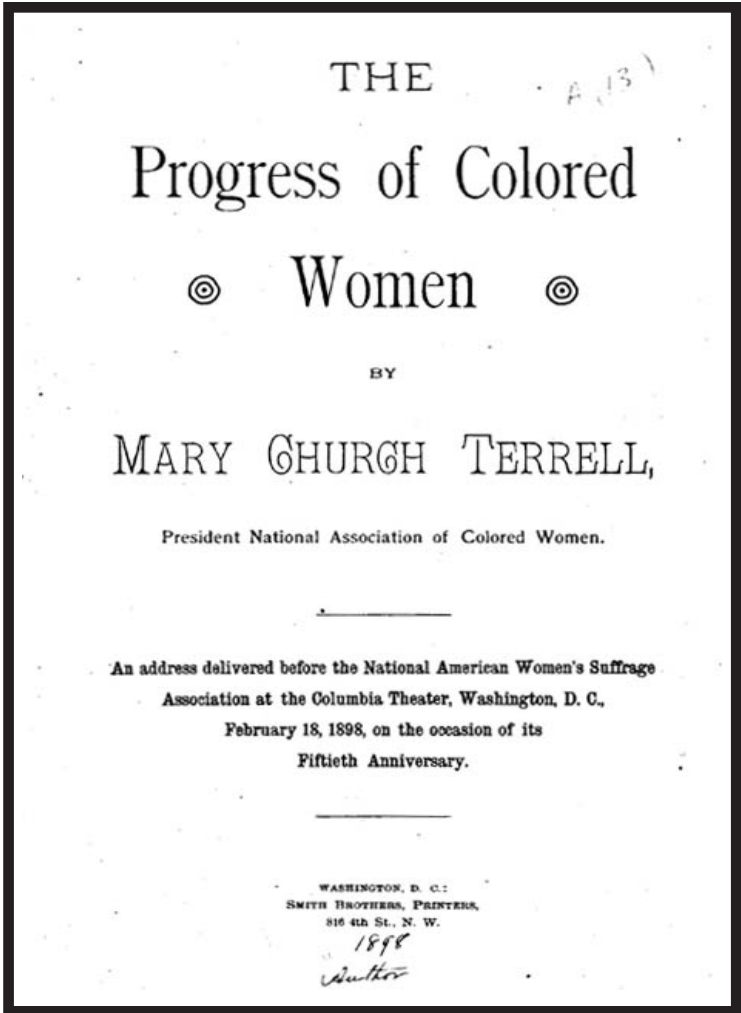
The National Baptist Woman's Convention, another focal point of Black women's organizational power, also consistently supported woman's suffrage. In addition, black women founded clubs that worked exclusively for woman's suffrage, such as the Alpha Suffrage Club of Chicago, founded by Ida B. Wells in 1913.

However, despite their strong support for woman's suffrage, Black women faced discrimination within the suffrage movement itself.

Although Black clubwomen participated actively in the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), the NAWSA did not always welcome them with open arms. In the 20th century, the NAWSA leadership sometimes discouraged Black women's clubs from attempting to affiliate with the NAWSA. Some Southern members of NAWSA argued for the enfranchisement of white women only.

In addition, in the suffrage parade of 1913 organized by Alice Paul's Congressional Union, Black women were asked to march in a segregated unit. Ida B. Wells refused to do so, and slipped into her state's delegation after the start of the parade.

When the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920, it legally enfranchised all women, white and black. However, within a decade, state laws and vigilante practices effectively disenfranchised most black women in the South. It would take another major movement for voting rights – the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s – before Black women in the South would be effectively enfranchised.



Front page of address made by Mary Church Terrell to the NAWSA, Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Daniel A.P. Murray Pamphlets Collection.

THE AHOSI "KING'S WIVES"

All-Female Military Regiment from 17th Century West Africa

Excerpts reprinted from "10 Fearless Black Female Warriors Throughout History" by A Moore, <http://atlantablackstar.com> and <http://www.blackpast.org>.

The Dahomey Amazons were an all-female military regiment of the Fon people of the Kingdom of Dahomey in the present-day Republic of Benin which is located in West Africa.

While European narratives refer to the women soldiers as "Amazons," because of their similarity to the semi-mythical Amazons of ancient Anatolia, the women, who existed from the 17th century to

the end of the 19th century, called themselves Ahosi (king's wives) or Mino (our mothers) in the Fon language.

The Ahosi, who numbered between 1,000 and 6,000 women by the mid-19th century, were extremely well trained, and ferocious fighters, with a reputation for decapitating soldiers in the middle of battle, as well as those who were unfortunate to become their captives. The motto of the women warriors was "If soldiers go to war they should conquer or die."

The Ahosi fought alongside male soldiers during the First Franco-Dahomean War

and the French army lost several battles because of the skill of the female warriors. The French however conquered the Dahomey in 1892 and were particularly ruthless toward the women soldiers, executing many of them because they felt the women provided the last resistance to their conquest of the state.

The female regiment was disbanded when the Dahomey kingdom became a French protectorate.

For more information read: "Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey" by Stanley B. Alpern.



BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Gynnya McMillen: Seventh Black Woman Found Dead in a Jail Cell

(Sources: Christine Kent - <http://www.thesistacircle.com/news-2>; Asha Parker - <http://www.salon.com>; Graham Kates - <http://www.cbsnews.com>)

On January 11, 2016, less than 24 hours after arriving at the Lincoln Village Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Elizabethtown, KY, sixteen-year-old Gynnya McMillen was found dead in her cell.

McMillen joins at least six other African American women who have died in police custody in the past year, including twenty-eight year old Sandra Bland of Texas (7/13/15), eighteen year old Kindra Chapman of Alabama (7/14/15), fifty year old Joyce Curnell of South Carolina (7/24/15), thirty-seven year old Ralkina Jones of Ohio (7/26/15), twenty-eight year old Alexis McGovern of Missouri (7/17/15), and forty-three year old Raynetta Turner of New York (7/27/15).

McMillen had been arrested and charged with misdemeanor assault after police responded to a domestic incident at her mother’s home. She was transferred to the detention center.

Stacy Floden, a Department of Juvenile Justice Spokesperson, told CBS News that when Gynnya refused to remove her sweatshirt to allow staff to search and photograph her for booking, she was placed in an “Akido” restraint, which is a martial arts technique. McMillen did

not respond to a 6:30 a.m. offer of breakfast the next morning, or an offer of a snack two hours later. She also did not respond when asked if she wanted to accept a phone call from her mother, but apparently it did not raise alarm bells for the staff. In fact, according to reports, Gynnya spent three-and-a-half hours in her cell unchecked before she was finally found unresponsive in her cell when a sheriff’s deputy arrived to take her to court. Recordings also indicate that it took eleven minutes after Gynnya was found unresponsive before CPR was started on her.

Reginald Windham, a worker at the detention center, was put on leave with pay for falsifying reports that he completed the required bed checks at 15 minute intervals the night before McMillen was found dead. According to personnel records, Windham had been disciplined by The Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice in five other instances, including “two excessive force instances and three where he showed a lack of competency and professionalism.”

Windham has since been fired, as has Bob Hayter, a commissioner of the state’s Department of Juvenile Justice who they say “failed to notify his superiors that an employee had been suspended for failing to check on the teen.”

Gynnya McMillen’s death is currently under investigation by state and local officials.



Tacoma Superintendent Carla Santorno earns National Women in School Leadership Award



(Source: Debbie Cafazzo; <http://www.thenewstribune.com>)

Tacoma Public Schools Superintendent Carla Santorno is winner of the 2016 Women in School Leadership Award from the American Association of School Administrators, which was announced in February during the association’s national conference in Phoenix.

The association recognized Santorno for leadership in several areas, including strength in both personal and organizational communication, professionalism and community involvement. “Her leadership in connecting schools and students with resources in the community is an exemplary model for others to emulate,” said Bill Keim, executive director of the Washington Association of School Administrators in a news release.

Santorno joined Tacoma schools in 2009 as Deputy Superintendent under then-Superintendent Art Jarvis. In 2012, she was named interim Superintendent following the announcement of Jarvis’ retirement and in September 2012, she became the district’s Superintendent.

Santorno focused on healing wounds and reaching out to the Tacoma community after a period of budget cuts, school closures and a teachers’ strike. There are now more than 50 community organizations that partner with the school district to help students and provide stability for parents, including the Tacoma Housing Authority which provides housing vouchers for low-income families, and local colleges and universities, which have provided scholarship funding for low-income students.

The Women in School Leadership Award is co-sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Family of Henrietta Lacks Reaches Settlement and Gains Some Control Over HeLa Cell Research



(Source: Jazmine Denise Rogers, <http://madamenoire.com>)

In 1951, a 31-year-old African American woman by the name of Henrietta Lacks died of cervical cancer. She was treated for her illness at Johns Hopkins and during one of her radiation sessions, two samples were taken from her cervix without her permission. One sample was swapped from a healthy area of her cervix, while the other was taken from a cancerous area. The cells eventually became known as the HeLa immortal cell line and are generally used in biomedical research.

The samples taken from Henrietta allowed researchers to analyze the cells in a way that they couldn’t on living humans, setting the groundwork for the multi-million dollar biomedical research industry. However, Henrietta’s relatives have yet to see a dime of the millions of dollars made off of her cells.

With the settlement, the family has gained a little more control over scientists who are given access to the cells and what they are allowed to do with them. Henrietta’s story is told in the 2010 best-seller, “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” written by Rebecca Skloot.

Alabama Scientist Pioneers Technology that Kills Cancer Cells with Lasers



(Source: Anna Claire Vollers, <http://www.al.com/news>)

Dr. Hadiyah-Nicole Green, an assistant professor at Tuskegee University, is one of less than 100 black female physicists in the country. She recently won a \$1.1 million grant to further develop her patent-pending technology for using laser-activated nanoparticles to treat cancer.

