

THE

BLACK LENS

SPOKANE

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

SANDERS/CLINTON VISIT SPOKANE

A Black Lens Analysis of Presidential Campaign Rallies

By Sandra Williams

It's not every day that both a presidential candidate and a former United States President visit Spokane in the same week, in fact, the Presidential candidate made an unprecedented second stop in Spokane within a matter of days. It looks like the election season is heating up.

The Black Lens, represented by myself, along with Photographer Robert Lloyd, was privileged to be able to join the press corps for all three events and what follows are some my thoughts about the experience.

For starters I was absolutely overwhelmed by the turnout for the Bernie Sanders rally that was held at the Spokane Convention Center in downtown Spokane on Sunday, March 20. Approximately ten thousand people showed up, standing in a line that snaked for over a mile through Riverfront Park. It would have been hard to not be impressed. The rambuncous crowd was skewed towards



Photos Courtesy: Robert Lloyd, visit <http://4comculture.com> for additional photo coverage

the younger end of the age spectrum, which came as no surprise, but it was much more diverse than I expected, given the media's drumbeat about Sanders inability to appeal to people of color, particularly African Americans.



The Clinton rally, with former President Bill Clinton representing his wife, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was decidedly smaller, a couple thousand at best, and surprising to me, it was much less diverse. But I am blaming a good deal

of both of those issues on the time of the event, which was held on a Monday afternoon, March 21, not a particularly good time to reach out to constituents, especially people of color who are less likely to have the privilege of being in jobs where they can take off at will.

This by the way is a complaint that I have repeatedly made to those who are planning events when they have the expectation of people from the community showing up. Sanders' second event, although still large, was a good deal smaller than the first. It too was held on a week day, during business hours, which I am confident had a noticeable impact.

In comparing the two candidates (and I can only use Clinton's words to represent his wife's positions), I spent time contrasting the major points that each of the speakers outlined. Clinton spent a good deal of his time talking about economic issues: national infrastructure, affordable rapid broadband, hedge funds and community banking. *Continued on Page 18*

SILENT PROTEST AT CITY HALL

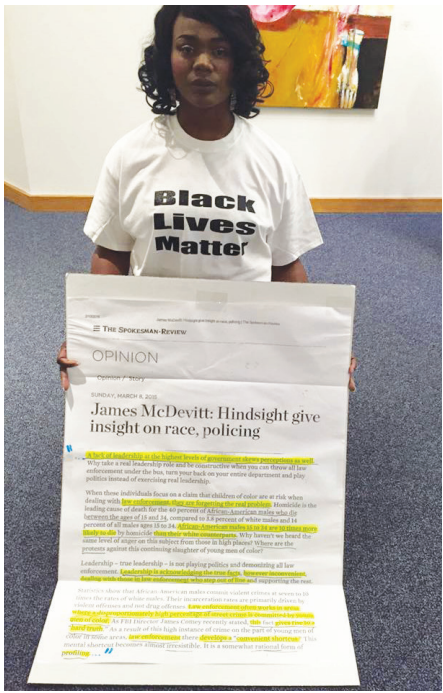
By Sandra Williams

Sometimes the sound of silence can be the loudest sound of all. That was the motivation behind the silent protest that took place in the Chase Gallery of Spokane's City Hall on Monday, February 29. A dozen protesters raising their voices by not saying a word.

The protest was focused on the appointment of Jim McDevitt as Interim Director of Law Enforcement. Concerns had been raised by a cross section of community members, especially from the Black community, about the Mayor moving forward with the appointment after an Op-ed piece written by McDevitt in 2015 surfaced that appeared to excuse racial profiling as justified and characterize African American males as violent.

Kitara Shaules, one of the organizers of the protest, expressed the frustration that many in the community felt, that their concerns were not being heard. "We noticed that when there were marches and protests in Spokane a couple of years ago, peopled listened, but when we continue to meet and meet and meet, it doesn't seem as if there is any progress because we just keep talking. We wanted to make sure that we brought some action with our words."

Continued on Page 18



ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR



by Sandra Williams

What’s So Scary About a Black Newspaper

“The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.” -Bantu - Stephen Biko

I can’t tell you how many times since I published the first issue of The Black Lens I have been asked “why do you need a Black newspaper”? Most of the time the question is simply a curious one, coming from a genuine place and asked by a thoughtful person who is sincerely wanting to understand. However, every once in a while, the question instead is tinged with a bit of suspicion and even hostility. Why a Black paper? Why only Black? Why focus on our differences? Aren’t you just giving us one more reason to stay apart when what we need is to be coming together? And my personal favorite, if there was a white only paper wouldn’t that be racist?

I was reminded once again of that familiar, “why a Black newspaper” refrain after the Spokesman Review published an article about me and the Black Lens on the cover of the Today section in their paper on February 27. Like many in the Black community, I am suspicious of the press, and justifiably wary of trusting that anyone associated with today’s media would have my best interest in mind. But I was pleased with the article, and I felt that Cindy Hval, a freelance journalist, had done an excellent job of capturing the story behind The Black Lens, my intentions, and why, for me, it came into being. She understood, I thought to myself, breathing a sigh of relief after I finished reading. But the relief was short lived.

In addition to the print version of the paper, the article was also posted online, and that posting came with the requisite comments section following it. I long ago stopped reading the comments that follow online articles, since I feel that the sections have mostly become a playground for ignorant and hateful individuals, who in their anonymity are empowered to say things that they would never, ever, say in the light of day. However, when several of my friends suggested that I *not* look at the comments, I couldn’t resist.