Green’s personal history with cancer fuels her drive to find a way to treat it. She grew up in St. Louis and – after the death of her mother and father – was raised by her aunt and uncle, General Lee Smith and his wife, Ora Lee.

Green’s Aunt, Ora Lee, passed away from cancer, having refused treatment because she didn’t want to experience the side effects. Three months later, her Uncle was also diagnosed with cancer and she took time off to help him through the chemotherapy and radiation treatments. She says she saw first-hand how devastating the treatment was, and “could understand why my aunt didn’t want to go through that.”

Green earned a bachelor’s degree in physics with a concentration in fiber optics at Alabaman A&M University, and then a full scholarship to the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), where she got the idea to use lasers to treat cancer without the side effects of chemo and radiation. She spent seven years during her master’s and doctoral programs at UAB, developing a way to target cancer cells – not the healthy cells around them.

Green said she feels a responsibility to be a positive example and change stereotypes of black women portrayed in media. “I did not get here by myself. Because of that clarity, I know my responsibility to encourage and mentor the next generation.”

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Lisa Borders, Former Coca Cola Exec Named WNBA President



(Source: <http://www.wnba.com/news>)

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver announced on February 10 that Lisa Borders had been appointed President of the WNBA. Borders, who brings more than 25 years of experience in operations, marketing, government relations and public service, served most recently as Chair of The Coca-Cola Foundation and Vice President of Global Community Affairs at The Coca-Cola Company.

Ms. Borders has worked the public, private and non-profit sectors. Prior to The Coca-Cola Company, Borders was President of the City Council and Vice Mayor of Atlanta, where her duties included managing the legislative branch of government and maintaining the relationship with the Mayor's office during Mayor Shirley Franklin's administration.

Ms. Borders serves as a trustee of Duke University and The Westminster Schools, and she is a board member of Atlanta Women's Foundation, Grady Health System, Woodruff Arts Center and Operation Hope. She holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a master's of science in health administration from the University of Colorado.

The WNBA is the world's premier women's basketball league, and it tips off its historic 20th season on May 14. Lisa Borders will join the WNBA on March 21.

Jamaican Woman to Head All Home Depot Stores in US



(Source: Angela Bronner Helm, <http://www.theroot.com>)

Ann-Marie Campbell replaced veteran exec Marc Powers in mid-January and was named the Executive Vice President of Home Depot's U.S. stores. In her new post, she will oversee nearly 400,000 employees in 2,000 stores.

Campbell was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and graduated with both a degree in Philosophy and an MBA from Georgia State University. She began her career with Home Depot in the 80s as a cashier while still in college.

In 2014, Campbell was named to Fortune's list of the "40 Most Powerful Women in Business." Before being named to her new position, she was in charge of some 690 Home Depot stores in 15 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Campbell told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution last year that her inspiration and business knowledge come from her grandmother in Jamaica, who did not finish high school, but transformed a roadside business into a multi-million-dollar company.

First Black Woman Promoted to Three-Star Army General



(Source: Sheryl Estrada, <http://www.diversityinc.com/news>, Photo courtesy of Office of the Surgeon General/U.S. Army Medical Command.)

Lt. Gen. Nadja West was formally promoted to three-star general in the United States Army on Tuesday, Feb. 9. Acting Army Secretary Eric Fanning administered the oath of office to West on Dec. 11, 2015.

With the appointment, West, 54, became the first Black woman in the Army to receive a third star. A ceremony took place to formalize her promotion, making West the highest-ranking woman to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Prior to her current appointment, West served as the Joint Staff Surgeon at the Pentagon. She also had previous assignments as commanding general of Europe Regional Medical Command; commander of Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and division surgeon, 1st Armored Division, Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.

West was an orphan and adopted as an infant. Her father was a career soldier, joining the Army when it was still segregated. She and her siblings followed in his military footsteps. Her mother was active in the civil rights movement. She earned a Bachelor of Science in engineering from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a Doctorate of Medicine from George Washington University School of Medicine. She is married to Donald West, a retired army colonel and they have two children, Sydney and Logan.

West, the Army's 44th (and first Black) surgeon general, will formally assume control of the U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) in a ceremony at Ft. Sam Houston's MacArthur Parade Field in Texas. In response to her appointment, Lt. General West said, "The story of African Americans is a story of resilience and perseverance that traces a people who refused to accept the circumstances under which they arrived on American shores."

Prof. Kimberlé Crenshaw Honored by the American Bar Foundation



(Source: *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*; jbhe.com)

Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, a Professor of Law at Columbia University and a Professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles, will receive the Outstanding Scholar Award from the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation.

Professor Crenshaw is a graduate of Cornell University and Harvard Law School. She earned a Master's Degree in Law at the University of Wisconsin, and is the author of many books, including Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women (African American Policy Forum, 2015).

Two Former US Soldiers Sentenced to 25 Years in Kuwaiti Prison



(Source: Meko Haze, <http://dailyhaze.com>)

After serving in the United States Army for seven years, Monique and Larissa returned to Kuwait as military contractors. Last May, police kicked in their door and found an ounce of "a suspicious tobacco-like substance". After sending the substance to Germany for testing, it was discovered the substance was K2. Which is legal in Kuwait.

But Monique's family claims that something changed after receiving the initial results. The women's lawyer said the two would be fine due to the legal standings of K2, yet both women remained in prison for eight months as they waited to go to court. When it came time for their trial, they were no longer looking at an ounce of K2. Now it was claimed the two had one pound of hash. A possession charge they claim to be false.

A drug charge in Kuwait can land you large fines, lengthy jail sentences and even the possibility of death. On January 16, 2016, the two women were sentenced to 25-years in prison for possessing one pound of hash.

Monique's family believes that she has been imprisoned because she and her girlfriend are openly gay. While being gay is not out outlawed in Kuwait, gays and lesbians are still prosecuted under the "debauchery" law and the Kuwaiti penal code contains provisions that can easily be used to target those in the LGBT community.

Monique's mother has started a petition on Change.org asking for the US government to look into the possibility of the wrongful imprisonment of the two women. As of now the petition has received over 150,000 signatures.

To read the petition visit: <https://www.change.org/p/free-monique-and-larissa-campaign-us-citizens-wrongfully-imprisoned-in-kuwait>

Nation of Islam Promises to Protect Beyoncé if Cops Won't



(Source: <http://www.vice.com>)

Just before this year's Super Bowl, Beyoncé released her "Formation" video and she performed the Super Bowl's halftime show with a crew of afro-wearing dancers dressed in Black Panther-inspired costumes.

The Formation video, set in New Orleans, references the Black Lives Matter movement, Trayvon Martin, and Hurricane Katrina, depicting Beyoncé on top of a New Orleans police cruiser, sinking in flooded water. It also features a wall that says, "Stop Shooting Us."

Critics called the video and the performance inflammatory and "anti-cop". Miami Police Union President Lt. Javier Ortiz called on all police officers everywhere to boycott all of Beyoncé's concerts on her forthcoming world tour. Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam have vowed to offer security to protect Beyoncé on her upcoming concert tour if police don't show up.

NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

Young Women Passing the Torch: “Teach the Movement”

By Naima Quarles-Burnley
Spokane NAACP President

February is our designated time to celebrate African American History and March is the month we set aside to recognize the contributions of Women. Our need for specific months focused on various groups points to the problem that “American History” has rarely been taught in a way that includes the stories of non-dominate cultures in a meaningful way. The history of African Americans should not be relegated to studying a handful of people who span from enslaved Africans to Civil Rights Activists presented in isolation. Black history, as well as Women’s history, should be taught as it was lived, within the larger American story. The American story is incomplete without examining our struggle as a nation to realize the principles of justice and equality articulated in our founding documents. The Civil Rights Movement is one of the defining eras in American history that moved us closer to those ideals.

In 2011, the Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC) Teaching Tolerance project sounded the alarm over the pervasive neglect of “American History” being taught without including adequate information on the Civil Rights Movement. In their initial study grading states on how well they were teaching the Civil Rights Movement, 35 states received a failing grade of F. Washington state was among those that received an F. In 2014, the SPLC did a follow-up report which revealed that much of the United States is still lacking in teaching the depth of the Civil Rights Movement. While there has been progress since 2011, there are still 20 F’s, with 12 states requiring no teaching of the Civil Rights Movement at all. Washington was upgraded to a “D.” Nonetheless, our state still teaches less than 20 percent of the SPLC recommended Civil Rights history content in our schools.

Three young women from Whitworth University recognize the importance of the Civil Rights era, a fire within them has been ignited and they are seeking to “pass the torch” by teaching the movement to the next generation. Civil Rights Curriculum Specialist and Teach the Movement Program Manager, Elizabeth Porter, a senior, from Tacoma, WA, worked with Ross Brooke Watts, the Director of the Dornsife Center for Community Engagement, over the past year to tailor the Teach the Movement program to Whitworth. In conjunction with the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Dornsife Center at Whitworth Uni-



Elizabeth Porter (left), Jacqueline Martinez (right), Emily Thorpe (not pictured)

versity is implementing it’s own branch of the Teach the Movement program in Spokane Public Schools. The University sends students into the public schools to work with administrators and teachers helping them strengthen their civil rights curriculum. Emily Thorpe, a junior, from Lynwood, WA, and Jacqueline Martinez, also a junior, from Los Angeles, CA, are Teach the Movement Coordinators helping recruit and train volunteers to go into the Spokane Public Schools.

Emily is an elementary education major and has a great passion for investing in the education of children, so she was stunned that Washington State is only teaching a fraction of Civil Rights history. “I was really surprised and disturbed. It’s really upsetting to me. I’m going into education realizing how flawed and how many shortfalls we have in our curriculum.” Her realization of this deficiency motivated her to join Teach the Movement.