Having been involved in social justice work for decades, and on the receiving end of more than a couple of “reverse racism” tirades, the comments were actually much more tame than I had expected, running the range from heartfelt messages of support and encouragement for the “much needed” point of view that the paper was providing, to an individual who doesn’t care about race, “only truth,” to individuals suggesting that the publication was itself racist and promoting separation, to one who insisted, “Blacks don’t want equal, they want domination and superiority over all others.”

I resisted the temptation to respond to the comments, particularly to the last one, because to be honest, if that person didn’t get it from reading the article, then I don’t believe that there is much that I could have said or done to make a difference.

Still, though, I was left scratching my head, and wondering to myself, what in the world is so doggone scary for some people (Black people included) about the idea of a Black newspaper? About a newspaper that dares to have a specific and exclusively Black focus. Not multicultural, as some have suggested it should be. Not white hating, as some have insisted that it is. But simply Black. And Black positive at that. Unabashedly. Unashamedly. Black. What is so scary about that? I pondered for a while, but then I remembered that at one point in the history of this country, and not too long ago, a Black person risked being killed for being caught reading or teaching another Black to read. Perhaps we are not as far removed from that history as we would like to believe.

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

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QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Who is Funding the ‘BLACK AMERICANS FOR A BETTER FUTURE’ Super-Pac?



Pictured from left to right) BABF Donors: Robert Mercer, Vincent Kolber, and Marc Stanley Goldman

What is a Super Pac?

Technically known as an independent expenditure-only committee, a super PAC (Political Actions Committee) may raise unlimited sums of money from corporations, unions, associations and individuals, then spend unlimited sums to overtly advocate for or against political candidates.

What is the BABF Super Pac?

Black Americans for a Better Future claims to be the first and only 527 Super PAC established to get more Blacks involved in the Republican Party.

Who is Funding the BABF Super Pac?

According to Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings, the only people who donated to Black Americans for a Better Future (BABF) in 2015 were wealthy white men. Total donations were \$417,250. Donors included: Scott Keller, CEO of Keller Investment Properties in Utah; Marc Stanley Goldman, a retired businessman and GOP donor; Vincent Kolber, CEO of a finance corporation; and Anthony Parker, who served as treasurer for the Republican National Committee for three terms. The majority of the donations (\$400,000) came from the PACs largest donor, Robert Mercer, a hedge-fund CEO who is a heavy supporter of Ted Cruz. The only African American that appears to be involved in BABF is Raynard Jackson, an African American Republican political consultant based in Washington, D.C, who is listed as the Founder & Chairman of the organization. According to the FEC, Jackson’s roles as the BABF’s chairman and founder netted him a salary of about \$155,000 in 2015. Sources: fusion.net, theintercept.com, nymag.com, blackmeninamerica.com

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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

Abd Al-Rahman Ibrahima Ibn Sori

Art and History by Berton Jones
(jbaguard@yahoo.com)

Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima Ibn Sori was the son of one of the great leaders in the history of the region now known as Guinea in West Africa, Chief Almaami Ibrahima Sori. He was heir apparent to the throne of the Fulani people.

Born in 1762, Ibrahima was raised in the customs of Islam, studied philosophy and law at the University at Timbuktu and was being groomed for political leadership. In 1781 an Irish surgeon named Dr. John Coates Cox, lost for days, stumbled into the Fouta Jallon village with a severe leg infection, and blind in one eye. After many months of care he warned the Fula of the slave ships along the coast.

Ibrahima married and had children but duty called as a cavalry commander. As he was commanding a cavalry division in war, his unit was ambushed, captured, and Ibrahima was trafficked from the West African Coast to Natchez County, Mississippi April 21, 1788. A tobacco farmer named Thomas Foster purchased Ibrahima and a young boy named Sambo (meaning second son) for \$930.

Ibrahima didn't know the language, the customs, or geography of this new land as he tried to explain his sovereign status. His new "master" refused any discussion, made him cut his long hair, and ironically gave him the slave name "Prince". Ibrahima resisted his new status and refused to work the fields, which led to severe beatings. In despair he realized that his bondage wasn't just the work of one man, it was endorsed and supported by an entire society of Europeans who had colonized America.

By 1807 Ibrahima married a "black woman" named Isabella and had nine children. He secretly held fast to his faith in Islam and one day his master sent him into town on business. To his amazement, limping into view

was the same Dr. Cox his people healed back in Fouta Jallon. They greeted each other warmly and Ibrahima explained his misfortune to the doctor. Dr. Cox pleaded his knowledge of the prince's history to Mr. Foster and even tried to purchase Ibrahima, to no avail, "Prince" was too valuable a piece of property.