Jacqueline’s experience growing up in Los Angeles, CA was very different, “I grew up in a predominantly Hispanic community and I learned about the Farm workers movement and about Cesar Chavez in each grade. That was a huge lesson that we were taught from the beginning. I am half Hispanic so I got to connect to my history....coming to Washington and realizing that minorities don’t get that chance to know or connect with their history in the

way that I have, that’s kind of what drew me to [Teach the Movement] as well.”

When students learn about the movement, they learn what it means to be engaged citizens. They learn how to identify injustices. They learn about how ordinary citizens can help bring about extraordinary change when we come together to stand against oppression.

“Our history is important to know,” explains Elizabeth, “and I say ‘our history’ because it includes all of the races and it’s not just African Americans, it’s not just whites, many races were impacted by the civil rights movement... [Civil Rights] impacted the rights of a whole lot of people in the context of today and allows a lot of this generation to have access to things today, not just a few people.... a lot of things today including voting rights, workers’ rights, and education...” These rights, she adds, would not be possible without the Civil Rights movement. Elizabeth’s passion is evident for Teach the Movement; she wants the next generation to know the rights we enjoy now did not come easy, they were gained through struggle.

Colin Powell reminded us upon the passing of Nelson Mandela, that the American Civil Rights Movement, as in South Africa, freed both Black and white citizens from the forces of oppression and paved the way for others around the world. We “pass the torch” when we teach our children how the movement for freedom, for equal opportunity, and for inclusive democracy connects to their hopes for a better future. “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion,” Mandela taught us.

The next generation needs to know the dream Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. articulated has not yet been fully realized, despite the election of an African-American president. We need to teach them that as long as race is a barrier to access and opportunity, and poverty is common for people of color, the dream has not been attained.

We still have work to do; the Civil Rights movement is not over. As these three young women help educate our younger generation about past and current injustices through Teach the Movement, they pass the torch and keep the fires for justice burning.

For morning information, contact the NAACP at (509) 209-2425 (extension 1141), or visit <http://spokanenaacp.com>.

THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER

THANKS LADIES

By Evelyn Anderton

Did you know the month of March is Women History Month? Its origins began as a national celebration in 1981. The United States Congress authorized and requested that President George Bush Sr. proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982 as Women’s History Week. This was a time to pay tribute to a generation of women whose commitment to society had proven to be invaluable.

The following women have proven to be more than qualified to make the cut:

Mary McLeod Bethune- Mary Jane McLeod Bethune (July 10, 1875 – May 18, 1955) was a dedicated educator and civil rights leader. She is best known for starting a school for Black students in Daytona Beach, Florida (now Bethune-Cookman University). She is also known for her role as an advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and as a friend to Eleanor Roosevelt.

Harriet Tubman- A poor Black woman born into slavery who went on to become one of the best known figures in history. Born in Maryland in 1821, Tubman’s had a life of hardship & deprivation from childhood that even marriage to a free Black man named John Tubman could not erase.

Having enough of being bought & sold as property, she escaped in 1849 & fled north with the help of the Underground Railroad, which Thomas Garrett & other white abolitionists had established. She went on to help other slaves find sanctuary in the northern states.

Sojourner Truth- (1795–1883) An illiterate freed slave, she was an eloquent critic of slavery and sexism, transfixing audiences with the force and simplicity of her message of Christian love and tolerance. Her famous “Ain’t I a woman?” speech, delivered to a women’s rights convention in 1851, forever disrupted assumptions about race, class, and gender in American society.



Wilma Rudolph- (1940-1994): She was a sickly child and developed polio when she was 4 years old. Her mother helped her to walk again, and by her senior year in high school she qualified for the 1956 Olympics in track. She went on to take three gold medals in the 1960 Olympics, becoming one of the most famous female athletes of all time.

Rosa Parks- (1913–2005) an African American civil rights activist, whom the U.S. Congress called “the first lady of civil rights”, & “mother of the freedom movement”. In 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Parks refused to obey bus driver’s order to give up her seat to make room for a white passenger. Her civil disobedience sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Phillis Wheatley- a slave brought from Africa as a child and sold to a Boston merchant. She spoke no English, but by the time she was sixteen, however, under the tutelage of her owners, she had mastered the language. Her interest in literature led her to write and publish “Poems on Various Subjects” in 1773. She is one of, if not the, earliest published African American author.

Shirley Chisholm- In 1968 became the first Black woman to serve in the United States Congress. Chisholm was a model of independence and honesty, and a champion for several issues, including civil rights, aid for the poor, and women’s rights. In 1972 she ran for President of the United States, making her the first Black person to do so. Although she did not win the Democratic nomination, she gained an impressive 10% of the votes.

Patricia Roberts- broke several racial and gender barriers throughout her distinguished political career. In 1965, she became the first Black female ambassador when President Lyndon Johnson appointed her as U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg. Two years later, she returned to her alma mater, Howard University, where she became the law school dean, making her the first Black female law school dean in the country.

Althea Gibson- (August 25th 1927 - September 28th 2003) was an American tennis player. Gibson turned pro at the age of 31.

Continued on Page 18

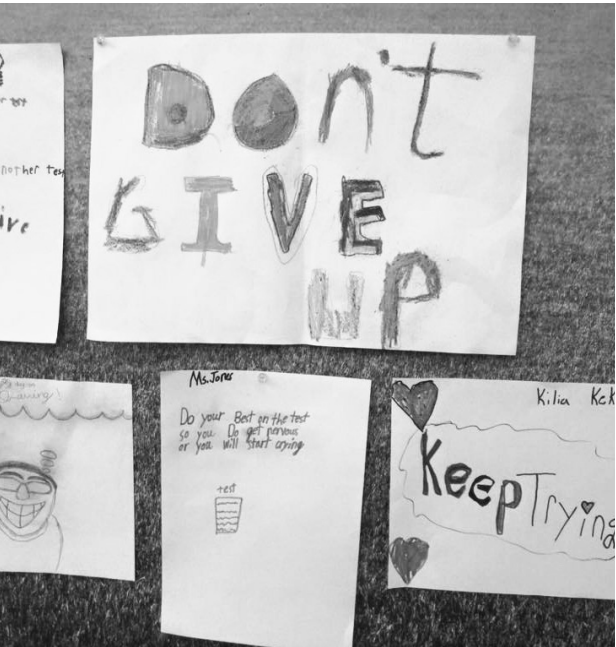
EDUCATION/SCHOOLS

ERIN JONES Continued from Page 7

“There was a cricket club right next to the college. I had just gotten to Philadelphia and it was about eleven o’clock in the evening. We were driving out to the college campus and right next to college on the cricket field was a sign that said ‘no coloreds or Jews allowed here’. That was 1989, and that was terrifying. I’ve seen some stuff in my life and I can tell you, I have never been as scared as I was the day that I saw that sign. My first day in America.”

Erin had read about the Civil Rights Movement in her classes, and she had read about Dr. King. “I had watched the Cosby show. I thought we lived like the Cosbys.” She says she had no idea “where we were as a nation when I got here. I was called the N-word for the first time. I had somebody on campus tell me ‘you know you’re only here because of Affirmative Action, we have to have ten of you’. It was a rude awakening for me.”

On the other side, she says, the Black students said “you’re a foreigner”, and “you’re not one of us.” There was no place where Erin seemed to fit in. “There was a lot of confusion for me about race, about culture, about where I belonged. I spent weeks just wanting to die, and I didn’t know how to tell my white parents. So I didn’t tell them. My parents had no idea that I was that broken until about six years ago when my mom heard me tell my story for the first time.”



On the other side, she says, the Black students said “you’re a foreigner”, and “you’re not one of us.” There was no place where Erin seemed to fit in. “There was a lot of confusion for me about race, about culture, about where I belonged. I spent weeks just wanting to die, and I didn’t know how to tell my white parents. So I didn’t tell them. My parents had no idea that I was that broken until about six years ago when my mom heard me tell my story for the first time.”

But things finally changed for Erin the summer after her first year in college. She was out walking one day and stumbled upon a basketball court in a tiny Black section of town that was made up of the Black folks that were maids and servers for the wealthy whites that lived around the college. “There was a 5 on 5 basketball game getting ready to start and they were short one player.” They saw Erin coming and asked her to play, and “that day changed my life because it was the first time I didn’t have to talk. I just played basketball and I was really good. I could speak the language of basketball, so for the first time. I belonged.”

After one of the games, Erin sat around and talked with the guys that she had been playing basketball with. All of them were younger than she was, in their teens. Sixteen. Seventeen. Eighteen. Not one of them had finished high school. When she asked them what their dreams were for the future, not one of them thought they were going to live to be twenty-one.

“And it was in that moment, on that basketball court that I realized how I’ve been complaining about not being Black enough, not being white enough, but there are bigger problems in this world, and I was made Black and white and academic and athletic for a reason, and on the court, right there, I decided I have to use all of that to make this world a better place by becoming a teacher. It was on the court that day that I made that decision.”

Erin would go back and play on that court every day, “I would play until the lights went out and it became my sanctuary.” She says it was an incredible opportunity, but also heartbreaking. The young men that she met were brilliant, and were filled with potential, “but nobody had ever believed in them and their schools were broken down.”

A fire seemed to be lit in her spirit. “For me it just became the greatest Civil Rights issue of the day. It was obvious to me that it was criminal what was happening, especially for Black boys.” Erin pondered, “if I can speak four languages, why didn’t anyone ever believe that these kids could



too.” That question, Erin says, stuck with her and she decided to invest the rest of her life in finding an answer.

Afer college, Erin made a conscious choice to not start teaching right away. She had two small children and wanted to make sure that her children got the education that they needed.“We made a conscious choice that I would stay with them and make sure that they could read and write and do basic math, because I knew, if they don’t start out ahead, they are going to end up behind.” So Erin stayed home with her kids and when they were school age she began to teaching.