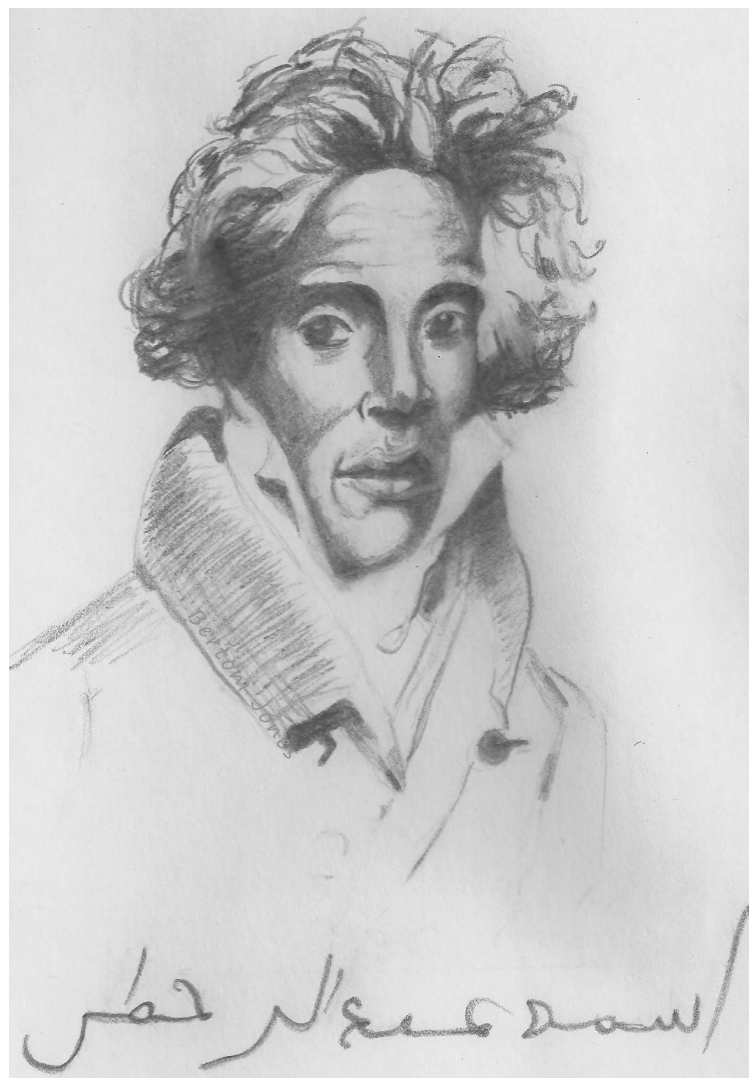
Dr. Cox immediately spread the word in Natchez County that royalty was being held in chattel bondage. Unfortunately Dr. Cox passed away in 1816, but his son, and the editor for a local Natchez newspaper named Andrew Marschalk convinced Ibrahima to write a letter of pleas that reached Thomas Muldowny, the American consul to Morocco.

Under the Imperial rule of the Moroccan Sultan Abd al Rahman II (A.K.A. Moulay Abderrahmane Ibn Hicham 1822-1859) officials pleaded to President James Monroe, who put Secretary of State Henry Clay to the matter. Trained in law and written in perfect Arabic, Ibrahima cited in the plea the newly ratified 1786 Treaty of Friendship and Peace as evidence that his bond status was illegal and that his trafficking took place after the signing of the treaty (He cited Articles 2, 6, 16, and 20).

Convinced of the case, Secretary Clay and the State Department put intense pressure on Mr. Foster to release "The Slave Prince". Foster stubbornly agreed, only on the condition that Ibrahima and his wife be returned to his African homeland of Fouta Jallon when released from slavery.

Ibrahima had proven his case in the eyes of the law and his royal Moorish status was restored, but before leaving America Ibrahima went on lecture tours with abolitionist groups to raise money to free his wife and children.

On February 7, 1829 Ibrahima and Isabella sailed the Harriet to Liberia. En route to his Fouta Jallon homeland from Liberia he passed away on July 6, 1829 never again seeing home.



Sources:

Now Is Your Time! – Walter Dean Meyers.

Moorish/Muurish Treaties – Bandele El – Amin.

Othello's Children In The "New World" – Jose V. Pimienta-Bey

The Barbary Treaties: Treaty of Friendship and Peace at Morocco (June 28 and July 15 1786)

ARTICULATE WHILE BLACK

Book Uses Language to Look at Race Issues

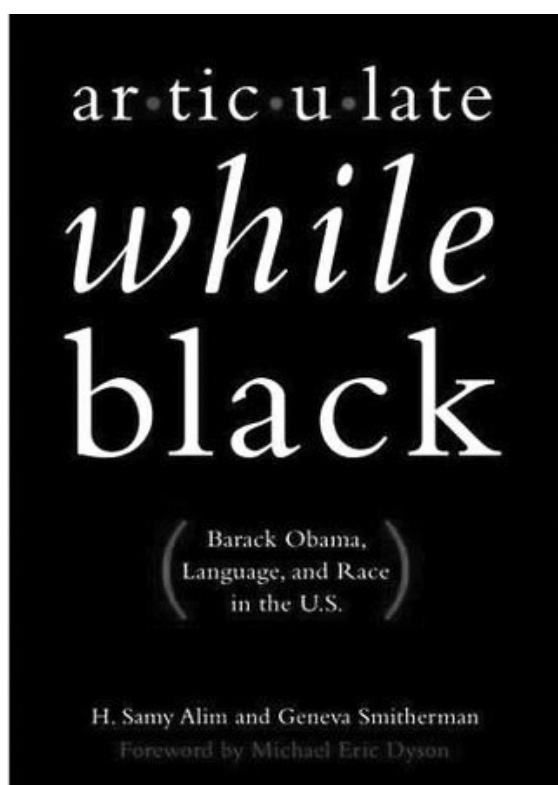
(Book review reprinted from the article "He Talk Funny" at <http://your-blackeducation.com>.)

In their highly acclaimed book, *Articulate While Black*, H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman introduce the reader to a new concept called "*Language Race*," the ability to think about race through a linguistic dimension in order to move the national conversation of race forward.