She taught in the Tacoma, WA public school system, and her last last year of teaching, Erin taught French immersion in a Tacoma Public school. “Every subject was taught in French, math science, history, language, P.A., no English at all.” Most of Erin’s students were Black or bi-racial, most had never heard French before they came to her class as sixth graders, and most were reading below grade level in English when she got them. “I got the kids that nobody else wanted, but I loved them, that’s the kids that I love.”

Continued on Page 18

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND EDUCATION: LOOKING BACK IN ORDER TO LOOK FORWARD
A Seven Part Series by Dr. Lawrence Burnley will continue in the April Issue

Spokane's African American Graduation

Join us as we celebrate our graduates
from K-12 schools, colleges and universities

20th
Anniversary

Graduate
Applications
Due April 8

Saturday, April 23, 2016
1-3pm
Whitworth University
Cowles Auditorium

Call Dan Whye at 509-434-5183

HEALTH & MEDICINE

Inland Imaging and The Spokane Links, Inc. Host ANNUAL MAMMOGRAM PARTY

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, according to the article, “Report: Breast Cancer Rates Rising Among African-American Women” by Stacy Simon, published on the American Cancer Society website (<http://www.cancer.org>). Breast cancer, the article says, accounts for nearly 1 in 3 of the cancers that are diagnosed in women, and the rate of cancer amongst African American women is rising.

A 2015 report published by The American Cancer Society, titled “Breast Cancer Facts and Figure” noted that even though Black women have historically had lower incidence rates of breast cancer than white women, death rates among Black women have historically been higher, and that has continued. In fact, the report says, the Black-white disparity in breast cancer death rates has increased over time, and by 2012, breast cancer death rates were 42% higher in Black women than white women. In fact, Black women are more likely to die from breast cancer in every age group.

Two of the reasons cited in the report for the higher death rates amongst Black women are that Black women are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to be diagnosed at later stages of the disease and therefore have the lowest survival at each stage of diagnosis. Black women are also more likely to be diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer, which is an aggressive subtype that is linked to poorer survival.

To combat breast cancer, and to detect breast cancer earlier, when treatments are more likely to be successful, the American



*“Without the mammogram my cancer would have gone undetected.”
-Tamela Richards*

Cancer Society recommends that women should begin having yearly mammograms by the age of 45. Yet, despite the risk, many women in the African American community do not follow that recommendation.

In an effort to reach out to Spokane’s African American women and encourage them to get mammograms and breast cancer screenings, Inland Imaging has been partnering with the Links, Inc. to offer MammoGram parties. This year’s party was on January 26, 2016 and held at the Inland Imaging Center at Holy Family Hospital.

The annual mammogram parties, which are spearheaded each year by Faith Wash-

ington, a nurse manager at Inland Imaging, started as a part of My Sister’s Temple, which is a non-profit organization that was established in 2008 as a program of The Links, Inc. to serve low income residents and communities of color in Spokane.

The “Mam Parties”, as some refer to them, break down many of the barriers that keep Black women from seeking medical treatment.

The invitation that comes from Faith is welcoming, not clinical, and it offers women “a relaxing way to get your annual mammogram screening while you and your friends enjoy beverages, hors d’oeuvres and a massage.”

At the Mam party, the atmosphere is relaxing, and much more like a gathering of sisters than a visit to a medical clinic. There is lots of laughter and conversation, as the women socialize and catch up with old friends, while enjoying appetizers, desserts and give aways.

But despite its social nature, the serious business of screening for breast cancer was also taking place.

Forty-three year old Tamela Richards reluctantly went to the MammoGram Party that took place in November of 2014 because her mother had asked her to come along. She had heard all of the “horror stories” about mammograms and how much they hurt, but agreed to get a mammogram done anyway since she was already there.

To her surprise, Tamela got a call saying that they wanted her “to come back for more tests.” She did. A biopsy was taken and cancer was discovered. “Without the mammogram,” Tamela said, “my cancer would have gone undetected.” But two years later, after chemotherapy and radiation treatment, Tamela’s cancer is now undetected. She is grateful that she went.

Sherry has come to the mammogram party every year since it started. She comes, “for the comradie and the fellowship,” she says, “and to support my sisters.” She also gets a mammogram each year. Naima wishes she could find something like the mammogram party for her sister who is afraid to have the exam done. “If she had a group of women that she was meeting and the process was fun, not fretful, she might do it.”

THE NATIVE PROJECT: SACRED HOSPITALITY FOR ALL



individuals, staff, families and communities. The facility is committed to offering “Sacred Hospitality” to all people seeking services.

Sacred Hospitality is an intentionally created practice where our compassion meets the needs of our patients, staff, and community; where they are welcomed, cherished, and respected as human beings; where stories are shared and valued; and where healing of the body, mind, and spirit can happen.

The NATIVE Project offers a variety of services that are provided in a diverse environment and delivered in a culturally respectful manner. Services include Medical Care, Dental Services, Behavioral Health, Counseling, Chemical Dependency Outpatient Treatment and Chemical Dependency Intensive Outpatient Treatment Programs for Youth, Diabetes Management Programs, Children and Youth Services and Nutrition Programs.

For more information about the NATIVE Project, visit <http://www.nativeproject.org>. To schedule a clinic appointments at the NATIVE, call (509) 483-7535. To schedule a counseling appointment call (509) 325-5502.

The NATIVE Project is a primary health care facility located at 1803 W Maxwell Avenue in the West Central neighborhood of Spokane. The facility, which includes both a community center and a medical clinic, provides comprehensive care to the greater Spokane community.

The mission of The NATIVE Project is to provide quality services that promote wellness, and balance of mind, body and spirit for



THE NATIVE PROJECT

In Partnership With

Providence Women's Health Center

Providence Mammography Coach



If you're age 40 or older, getting a mammogram breast cancer screening should be part of your yearly routine. The Women's Health Center Coach makes these screenings convenient, and will be bringing them to The NATIVE Project!

WHERE:

THE NATIVE Project

WHEN:

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

TIME:

8:00 AM to 5:30 PM

CONTACT:

(509) 483-7535 to make an appointment

www.nativeproject.org

No woman is refused mammography services on the Coach, for lack of ability to pay. For women without insurance, we provide connections to community programs with follow-up health care services. This event is partially funded by a grant provided by the Susan G. Komen Foundation of Eastern Washington.

If you don't have a regular physician, or if you need further tests, The NATIVE Project Patient Benefits Coordinator can assist you.



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

JASMARI GORDON

Artist/Animator



My name is Jasmari Gordon and I am a 16 year old artist and aspiring animator from North Central H.S.

My first piece in this series is inspired by strong women, unity, and the Power Puff Girls.

Unity and supporting one another is very important within any community, especially among women and girls.



INDEPENDANT
LOCAL MUSIC
AND
PERSPECTIVES

THIN AIR
COMMUNITY
RADIO
88.1 FM
92.3 FM

**DO YOU KNOW A
TALENTED YOUTH
OR YOUNG ADULT?**

**The Black Lens
wants to celebrate
our young people.**

**IF WE DON'T,
WHO WILL?**

Call 509-795-1964 or e-mail
sandy@blacklensnews.com

OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE
SERVICES
PROGRAMS

WORDS AND IMAGES OF BLACKNESS



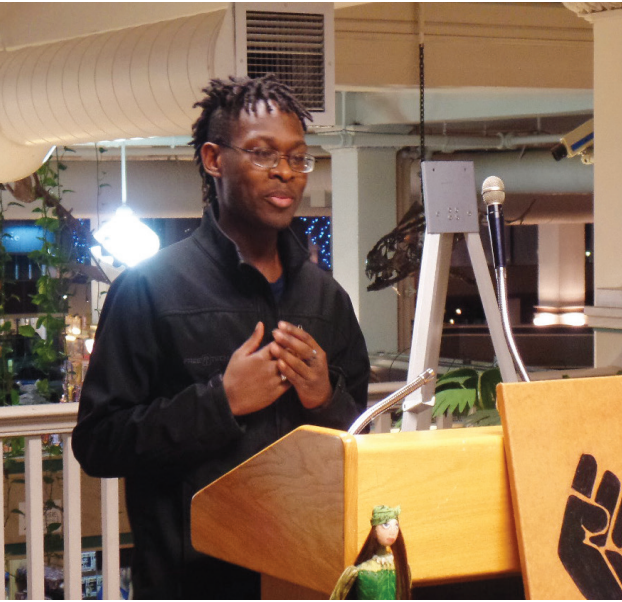
The Black Lens and Aunties Bookstore Partner for First Community Event

A standing room only crowd squeezed into the Mezzanine of Aunties Bookstore in downtown Spokane on Friday, February 12 to experience “Words and Images of Blackness”.

The event, which was the first community event sponsored by The Black Lens, was a partnership between The Black Lens and Aunties Bookstore, and it featured local artists sharing their art, local writers sharing their original pieces, and community members sharing readings from their favorite African American authors.

The speakers, most of whom had not presented in public before, included local artists, poets, students, business owners, an attorney, a screenwriter, and a grandmother. They shared with the enthusiastic audience a little about who they are, stories about their lives and their art, and their motivations for the work that they do.

The Black Lens is committed to celebrating the amazing talent that exists within our community and is already planning a second event. A special thank you to Aunties, Spokane’s Independent Bookstore since 1978, for hosting the event, and to Heather for her vision and her commitment to featuring diverse voices and artists.



OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE
SERVICES
PROGRAMS

Beautiful Women Facebook Group

By Donna Thomas

I'm from Arkansas. I was homeless and I used to be hungry, but wouldn't ask anyone for money or food. I know the shame that homelessness has. I was also beaten by my kids father and he used to make me feel really unattractive. I see men put down women by calling them names.

I started the Beautiful Women Facebook Group in 2013. I created the group to uplift women. I use the group to feed the homeless. I tell them my story and say a prayer with them and take pics with some. I tell them the pics are to encourage others to come out and help them.

The Beautiful Women group members are all over the US and in the Phillipines. Group members in California went out and brought hot coffee to the homeless. This was inspired by my feeds. I do spaghetti feeds and chili feeds. I went out and gave coffee to the homeless, and I've passed out care packages. I want to do more and I will.