By using Obama's presidency as a central case study on how "languaging" race benefited or hindered his campaign and time in office, the reader is introduced to themes such as Af-

frican-American Vernacular English, commonly known as Ebonics, styleshifting, jeremiad speech, enlightened exceptionalism, nonverbal language, politicizing Hip-Hop, and educational outlooks.

The book is heavily researched, and each chapter has information from a variety of sources, including books, newspapers, television speeches, radio commentary, ethnographic interviews, images, and movies. The manuscript uses several different theories concerning sociolinguistics, ethnography,



and critical race theory to provide the reader with a solid framework.

Some of the questions raised in the book include:

Does Obama styleshift?

Is hip hop politically conscious as it supports Obama through music?

How does enlightened exceptionalism affect the idea of the articulate black person?

Does the current educational system create a space for black language to be used as a tool versus a deviation from the language widely used?

Articulate While Black could be read for linguistics, racial, cultural, political, and educational purposes.

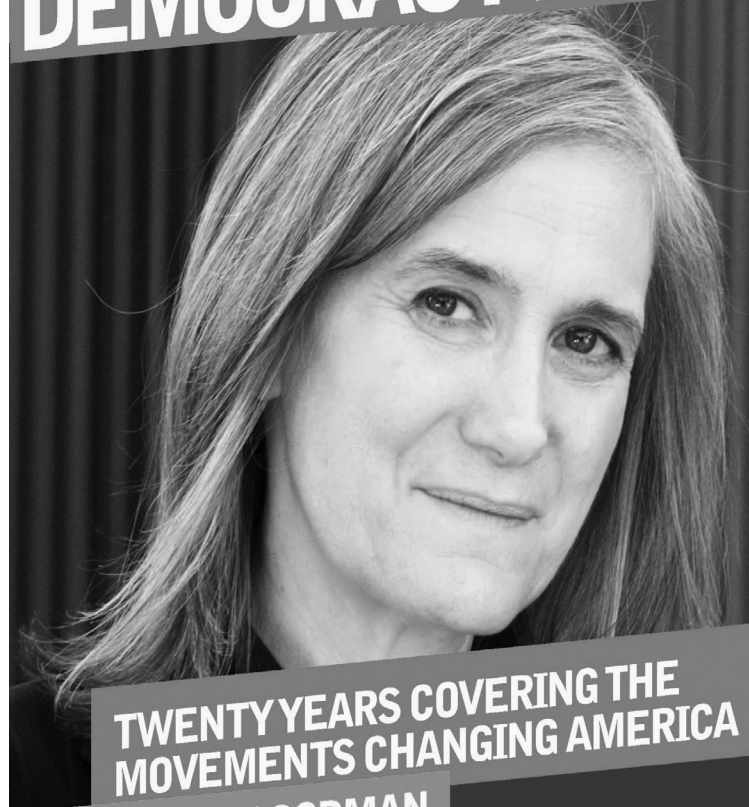
While the book is sprinkled with "ebonics" to add "flava," especially through Obama's swag quotient, the authors do a great job at blending their ideas together, making it easier to read and comprehend for those without a background in linguistics.

Articulate While Black should definitely be part of your personal library!

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Spokane Task Force Releases Report on Gender & Race Pay Equity

The Gender and Race Pay Equity Task Force for the City of Spokane, which includes members of the Spokane City Council, the City of Spokane Civil Service Department, the City of Spokane Human Rights Commission, representatives of businesses and business associations and academic and nonprofit leaders, held a press conference on Thursday, March 24, at City Hall to release the final draft of their report, “Gender and Racial Equity at the City of Spokane”.

The report, which the task force has been working on since May of 2015, begins by explaining that the wage gap is “a national phenomenon” and that “across the United States, women earn 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. When race is taken into consideration along with gender, the gap grows even larger.”

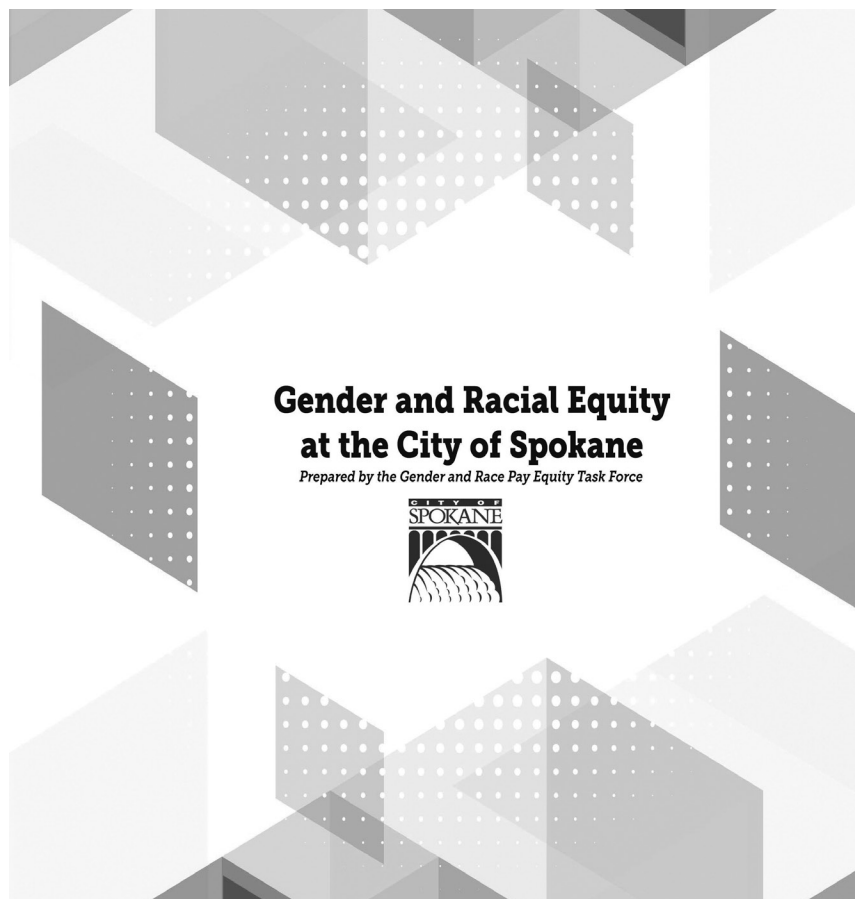
In specifically looking at Spokane’s wage gap in the private sector, the report notes that in 2009 “working women earned 82.7 percent of the earnings of working men” and in 2014, “working women in the City of Spokane earned 78.3 percent of the earnings of working men,” an increase in the wage gap of 4.4 percent in five years. For women of color, especially Black women and Asian women, the numbers are worse. “Asian women make forty-five percent of what white men make”, and Black women in Spokane “make 47 percent of what white men make.” Women working for the City of Spokane fare better, “making 85 cents for every