Lavice Geater works with me. She is my assistant manager. She always goes out when I ask her to feed the homeless with me. She also encourages others to go out and feed.

My life story is that I was supposed to be blind by the age of 18, but I'm 56 and not blind. The doctors said I couldn't have children. I have 3. My right upper lung was removed and grew back fully functioning. Three doctors diagnosed me with cancer and when the final results came back from



the main lab, it was negative. I'm on disability now. I was a caregiver and a dietary cook.

I am a beautiful woman because I love others. I feel that women are the backbone. We are strong, but weak sometimes. Women need to uplift each other. We have given birth....lost children.... been abused... talked about....

So, from one woman to another, encourage and uplift each other. God Bless. Keep your head up...

We are all beautiful women!

BROKEN ANGEL

by Donna Thomas

Broken angel
flap your wings
and continue to fly.
I really
need you
can't you hear me cry?
Shield me
under your broken wing.
Like Dr. King
I have a dream.
A dream that I must fulfill,
a dream so strong
I get a chill.
Hold me broken angel
for I am weak,
just hold me
you don't have to speak.
When you hold me
and make me strong,
you won't be a broken angel
very long.



Provider of Choice.

For expert, compassionate care.

Celebrating Women's History Month



Planned
Parenthood®

Greater Washington and North Idaho

Schedule online today.

 PPGWNI.ORG

 1.800.230.PLAN

Spokane:

123 E. Indiana Ave.

Spokane Valley:

12104 E. Main Ave.

IN THE SPIRIT

MINISTERS JOIN FORCES

Minister's Fellowship and Community Raise Thousands

The Black Church has always been the place that the Black community could turn to for help when it was needed. Help with medical bills. Help with the cost of a funeral. Help with gas money to get to an interview or even a little cash for groceries to make it to the end of the month. No questions asked. No credit check required. So it makes sense that when someone from the community was in need, it would be the Black church that would step up to help.

Bryn Martin-Williams, a member of Holy Temple when she was growing up, has wanted to be a nurse for as long as she can remember. It is her dream. In fact, Bryn says, "it's almost as if being a nurse is ingrained in my DNA." When she was admitted into Seattle University's College of Nursing, class of 2017, she was overjoyed that her hard work had finally paid off, and she was on her way towards achieving her goal.

But the joy was shortlived. Bryn needed to cover the cost of attending nursing school, and despite her best efforts, she was thousands of dollars short.

That's where the churches stepped in. Bryn's grandmother called Pastor Happy Watkins, who called Ivan Bush, and the two of them got in touch with the Spokane Minister's Fellowship. The result was a community fundraiser that was held on Sunday, February 24 at Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, with a goal of help-

ing Bryn reach her goal of \$5,000 to cover outstanding expenses for the current quarter.

Hosted by Superintendent Ezra Kinlow and emceed by Pastor Happy Watkins, the program featured musical performances from Holy Temple, Morning Star, and New Hope churches, as well as an emotional rendition of "He's Able" by Bryn's sister, and a rousing drum solo performed by Eastern Washington University senior, Quindrey Davis.

Words of wisdom and stories from their life experiences were shared by nurses Wilhelmina Williams, Helen Wade, Faye Baptiste and Faith Washington, who offered their support and encouraged Bryn to not give up on her dream despite the obstacles and challenges that will come her way. "Lean on Me," Faith sang to Bryn, as the audience joined in, demonstrating the sense of community that was evident throughout the program. Bryn also received support and encouragement from her family friends who are also nurses.

Filled with emotion, Bryn thanked those in attendance for supporting her, and Ivan Bush did the honors, presenting her with the total raised, \$3,500. The ministers also vowed continued support for Bryn throughout her time in school.

"What we do for our young," Mr. Bush told the audience, "ensures our viability and sustains us."



SPOKANE MINISTER'S FELLOWSHIP PRESENTS:

HOLY WEEK MINI REVIVAL

MARCH 23-25, 2016

GUEST SPEAKER:

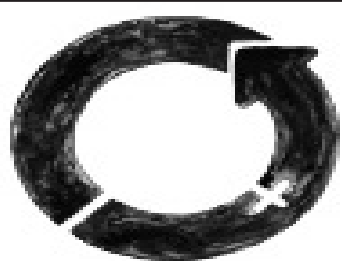
REV. DR. ROBERT L. MANAWAY
Tabernacle Baptist Church, Seattle WA

SERVICES NIGHTLY AT 6:30PM

HOLY TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
806 W. INDIANA, SPOKANE

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:
REV. WALTER KENDRICKS, PATOR
MORNING STAR MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
3903 W. ROWAN, SPOKANE, WA 99207
PHONE: 509: 509-534-4878
E-MAIL: MORNINGSTARBC3909@GMAIL.COM





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2016

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: LORETTA ROSS

Spokane's International Women's Day planning committee is honored to present Loretta Ross as keynote speaker for the 2016 International Women's Day program, which will be held on Saturday, March 19.

Ross is a nationally-recognized expert on women's issues, racism, and human rights, and one of the creators of the reproductive justice movement. Her work focuses on how the intersectionality of social justice issues affects social change and service delivery in all movements – an important framework that is the key to the advancement of all women and communities.

Among her many leadership positions, Ross was Co-Founder and National Coordinator of the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, a network of women of color and allied organizations that organize women of color in the reproductive justice movement. Ross has appeared on CNN, BET, "Lead Story," "Good Morning America," "The Donahue Show," "Democracy Now," and "The Charlie Rose Show."

International Women's Day is a global celebration of women and girls. The Spokane celebration is an opportunity to foster commu-



nity among women and share knowledge to advance all women in our area. Participants include the YWCA Spokane, Eastern Washington University Chicano Education Pro-

gram, Eastern Washington University Women's Studies Program, the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane, Spokane Area NOW, Greater Spokane Progress, and Spokane WAM. The program is facilitated by Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho.

Prior to Ross' keynote, this year's International Women's Day event will feature an interactive art experience curated by Spokane WAM – a creative network for local women in arts and media. Also leading up to the keynote will be a community resource fair, where attendees are able to connect directly with local organizations and network with one another.

Spokane's 2016 International Women's Day is on **Saturday, March 19th, from 4-8pm at The Riverside Place Blue Room and the Commandery Room, 1100 W Riverside Ave Spokane, WA.**

The event is free and open to the public. Food and refreshments will be provided. For more information or for accommodations, transportation needs, or special childcare instructions please contact Tiffany Harms, event coordinator, at tiffany.harms@ppgwni.org or call 509-464-9875.



Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Uncompromising Commitment to Communities: Service, Leadership, Empowerment

CELEBRATING 103 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

A Sisterhood Called to Serve: Transforming Lives, Impacting Communities

Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.
Founders Day Luncheon
March 12, 2016
Noon
Red Lion Inn at the Park
Ballroom D

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated was founded on Howard University's campus in January 1913 by 22 collegiate women. These students wanted to use their collective strength to promote academic excellence and to provide assistance to those in need.

In March of 1913, the Founders of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. performed their first public act. They participated in the Women's Suffrage March in Washington, D. C. The organization was incorporated in 1930.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to provide assistance and support through established programs in local communities throughout the world.



Keynote Speaker: Mrs. Sandra Phillips Johnson
Director of the Farwest Region

More than 250,000 women have joined Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. since it was established. The sorority currently has 1,000 collegiate and alumnae chapters that are located in the United States, England, Japan (Tokyo and Okinawa), Germany, the Virgin Islands, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica and the Republic of Korea.

Since its founding, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. has clearly distinguished itself as a public service organization that boldly confronts the challenges of African Americans and, hence, all Americans. Over the years, a wide range of programs addressing education, health, international development, and strengthening of the African

American family have evolved. In realizing its mission, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. provides an extensive array of public service initiatives through its Five-Point Program Thrust of Economic Development, Educational Development, International Awareness and Involvement, Physical and Mental Health, and Political Awareness and Involvement.

On March 12, 2016, Spokane Alumnae Chapter will host their Founders Day luncheon at the Red Lion Inn at the Park at noon in Ballroom D. The theme is "A Sisterhood Called to Serve: Transforming Lives, Impacting Communities" and the guest speaker is Mrs. Sandra Phillips Johnson, the Director of the Farwest Region.

The local chapter has been active in the Spokane community for thirty-seven years. A scholarship will be awarded to a high school student in the area, and outstanding community volunteers will be recognized. The public is invited to attend.

For tickets, please call Ms. Jeanne Bayes, President, at 509-255-6013. All proceeds will benefit the scholarship program, the Dr. Betty Shabazz Delta Program and the Dr. Jeanne L. Noble GEMS Institute Program.

BUSINESS / ECONOMICS

DYCELIA WEISS: A SERVANT'S HEART

By Dycelia Weiss

I was born in North Carolina and raised in the inner city of Baltimore, MD. As a child, I had to overcome many challenges. I was a wallflower. Shy. I remember reading out loud in class was one of my greatest fears.

I attended private school in Baltimore's inner city, which was not a popular thing in my neighborhood. So, often we had to fight our way home. But there was always someone who was there to show me a better way.

At the age of 21, I gave my life to Christ and my fears disappeared. As a believer, I was set free from many of my childhood fears. This honor belongs to God. I am no longer that shy, timid and scared person. Today, I never meet a stranger. This was the first door that was opened for me.

I arrived in Spokane in April 2004 because New Testament Christian Church needed a piano player and I wanted to meet that need. So I left Graham, Washington and relocated to Spokane. My career path has always been in customer service. For the last 11 years I was employed with ECOVA, a cost management and energy sustainability company. I started as a data entry/billing specialist and was promoted to an open/close Representative. When I resigned to start my own business, I was a Data Specialist.



Alone, all alone. Nobody, but nobody can make it out here alone.

-Maya Angelou

A turning point in my life came when I was given an opportunity to start my own business. I was told I could either build my own dream or have someone hire me to build theirs. My passion to help families drove me to pursue my dream.

Many of us have stopped dreaming; we don't have goals to drive us to go beyond what we know, but I'm willing to make a difference.

When I entered into the financial industry and became a business owner, I was told this is a male dominated arena, but this did not deter me. I dare to make a place for myself as well as other women.

I have a servant's heart. My passion is to bring financial education to every day working families. Individuals and families need to know that they have options. They need to be empowered to dream again. Too many families are unprepared for the unexpected. We know death is a reality, but many of us fail to prepare for it. As a visionary, I am determined to bring change to the Spokane community. I will go where I am needed.

Dycelia owns her own business, Weiss Financial Consulting, which she started in 2013. She is also an independent associate with World Financial Group, Inc. (WFG), a national financial services marketing company with associates throughout the United States. Dycelia educates individuals and families on financial concepts, and offers financial products and solutions, including life and health insurance. As a part of her business, Dycelia offers monthly interactive workshops and seminars in the community. Her current workshop is called: Finance 101: Discovering Your Financial Fingerprint. For more information or to register contact Dycelia Weiss at 509-327-0165 or dyceliaweiss@gmail.com

2016 WOMEN OF POWER SUMMIT

Sponsored by Black Enterprise Magazine

KNOW YOUR WORTH. OWN YOUR TRUTH. EMBRACE YOUR POWER.

March 9-12, 2016, Diplomat Resort and Spa, Hollywood, FL

The 2016 Women of Power Summit is a four day executive leadership conference designed to prepare and embolden women executives of color to take risks, think strategically, and rise above all challenges. The summit, which will bring together 800 women from across the country, will be held from March 9, 2016 - March 12, 2016 at the Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood, Florida.

The annual empowerment weekend is dedicated to career advancement and executive skill building, but it also focuses on the unique challenges women of color face outside of the workplace – the delicate balance of career, family, and personal enrichment.

For the attendees, Women of Power is a unique opportunity to connect with peers; build on strengths; and learn new, marketable skills. Participants can expect to gain access to and learn from industry leaders about how to optimize their potential for professional advancement. They will participate in interactive workshops and sessions that examine corporate trends, leadership and management skills, and small business issues.

Additionally, participants will get to network with executive women from across the country, and enjoy restorative activities such as morning workouts, golf clinics, one-on-one coaching sessions, nightly entertainment, and much more.

This year's keynote speakers include: Debra L. Lee, the Chairman & Chief Executive Offi-

cer for BET Networks; Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, the first woman to be elected and consecrated as Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church; and Arnold Donald, the President & Chief Executive Officer of Carnival Corporation and Cruise Lines.

Other speakers include: Jo Ann Jenkins, the Chief Executive Officer of AARP; Cynthia Marshall, Chief Diversity Officer for AT&T; Deborah Rosado Shaw, Senior Vice President for Pepsico; Congresswoman Joyce Beatty of Ohio's 3rd Congressional District; and Dawn Hudson, Chief Marketing Officer for the National Football League, amongst many others.

In addition to world renowned speakers, executive coaching sessions, and opportunities for networking, the action packed summit will also include a weekend of shopping, mixers, receptions, and fitness activities, as well as entertainment from Grammy nominated artist Johnny Gill, and Capone, The Gangster of Comedy.

The featured event of the summit, the 11th Annual Legacy Awards Gala, will honor four powerful Black women: Golf Pioneer, Renee Powell; Actress and Singer, Vanessa L. Williams; Actress, Alfre Woodard; and Dr. N. Joyce Payne, Founder of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

Black Enterprise, annual sponsor of the Women of Power Summit, has been is the premier business, investing, and wealth-building resource for African Americans since 1970. For information about the summit visit: <http://www.womenofpower.com>



GOVERNMENT / POLITICS

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN Launches New Spokane Chapter

By Amanda Mansfield
President, Spokane Area NOW

Feminism today is about much more than ending sexism. Today's "third wave" feminists advocate for equality for all, and empowerment of all oppressed groups including people of color.

This "intersectional" feminism states that all systems of oppression, whether they be gender, racial, class, sexual or gender identity, and so on, are interrelated. Intersectional feminism is about reflecting the needs of all marginalized groups and fighting back against all of the interconnected systems of oppression that affect different women in different ways.

The dynamic new Spokane Area chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), which launched in August, 2015, is actively working to eliminate systems of oppression and foster equality in a number of ways, including:

- Fighting racism;
- Promoting economic parity for women and people of color;
- Promoting LGBTQIA rights;
- Opposing police violence, particularly against people of color;
- Fighting against sexual harassment and assault;
- Protecting reproductive rights;
- Promoting body positivity and self-esteem among women and girls of all races and ethnic/cultural backgrounds

"NOW condemns the racism that inflicts a double burden of race and sex discrimination on women of color," the National Organization for Women's Combatting Racism Committee states. "Seeing human rights as indivisible, we are committed to identifying and fighting against those

barriers to equality and justice that are imposed by racism."

Like our national organization—a leader in the struggle for civil rights since forming in 1966—Spokane Area NOW is committed to working for equal opportunities for women of color in all areas including employment, education and reproductive rights.

Most recently, Spokane Area NOW has participated in:

- The City of Spokane Gender and Race Pay Equity Task Force
- Black Lives Matter protests, marches, and teaching sessions
- A community forum on how to address inherent racism, sexism, and homophobia within the Spokane Police Department
- Spokane NAACP meetings and events
- A discussion of white privilege and the importance of integrating the perspective of women of color within all

barriers to equality and justice that are imposed by racism."

Like our national organization—a leader in the struggle for civil rights since forming in 1966—Spokane Area NOW is committed to working for equal opportunities for women of color in all areas including employment, education and reproductive rights.

Most recently, Spokane Area NOW has participated in:

- The City of Spokane Gender and Race Pay Equity Task Force
- Black Lives Matter protests, marches, and teaching sessions
- A community forum on how to address inherent racism, sexism, and homophobia within the Spokane Police Department
- Spokane NAACP meetings and events
- A discussion of white privilege and the importance of integrating the perspective of women of color within all

Our chapter also has promoted actions and events for the region's Black Student Unions, Spokane NAACP, and the Black Lens News. We aim to deepen our relationship with racial justice advocacy groups to ensure that racial justice remains at the forefront of our action plan.

The Spokane Area chapter of NOW is an interactive, ever-growing and always-changing chapter in which everyone's opinions, thoughts, and ideas matter, and we strive to consider the perspectives of women of color in all that we do. We want to know which issues you want to address and we are actively seeking diversity among our members and supporters. We welcome people of color, from all racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, and of all sexes, ages, and genders. In short, we welcome everyone and anyone committed to dismantling our oppressive system and creating a culture of equal opportunity for all.

You are invited to come and join us at our action-packed chapter meetings on the third Wednesday of every month, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the downtown Spokane Public Library's meeting room 1A, on the first floor. Our next meeting is March 16.

Let's make a difference together for African American women and girls, and for all oppressed groups.

For more information on NOW's meetings, membership, and activities, "like" and follow us at SpokaneNOW on Facebook or join our mailing list by sending your email address to NOW.Spokane@gmail.com.



Do You Know How to Caucus? Spokane Democrats To Hold Caucus Orientation Sessions

Washington State Democrats do not use the state-run primary system to choose its Presidential nominee. Instead, Democrats who want to have a part in choosing our next president should plan to attend precinct caucuses, which will be held at 10am on March 26, 2016.

But what is a caucus?

Instead of casting a ballot, like in an election, at a caucus, members of the Democratic Party will attend local meetings and join with their family members, friends, and neighbors at precinct locations around town to have conversations and discuss their choice for the next President.

It is a lively exchange of ideas and beliefs, where caucus goers supporting Presidential candidates can give a quick pitch to undecided voters and try to sway others to their side.

After a certain amount of time, a tally of the caucus goers is done and the votes are counted. Delegates are allotted to each Presidential candidate based on the results

of the votes. Each group of caucus goers then chooses their delegates for the regional/state convention.

Washington state does not officially register voters by party, however each attendee at the caucuses will be asked to affirm that they consider themselves a Democrat when they sign in. Anyone who considers themselves a Democrat will be allowed to attend precinct caucuses.

However, only registered voters, or people who will turn 18 between the date of the precinct caucuses and Election Day 2016, will be able to vote for the Democratic nominee for president.

Voter registration forms will be available at caucus locations for people who need to register on-site.

For those who are interested in participating in this year's caucus, but are unfamiliar with the caucus system (or for those who are Precinct Committee Officers (PCOs), the Spokane County Democrats will be presenting five Caucus Orientation Ses-

sions in March to familiarize Democrats with how the 3/26 caucuses will operate.

The orientation sessions will walk participants through the caucus process from beginning to end, including the nuts and bolts of how the delegate allocation process works. Each session should last about an hour, with time for questions. No need to register, just bring a pen/pencil and a notepad.

Orientation Sessions:

March 9 - 7-8:30pm (Thursday)
Northeast Community Center
4001 N Cook St, Spokane

March 10 - 7-8:30pm (Thursday)
Bethany Presbyterian Church Spokane
2607 S Ray St, Spokane

March 12 - 11am-12:30pm (Saturday)
Wren Pierson Community Center
615 4th St, Cheney, Washington 99004

March 13 - 5-6:30pm (Sunday)
Spokane Valley Library
12004 E Main Ave, Spokane

March 19 - 9-10:30am (Saturday)
Westminster United Church of Christ
411 S Washington St, Spokane

To pre-register for the caucus and find your caucus precinct (or where to go for your caucus), visit:

<https://www.demcaucus.com/register>

For more information contact the Spokane County Democrats at 509-324-8525 or e-mail to office@spokanedemocrats.org.