dollar made by their male counterparts”, while “women of color make 84 cents for every dollar a white man makes at the City.” The report also noted that “higher levels of education do not close the gap”.

In addition to the wage gap, workers at the City of Spokane are not representative of the community, according to the report. “In the private sector, women make up 48 percent of all workers in the City of Spokane,” while in local government, women “account for only 24.2 percent of employees.” Similarly, there is an underrepresentation of people of color in local government when compared to the demographics of the workforce or community. “People of color make up 12.7% of the workforce population, but only 8.5% of employees at the City of Spokane.”

The final report features an in-depth analysis of gender and racial pay gaps within the City of Spokane and in the local government. It includes a set of twenty two recommendations that if implemented will help close the gap.

“This report is designed to empower our members and other advocates with the facts and resources they need to tell the simple truth about the pay gap,” said Spokane City Councilmember Karen Stratton, Co-Chair of the task force. “We hope that our critical and thorough look within the City of Spokane will be an example to the rest of the community.”



To read the full report or watch video of the press conference visit the City of Spokane’s website at <https://my.spokanecity.org/news/stories/2016/03/24/closing-the-gender-and-racial-pay-gap>

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REASON TO BE CONCERNED

Community Forum Addresses McDevitt's "Problematic" Op-Ed



By Jaclyn Archer

The meeting was called for 5:30, but by the time the bulk of the attending crowd found refuge from the evening drizzle in Spokane Public Library's Meeting Room 1A, it was nearly 6 p.m.

Approximately 100 police representatives, employees of the City of Spokane, advocacy group leaders, and community members filled concentric rings of contoured plastic seating three chairs deep. Those who did not arrive early enough to find a chair stood near the door or leaned against the walls.

On the side nearest the door sat Interim Police Chief Jim McDevitt, flanked by Kathy Armstrong, Program Manager for the Spokane Police Office of Professional Responsibility, and his Assistant Police Chief, Craig Miedl. Seven uniformed officers were dispersed throughout the room, and several more plain clothes or off duty officers were mixed into the crowd.

The community forum was called to address concerns about the fitness of Jim McDevitt to act as Interim Director of Law Enforcement in light of an Op Ed he wrote for The Spokesman Review on March 8, 2015.

The article, titled "Hindsight gives insight on race, policing" raised concerns among community leaders about the damage McDevitt's appointment could do to the already tenuous relationship between the Spokane Police Department and communities of color, particularly the Black community.

The Opinion

In his Opinion piece McDevitt claimed, among other things, that "African-American males commit violent crimes at seven to 10 times the rates of white males," and that because law enforcement "often works in areas where a disproportionately high percentage of street crime is committed by young men of color," police officers often develop a "convenient shortcut," a type of pattern recognition which McDevitt characterizes as "a somewhat rational form of profiling."

Perhaps the most problematic claim in the article is that police-involved deaths of young Black men may be primarily attributed to uncooperativeness, and that "The solution is to comply with the instructions of law enforcement."

This final claim would solve all police shootings by demanding complete docility from Black males during police encounters. Beyond the inhumane implication that resisting arrest in any form is worthy of a death sentence, the excess of video footage showing officers shooting surrendered or fleeing suspects paints a more complex picture.

McDevitt's claims sound shocking to some at first blush, and it was this shocking tone that initially raised red flags for racial equity workers in Spokane, but more importantly McDevitt's claims are factually and tonally problematic.

McDevitt cited three articles from which he said his primary claims and data were drawn. After the forum ended, McDevitt provided copies of these articles to all interested parties. The articles included recorded comments by Fox News analyst Juan Williams in 2014, from which McDevitt drew the bulk of his statistics. However Williams is not definitively the source of McDevitt's claims about the amount of violent crime committed by Blacks.

McDevitt seems to have derived his "seven to 10 times more" claim from his second source: a speech by Wall Street Journal senior editor, Jason L. Riley, delivered at Hillsdale College and later adapted for Imprimis. In his January 2015 article, "Race



Relations and Law Enforcement," Riley says "Blacks constitute about 13 percent of the population, yet between 1976 and 2005 they committed more than half of all murders in the U.S." This claim is backed up by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, however, the same pool of stats show that whites were primarily responsible for the other half of homicides during the same time period, a fact which would cause McDevitt's math to fall apart.

Furthermore, Riley's numbers provide an incomplete foundation for any claim about violent crime rates, as they only address homicide and do not account for non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Further examination of government statistics reveals that on average Blacks are arrested and charged for most crimes at two to three times their rate of representation. However, this disproportionality can be accounted for by historical and systemic racism and their legacies: generational poverty, the opportunity gap, unemployment, and broken families.

McDevitt gives a brief nod to these factors in his two paragraph denouement, urging that the efforts of anti-police brutality protestors be channeled into addressing the social ills which effect the Black community. Ironically, McDevitt fails to acknowledge the role of problematic policing and a skewed justice system in perpetuating these social ills.

McDevitt's language about the "rationality" of racial profiling was largely derived from another speech by FBI Director James B. Comey. However, Comey's original phrasing qualified this notion, saying that profiling was "rational by some lights," while simultaneously characterizing it as "lazy," and the result of "cynicism." In Comey's article, there is no question that in his view, racial profiling is an unfortunate result of prolonged difficult work circumstances seeding a general suspicion of a population officers serve—usually Black and brown people—leading to problematic mental shortcuts. In Comey's words these

shortcuts are "easy, but wrong."

There is no such qualification in McDevitt's article. In fact, "rational," "convenient," and "irresistible" in the face of Black criminality, were the only adjectives he used to describe racial profiling. Failure to note the problematic nature of racial profiling leaves McDevitt open to interpretation as a racist, and this impression is not aided by the fact that his statements on profiling appear to be the climax of his article. McDevitt seems to use the supposed rationality of racial profiling to buttress an argument which places fault for strained relations with police squarely upon a young, Black, hyper-criminal class.

During the community forum McDevitt said he intended a different interpretation. "In my article I did not endorse racial profiling," he stated, blaming the confusion on a difficult editing process that required him to remove large portions explanatory content.

However, those of us not privy to his previous drafts can only assess the final product: three paragraphs of police perspective, five more criticizing young Black males both living and dead, a single paragraph nod to the Black struggle, garnished with a call to trade protest for social engagement.

The Community Forum

"Racial equity is a journey, not a destination," McDevitt said, after listening to nearly an hour of community testimony. Of the approximately 100 people who gathered at the Spokane Public Library on March 9, several were community leaders concerned with racial equity, human rights, or providing services to vulnerable populations. NAACP President Naima Quarles-Burnley attended, along with her Vice President Phillip Tyler and several NAACP members. Also present were Blaine Stum, Chair of Spokane's Human Rights Commission; PJALS Director Liz Moore; former mayoral candidate and human rights activist Shar Lichty; Toni Lodge, CEO of the Native Project; and Layne Pavey of community organization I Did the Time. **Continued on Page 18**



NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

“Born Suspect: Racial Profiling is not Effective Policing”

By Naima Quarles-Burnley
Spokane NAACP President

The “Land of the Free & the Brave” currently has the largest prison population in the world – the US is 5% of the world’s population yet 25% of those incarcerated throughout the world are behind bars in America. When incarceration is used as the primary response to social problems, individuals, families and communities suffer, everyone suffers. The NAACP seeks to eliminate harsh and unfair sentencing practices that are responsible for mass incarceration and racial disparities in the prison system.

Racial Profiling is broadly defined as the suspicion of people based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender or other immutable characteristics, rather than on evidence-based suspicious behavior. Racial profiling plays into our implicit biases and is usually paired with negative action. Each of us has the potential to engage in stereotyping and profiling, but when those with power and authority engage in this behavior, it can have disturbing consequences on how policies, practices and procedures are implemented. We end up with disparate minority contact between the police and communities of color. We end up with law enforcement officials espousing that certain races of people are born suspects.

This is why the views expressed, by the now Law Enforcement Director, in March 2015, are an issue a year later. As a private citizen you can express whatever view you please albeit racially biased. When you hold a public office the views you express can impact how you administer criminal justice. In one of the recent Department of Justice Community Relations Service team meetings the Law Enforcement Director said he had not intended to support racial profiling in the Op-Ed he wrote last year.

Last March the Spokesman Review Op-ed offered by Jim McDevitt prior to becoming Law Enforcement Director stated “statistics show that African-American males commit violent crimes at seven to 10 times the rates of white males. Their incarceration rates are primarily driven by violent offenses and not drug offenses. Law enforcement often works in areas where a disproportionately high percentage of street crime is committed by young men of color.”

We take issue with these statistics and the conclusion that Mr. McDevitt reached that, “As a result of this high instance of crime on the part of young men of color in some areas, law enforcement there develops a ‘convenient shortcut.’ This mental shortcut becomes almost irresistible. It is



a somewhat rational form of profiling.” The current Law Enforcement Director says he only wanted to start a conversation about why racial profiling exists. Well, indeed he has done just that.

At its core, racial profiling is based on the assumption that people of specific groups are more likely to commit certain kinds of crimes than others. These conversations about racial profiling are filled with incriminations on both sides and tinged with distrust. One race of people has been declared “Born Suspects” and the other race has declared it is duty bound to uphold the law. Racial profiling is a key factor that leads to negative law enforcement and community interactions throughout the country including Spokane.