REPUBLICANS:

The Republican Party will hold a Statewide Primary on May 24, 2016 to allocate delegates to the 2016 Republican National Convention. For information call the Spokane County Republican Party (GOP) at 509-838-6162 or e-mail info@spokanegop.com

OUR VOICES

THIS IS OURS

By Inga Laurent

These last few weeks have been devastating. I find myself at extremes—on the verge of tears or boiling over with anger. I do not understand the range of responses to the loss of human life. I cannot understand the lack of civility, accountability and respect for the sanctity of human life, regardless of technicalities, action, inaction, past action, body size or skin color...

But what has been most devastating is the silence.

The silence of my colleagues, my students, my profession....Never have I found so many of us with so little to say.

And while the silence may be benign, it certainly does not feel that way. I cannot explain why the silence seems so deafening, so sinister, so dark, so loud, but it does. The silence feels like indifference or defeat.

And I understand that we are silent for so many reasons.

Because we aren't ready to, aren't sure how to, don't



want to talk about it. Because we don't want to offend, admit, deny, accept, acknowledge or be complicit in it. Because it's complicated, nuanced, jumbled, overwhelming and there are just no clear solutions, resolutions or easy answers.

But silence cannot be the answer, especially not for us.

This is ours. We create it, sustain it, perpetuate this system. We are not outsiders, on the periphery, the borders, or the edge. We are in the belly of the beast; we are the beast. We are in it, we are it. It is us. This is ours.

And so it is our responsibility to act, to fix, to change, to remedy.

How?

There is no clarity here,

the path undefined, hazy. But we start by owning it. This is ours.

We own it and we march. We talk, we debate, we blog, we discuss, we bring it to light – in forums, in conferences, on the news, individually, in the classroom – we are unceasing. We use our tools: facts, precedent, policy and logic. We. Do. Not. Stop.

Because this is ours.

AIN'T I A WOMAN

By Sojourner Truth

Delivered in 1851 at the Women's Convention in Akron, OH

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? [member of audience whispers, "intellect"] That's it, honey. What's that got to do with women's rights or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say.

A BLACK KID IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL

By Brittanyana Pierro

To be a Black kid in a White America is to be in a constant state of confusion and disillusionment; to be a Black kid in an American school is often to be in a constant state of self-deprecation and lack of motivation.

Our country is going through a revolution, in which those being persecuted are no longer afraid to speak up. As we change the path of our nation, we must also pave the way for those that will come after.

School is a place in which we develop the ability to learn, and along with that we develop as a person. The true paradox of public education is that rather than teaching kids to be themselves, it teaches them to be sheep. And to be a Black sheep in a racist society is quite like the lullaby; your wool was stolen, and you're forced to keep a thick skin.

While many of our nation's children are being told to recite their alphabets and numbers, a select few are being taught that they are incompetent. In many schools, especially in low diversity areas like Spokane, having brown skin is like having a learning disability. From the moment you walk in the door, your place has already been made.

Phil High-Edward, an assistant principal at Shadle Park High School, is one



of the few Black educators in the Spokane school district. Because of this, he offered a unique perspective on the racial situation of Spokane's educational system. I asked High-Edward how he felt about the representation of people of color at his school, and this is what he said.

"I see it as a very segregated school system. You will see the majority of our African American, Mexican American and minority children in lower academic rigor classes. You'll see more of them in special education classes. You will not see a lot in academically rigorous classes like AP and Honor classes. We say something with that... [we've] already selected who's gonna be successful and who's not."

The struggle of being a person of color in the education system, is that the people in charge view us with precon-

ceived labels. They see through a lens of stereotypes that say the Black kid is a thug, or the Mexican kid is illiterate. Even though these labels aren't true, enough enforcement will make the child believe they are. Even though these labels aren't true, we begin to see ourselves through the broken lens.

A Black Kid in a Public School: a child fighting for equality.

OUR VOICES

REPLACING JUSTICE SCALIA: Does an Obama Appointment Have a Chance?

By Sharon Kyle, JD

(Reprinted with permission from *The Black Commentator*, <http://www.blackcommentator.com>)

On Saturday, February 13th we learned of the passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Although he was no friend of the progressive community, we offer condolences to the Scalia family.

Four of the nine sitting Supreme Court Justices are over the age of 75. Antonin Scalia was 79 at the time of his passing. The remaining septagenarians and octagenarian are Justices Breyer (77), Kennedy (79), and the Notorious RBG – Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who is 82. The loss of one or more justices over the next few years is inevitable and should be on the radar of any and everyone who has the right to vote. The death of Scalia highlights the importance of the upcoming 2016 presidential election.

Now, as President Obama has yet another chance to fill a Supreme Court vacancy, we'll see one of the most consequential decisions a president can make. We'll also see one of the primary reasons a party wants control of the U.S. Senate. With Republicans in control, in a presidential election year no less, does an Obama appointment have a chance? Will we see judicial gridlock? Will there be a Constitutional struggle? Will the battle that is likely to ensue lead the public to engage in greater civic participation or at least increase their interest in the political process?

I certainly hope so because the stakes are so high. It's too early to answer any of these questions, but let's take a look at what has happened historically.

Since its inception, there have been 112 United States Supreme Court Justices. Fifty of these justices, including Justice Scalia, have died in office. Since 1789, there have



only been two ways justices have left the bench – 55% have left through their own volition, either resigning or retiring, and 45% have died in office. Although the U.S. Constitution allows for the removal of a judge via the impeachment process, the nation has yet to use this option. So, with an almost lifetime guarantee, being appointed and confirmed as a justice to the U.S. Supreme Court is arguably a more powerful position than that of the president of the United States.

Supreme Court cases have shaped and changed the nation in ways that the executive and legislative branches either don't have the power or the will to do. In recent times,

our nation has been rocked by Supreme Court decisions in cases like:

Shelby County v. Holder, a decision that essentially gutted the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and opened the door for many states, most in the South, to implement voter restrictions.

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, which made it easier for deep pocketed individuals and corporations both domestic and abroad to buy elections.

Bush v. Gore, the case that resolved the dispute surrounding the 2000 presidential election which resulted in George W. Bush being ushered into the White House – paving the way for the Chief Justice Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito appointments, ergo *Citizens United* and *Shelby*.

In addition to Scalia's seat, the next president might easily appoint three other new justices to the Court, given the advanced ages of the current justices. Given that 45% of Supreme Court Justices die in office, pressing the presidential candidates for who they might appoint if elected should be standard fare. With the passing of Scalia, we will no doubt continue to hear much more from the candidates on this issue.

Sharon Kyle, JD, is the Co-Founder and Publisher of the *LA Progressive*, (<https://www.laprogressive.com>), an online social justice magazine. With her husband Dick, she publishes several other print and online newsletters on political and social justice issues. In addition to the *LA Progressive*, Ms. Kyle holds a Juris Doctorate, is an adjunct professor at Peoples College of Law in Los Angeles, and sits on the board of the ACLU Pasadena/Foothills Chapter and the Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party. She is also on the Editorial Board for *The Black Commentator*.

MISSING FROM THE CONVERSATION: Black Women and Mass Incarceration

by Kimberly Tignor

(Reprinted from *Trice Edney News Wire Service* - <http://www.tricedneywire.com>)

Now that we know that former Oklahoma City police officer Daniel Holtzclaw will spend the rest of his life behind bars for multiple counts of rape and sexual assault against black women, the national conversation has turned from recounting his heinous crimes to discussing an even more disturbing question: why did it take so long for most of us to notice this story?

The answer, as many commentators have pointed out, lies at the uncomfortable intersection of gender, race, and class. The Holtzclaw saga underscores a broader truth about America in 2015: our criminal justice system systemically undervalues and abuses—and our mainstream media routinely ignores—poor black women.

Katie Truslow (her name changed to protect her privacy) is a Black woman who has faced these injustices. Like 85 percent of incarcerated women, her prison story begins with physical and sexual violence. After her abusive ex-husband raped her during their divorce, Truslow began dat-

ing the drug dealer who protected her. When her boyfriend was indicted, Truslow's connection to him was all the prosecutors needed to charge her with conspiracy. Truslow's status as a black woman with little money made it easier for the criminal justice system to see her as a perpetrator rather than as a victim.

The theory of intersectionality explains our society's ambivalence toward Americans who happen to be women and black. Intersectionality posits that social categorizations such as race, class, gender, and sexual orientation overlap in ways that create unique disadvantages for individuals who belong to more than one category.

American civil rights law focuses on only one disadvantaged status at a time. However, racial justice tends to be defined in terms of the needs of black men and feminism in terms of the needs of white women. Hence the relative obscurity of black women like Katie Truslow and the survivors of Holtzclaw's crimes: they are victimized because they are women, they are ignored, stigmatized, and even incarcerated just because they are black and predominantly poor.



A similar dynamic explains the lack of data about incarcerated black women. Corrections agencies disaggregate prisoner data by race and by gender, meaning that we know plenty about black prisoners and about women prisoners. Because the data is not separated by race and gender, we rarely know how many of the black prisoners are women, and how many of the women are black. The lack of data limits the conversation. Activists and policymakers can have detailed conversations about black people and women in the prison system but must resort to imprecise statistics and anecdotal evidence to describe the state of Black women prisoners.

We extrapolated from the one data point included about black women in the Prisoners in 2014 report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics provided that black women make up 23 percent of incarcerated women. By contrast, black women comprise only 14 percent of the U.S. female population. We also know that Black women are incarcerated at roughly twice the rate of White and Latina women.

Our national silence about black women's experiences with mass incarceration does not render their absences inconsequential. Katie Truslow's sudden absence was keenly felt by her daughters, who were only 7 and 9-years-old at the time of her incarceration. Of the 61 percent of black women prisoners who have minor children, more than three quarters were their children's primary caregiver prior to their incarceration.

Against Truslow's wishes, her girls eventually wound up living with the mother of her abusive ex-husband. Since Truslow was incarcerated, she was not there to protect her daughters, and the cycle of sexual abuse began to repeat itself. She describes one incident in which she had to call someone to track down her daughter when the girl ran away

because of Truslow's ex-husband's sexual advances.