Communities of color across the nation have especially felt the devastating and deadly consequences of the serious problem of racial profiling in the United States. It is hard to maintain faith in the American judicial system if our lived experience tells us we are “Born Suspects” knowing that we are more likely to be stopped by police when we walk down the street, drive down an interstate or go through an airport, merely because of the color of our skin. These “convenient shortcuts” are all too commonplace and erroneously accepted as an inevitable and necessary strategy of law enforcement in America.

It seems that after the 9/11 attacks that law enforcement on the local, state, and federal levels relied heavily on the use of race, ethnicity, nationality, and religion to round up suspects in the name of the “war on terror.” Thus, racial

profiling continued to plague communities who had traditionally been impacted prior to 9/11— primarily African American and Latina/o and Native communities—but at the start of the 21st century, the net was cast even wider to more explicitly include people of Muslim or Middle Eastern descent. In the post 9/11 era, as it has become publicly acceptable to racially profile certain communities again efforts to promote community policing and improve relations between communities of color and police have been greatly hampered.

Proponents of racial profiling often assert that it is an effective tool for finding individuals or groups engaged in criminal activity. Yet relying on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other inherent/immutable characteristics has proven time and again to be an ineffective, and often costly, tactic. Empirical data from across the United States proves this point. Nearly a decade ago, Amnesty International USA published an extensive report, Threat and Humiliation: Racial Profiling, Domestic Security, and Human Rights in the United States, with examples from throughout American history that have proven racial profiling to be both ineffective and a waste of precious and limited law enforcement resources.

The societal impact of biased-based policing is irrefutable: it leaves individuals and communities—most of whom are law-abiding residents— feeling violated, humiliated, and oppressed. Racial profiling can never be an effective law enforcement tool or a viable replacement for evidence-based policing practices. The negative consequences go far beyond the stigmatization of the impacted communities. Racial profiling breeds mistrust of law enforcement by all members of the community, making it difficult—and at times impossible—to work together to solve crimes and reduce violence. Additionally, racial profiling serves to delegitimize the entire criminal justice system, by creating a divide between communities and the public representatives of the system who are sworn to protect them.

Racial profiling has repeatedly been proven to be an ineffective tool of law enforcement that has never helped create greater public safety. History has shown us that racial profiling ultimately makes us less safe. Racial profiling harms everyone.

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

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Obama first sitting president to visit Cuba in 88 years

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from North-StarNewsToday.com

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Like President Richard Nixon did in 1972, when he flew to Beijing, China, to meet with Chairman Mao Zedong of the People’s Republic of China, to normalize relations between the two countries, President Barack Obama flew to Havana, Cuba, to begin normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States.

President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama visited Havana, Cuba, on Monday, March 21, and Tuesday March 22, where President Obama was scheduled to meet with Cuban President Raul Castro.

President Obama’s visit constitutes a major thaw in relations between the U.S. and Cuba. According to Ben

Rhodes, U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor, the president is traveling to Cuba for more reforms.

“We want to open up more opportunities for U.S. businesses and travelers to engage with Cuba, and we want the Cuban government to open up more opportunities for its people to benefit from that engagement.”

President Obama and President Raul Castro met in 2015 in Panama City, Panama. Six years before that meeting, members of the Congressional Black Caucus flew to Cuba in 2009, where they met with Fidel Castro and Raul Castro on different days.

Congressional Black Caucus members who visited Cuba were: U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee (D., Calif.); U.S. Rep. Mel Watt (D., N.C.); U.S. Rep. Laura Richardson (D., Calif.); U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush, (D., Ill.); U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D., Mo.) and U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge. The members of the CBC called for a new direction in U.S. foreign policy towards Cuba.

Since the release of Alan Gross, a U.S. contractor, in December 2014, the two countries have held a series of diplomatic talks that led to the restoration of commercial air traffic. Last August, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry reopened the American Embassy in Havana, 54 years after it had been closed. The embassy is across from the Plaza de la Revolucion in Havana.

President Obama is the first sitting president since Calvin Coolidge to visit Cuba. In 1928, President Coolidge



visited Cuba aboard a U.S. battleship. Former President Jimmy Carter visited Cuba in 2002, 20 years after he left office and at the invitation of Fidel Castro, the country’s former president and leader of 26th of July Movement that overthrew the American-backed Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista on January 1, 1959.

After visiting Cuba, President Obama and the First Lady flew to Argentina for a two-day visit on March 23rd and 24th. In Buenos Aires, President Obama and the First Family met with Mauricio Macri, Argentina’s new president, to discuss, President Macri’s reform agenda.



AFRICAN AMERICANS AND EDUCATION

*Looking Back in Order to Move Forward:
A Seven Part Series By Lawrence Burnley, Ph.D.*

Part VI-B: The Southern Experience and the Role of Religion

Carter G. Woodson identifies three categories of Whites interested in educating Blacks in the antebellum South: (1) planters concerned with increasing their profit margin and labor supply; (2) those moved by a sense of altruism; and (3) evangelicals who were concerned primarily with converting Blacks to Christianity. Woodson also notes the common belief among many Christians in the antebellum period that one could only know God by reading the Bible, which served as a primary incentive to learn to read.

Woodson further asserts that larger plantations in the South tended to be owned by Episcopalians who stressed verbal biblical and theological instruction among those they owned. Woodson seems to agree with Raboteau on this issue. The diminished view of the import of literacy in relation to one's Christian experience among larger plantation owners resulted in even less literacy instruction among those they owned.