Truslow now worries that a different cycle will repeat itself—that of incarceration. She works with women who are reentering the general population after prison and sees the same stories filled with sexual trauma, domestic violence, and desperation time and time again. Truslow knows that story well: it is her story, and it is also the story of her daughters. And she worries that incarceration, like sexual abuse, is a “generational occurrence” and “a pain that will carry out to [her] daughter.”

To prevent that from happening, we must include the stories of black women like Katie Truslow and the survivors of Daniel Holtzclaw's crimes when we speak about the injustices of the American criminal justice system. More importantly, we must take concrete steps to address the ways that system uniquely burdens women of color. Only when justice is holistic and inclusive is it complete.

Kimberly Tignor is the interim director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Lawyer's Public Policy Project.

ERIN JONES

Continued From 7

A couple of years later, Erin was offered a position at Whitworth University, which is what brought her to Spokane. She was to be running Whitworth’s Act Six, college preparation program, but unexpected budget cuts eliminated the position that Erin had planned to take, and she ended up applying to be a substitute teacher for Spokane Public Schools, but heard nothing back from the district. The district said they were waiting for a “pool of applicants” before they could interview for an open English position that was at Rogers High School. Tired of waiting, Erin told her husband and her children, “mommy is getting a job”. She marched down to Rogers High School the next day and within forty-eight hours had a job.

Her second year teaching at Rogers, Erin received the 2007 Milken Educator Award, which honors top educators from around the country. In 2013, Erin was selected as one of ten White House Champions of Change for Educational Excellence for African Americans for her work promoting educational excellence for African-Americans in the community, and most recently, the Washington state PTA honored Erin with their Educator of the Year award in 2015.

The Milken award propelled Erin to the State Superintendent’s Office, where she worked for Terry Berguson for a year as Director of the Center of the Improvement of Student Learning in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and then three years for State Superintendent Randy Dorn as Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement.

In the November 2016 election, Erin will be running for the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

For more information visit Erin’s website at: <http://www.erinjones2016.org>.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Continued From Page 1

BlackEnterprise.com reports that women in general now own 30 percent of all businesses in the United States, accounting for some 9.4 million firms. African-American women control 14 percent of these companies, or an estimated 1.3 million businesses. In contrast, white women own 6.1 million, the lion’s share of the women-owned firms, according to the National Women’s Business Council.

Generally, black businesses - owned by men and women - still lag grossly behind those owned by whites, says Malveaux. “The issue is that African Americans are less likely to have access to capital and African-American women are even less likely than that. In terms of access to capital, no African American has a level playing field.”

The Wall Street Journal reported in 2014 that black-owned businesses, which once received 8.2 percent of all loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration, had dropped to only 2.3 percent.

From a black man’s perspective, it has been inspiring to observe the growth of entrepreneurship among determined black women, says Howard R. Jean, co-founder of the Black Male Entrepreneurship Institute. He concludes the growth is spurred, in part, by black women increasingly realizing their worth.

“It comes to a point when women have stopped begging for a seat in the boardroom and began creating their own,” Jean says. “Realizing their value on the open market and capitalizing on the certification pools that increase their opportunities for success in business, women are now in a position of influence in the business community.”

Edna Kane-Williams is senior vice president for multicultural leadership at AARP.

THOUGHTS FROM A GRAND-MOTHER

Continued from Page 6

She was the first Black tennis player to win Wimbledon (in 1957) and the U.S. Open (in 1958). Aside from her success, she is most remembered for breaking the color barrier in professional tennis. She won a total of five Grand Slam titles.

Marian Anderson- 1897 – 1993) In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution) refused to let Anderson sing in DC’s Constitution Hall because she was Black. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt resigned from the DAR, and her husband’s administration arranged an outdoor concert at the Lincoln Memorial for a crowd of 75,000 and millions of radio listeners. Anderson was the first African American to sing with the Metropolitan Opera, and in 1958 became a delegate to the United Nations.

These women are just a few who have been very instrumental in our society throughout history, especially our Black history. Special thanks to each and every one of you for your numerous accomplishments and contributions.

MORNINGSTAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Walter J. Kendricks, Pastor

3909 W. Rowan
Spokane, WA

Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday Worship: 11:00am

509-534-4878

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The City of Spokane is testing for:

Entry Level Firefighters

Saturday, March 26th, 2016

8:00a.m.

For more information and to register for this exam go to:

www.publicsafetytesting.com

or

<https://my.spokanecity.org>

Contact our office directly at:

509-625-6160 or



ADVERTISING SALES

The Black Lens is looking for an independent Sales Rep to help the paper grow.

Part Time - Commission Only
Some Sales Experience Preferred.
References Required.

Call 509-535-3903

MARCH EVENTS

MARCH 12

DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATION

Keynote Speaker: Mrs Sandra Phillips Johnson,
Director, Farwest Region

Noon

Red Lion Inn at the Park, Ballroom D

303 W. North River Drive, Spokane

Tickets: \$35 each

Contact: 509-255-6013 or 509-928-8884

MARCH 13

THE TRIPLE NICKEL: BLACK PARATROOPERS OF WASHINGTON STATE DURING WWII

A conversation about the seldom told story of the first
all-black "Airborne Infantry Firefighters Present by
Robert L. Bartlett, EWU Professor, Sociology & Justice
Studies

2pm

Kalispell Room at Norther Quest Casino

100 N. Hayford Road, Airway Heights

Presented by Humanities Washington and hosted by
the Spokane Chapter Military Officers Association of
America

MARCH 14

FINANCE 101: DISCOVERING YOUR FINANCIAL FINGERPRINT

with Dycelia Weiss of Weiss Financial Consulting

Enjoy an evening of fun as we discover how money was
modeled in our lives: Our Financial Fingerprint.

5:30pm

Emmanuel Family Life Center

631 S Richard Allen Court

For more information or to register contact Dycelia Weiss at
509-327-0165 or dyceliaweiss@gmail.com

MARCH 16

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN NOW SPOKANE CHAPTER MEETING

6-8 pm

Spokane Public Library (Downtown Branch)

Meeting Room 1A (First floor)

For more information email NOW.Spokane@gmail.com.

MARCH 18

SESSIONZ SMOOTH JAZZ

Hosted by Michael Bethely, featuring Heather
Simmons and guests

Inspiring music and spoken word

7:30-10:30pm

The Big Dipper

171 S Washington St, Spokane, WA

Cost: \$10

MARCH 19

SPOKANE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day is a global celebration of
women and girls.

4-8PM

The Riverside Place Blue Room & Commandery
Room

1100 W Riverside Ave Spokane, WA

Cost: Free

Food and refreshments will be provided. For more infor-
mation or for special needs accommadations, transporta-
tion needs, or special childcare instructions please con-
tact Tiffany Harms, event coordinator, at tiffany.harms@
ppgwni.org or call 509-464-9875.

MARCH 21

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general meeting

7-9pm

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

MARCH 23-25

SPOKANE MINISTER'S FELLOWSHIP HOLY WEEK CITY WIDE REVIVAL

Featuring Guest Speaker: :

Rev. Dr. Robert L. Manaway

Tabernacle Baptist Church, Seattle WA

Services 6:30pm Nightly

Holy Temple COGIC

806 W Indiana Ave, Spokane

For information call: 509: 509-534-4878

MARCH 27

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

7am

Holy Temple COGIC

806 W Indiana Ave, Spokane

MARCH 27

WORD OF FAITH EASTER SERVICE

Featuring God's Harmony, WSU Gospel Choir

Plus Miracle and Healing Service

10am

Word of Faith Christian Center

9212 E. Montgomery Ave, Suite 400, Spokane Valley

509-891-5253

APRIL 23

2016 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION CEREMONY

Come join us for the 20th Anniversary of celebrating our
graduates

1:00pm

Whitworth University Campus

Hixson Union Building (HUB)

300 W Hawthorne Road

Spokane WA 99251

Community Forum on Fair Chance Hiring

The Spokane City Council will host a com-
munity educational forum on Fair Chance
Hiring **March 8 at 6 p.m.** in the City Council
Chambers. The forum will also be televised on
CityCable 5.

Fair Chance Hiring is an employment practice
policy adopted by more than 70 cities and nine
states across the United States to remove barriers
to employment for individuals with arrest/
criminal conviction records.

The community forum will be moderated by
District Court Judge Richard Leland

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

COME WORSHIP WITH US
And enjoy a SPIRIT filled Worship!

Come and receive Jesus:
He delivers
He saves
He restores
He heals

**HOLY TEMPLE
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**
806 W. INDIANA
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99205
509-624-0522

Ezra and Eleise Kinlow

New Hope Baptist Church

Pastor Happy Watkins
Asst. Pastor James Watkins

The Friendly Church

SUNDAYS 11AM

409 S. Greene St.
Spokane WA
509-535-1336
newhopespokane.com

CHKN-N-MO
SOUTHERN STYLE COOKIN'

COUPON
ONE DINNER 1/2 OFF

When you Buy One Dinner You
Receive a Second Dinner of Equal
or Lesser Value for Half Price

414 1/2 Sprague Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201
509-838-5071
<http://chicken-n-more.com>

"Best Southern Food in Washington"

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN WORD OF FAITH CHRISTIAN CENTER



FEATURING

GOD'S HARMONY

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY'S GOSPEL CHOIR

EASTER SUNDAY - MARCH 27, 2016
10AM

Plus Miracle & Healing Service!!!

Word of Faith Christian Center
9212 E. Montgomery Ave, Suite 400, Spokane Valley
509-891-5253

WORD OF FAITH MIRACLE & HEALING SERVICE

If you need a Healing, Miracle or Deliverance please join us! Pastor Otis Manning will be Praying for the Sick and for Miracles!

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. -James 5:14-16