The role of religion and of sectarian evangelical and mission-related activity cannot be overstated regarding their impact on literacy development in general and schooling for Blacks in particular. On this issue, Albert Raboteau points to the influence of two Protestant evangelical revivals known as the First and Second Great Awakenings of 1740 and the early 1800s respectively. These revivals were pivotal social movements that led to increased literacy instruction for enslaved Africans.

Pro-revival groups operating in the South included the New Light Presbyterians, the Separate Baptists, and the Methodist Episcopal Church. These groups emphasized the need for a person to accept Christ and repent in order to have an authentic conversion. The convert's growth in faith must be supported by subsequent reading of the Bible, which required literacy.

Anglicans, according to Raboteau, placed less emphasis on literacy because they emphasized teaching the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed (which would be memorized and not read), and moral behavior as the way to salvation. A related consequence of these early evangelical movements relative to literacy development among Blacks was the conversion of Southern Whites. According to Raboteau, the conversion of Whites in the South led to limited permissiveness on the part of some Whites regarding literacy instruction for Blacks.

Margaret Washington Creel claims that Anglicans in South Carolina emphasized literacy because most clergy viewed it as a prerequisite for baptism. In the mid-eighteenth century, two Anglican-supported evangelical societies were started by Thomas Bray. These organizations had definite educational consequences for Blacks.

Bray started the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign

Parts. The former would give birth to the Charleston Negro School (for free Africans) in 1743. This school stayed in operation for twenty years.

Creel points out that Anglican schools were tolerated by planters because the societies' missionaries promoted the belief that obedient servitude was promulgated on the principle of conscience that was informed by Christian doctrine. Creel's conflict with Raboteau regarding the role of literacy in Anglican salvific doctrine is worth noting. Raboteau does point out that Anglicans were one of the few sectarian groups that required theological training for preachers and exhorters. This requirement would of course result in mandatory literacy training for Blacks seeking ordination in the Anglican tradition. Perhaps this is the point to which Creel referred.

The very act of reading was a form of Black resistance to their condition of oppression. Heather Williams reminds us of the almost seamless integration of religion, literacy development, and resistance when considering the motivational factors at play in free and enslaved Blacks' response to Christian missionary efforts. She writes, "Christian missions to slaves attracted some converts for the very reason that church was a place in which they might learn to read."

[Some] African Americans attended church in part to take advantage of the literacy offered. Once in church, many slaves placed their faith in the biblical messages of liber-



ation. In slavery and in freedom, a desire to read the words of the Bible impelled many to seek out teachers who could help them to decipher for themselves the word that in sermon and in song kept them believing they would someday be free."

A point often lost by the most widely-read historians of education history in the U.S. is the role played by African Americans in the provision of schooling to African Americans before, during and following the Civil War in the southern states where the large majority of African American lived. Against seemingly insurmountable odds, Blacks belonging to predominantly White protestant denominations, as well as those belonging to historically Black denominations were decidedly proactive, creative and courageous in establishing schools for members of their communities.

The heroic and sacrificial efforts of these men and women in the years following the Civil War will be the topic of the next and last entry of this series.

Next in this Series – Part VII: Reconstruction and Deconstruction: African American Education after the Civil War.

2016 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION

Join Us in Celebrating our Graduates on Saturday, April 23

By Chrissy Davis

The 20th Anniversary of the Inland Northwest African American Graduation Ceremony and Celebration will be held on the 23rd of April 2016, 1 PM at Whitworth University in the Cowles Auditorium. The African American Graduation Ceremony is a pre-commencement celebration to acknowledge the academic accomplishments of our Black youth, who through unyielding determination have successfully completed their studies from area high schools, colleges, and universities. This year Dr. Beck A. Taylor, President of Whitworth University will give the official welcome.

The members of the 2016 African American Graduation planning committee recognize that this year's celebration is a significant milestone for the Spokane Community; as such they will pay homage to the founding members of the African American Graduation Celebration. This year's theme is "We've Come This Far by Faith". And indeed we have, and it is because of the founding members' courage



and commitment to our students that we continue to honor and support our Black graduates. This year the founding members will address the graduates to impart their wisdom.

The celebration continues to focus on African and African American heritage, and was intentionally designed to inspire Black students to reach their utmost potential. For example, each graduate receives a Kente cloth as part of the ceremony. The Kente cloth (also referred to as Kente stole) is indigenous to the Akan people of West Africa, more specifically to the Ashante people of Ghana and is rich in texture and design. It is a symbol of the royal African past, and is worn during ceremonies in Ghana, West Africa to represent pride in one's heritage. The value of the cloth is based on the intricate patterns that also notes the wearer's status in the community. The Kente stole that will be presented to our graduates is most befitting because it symbolizes authority, richness, and power to those we honor each year during the African American Graduation Ceremony. Over the last 20 years, approximately 700 graduates have been honored and bestowed with a Kente cloth to signify the richness of their knowledge; the power

to continue pursuing [their] knowledge; and the authority to contribute their knowledge to the community at-large.

Over the past 20 years, the African American Graduation Celebration has reinforced the importance of scholarship and the sense of community. Many members of the community have supported this event over the years, from religious leaders, to local businesses, civic leaders and the leadership of many of the educational institutions. To that end, we, the 2016 African American Graduation Planning committee invite the Spokane community to join us for this exciting celebration of Mmomudwan (Unity/togetherness), Sesa Woruban (New beginning), and Sankfoa (Return and get it/Learning from the Past).



Again, the 20th Anniversary of the African American Graduation Ceremony and Celebration is scheduled to start at 1 PM on Saturday, April 23rd 2016 in the Cowles Auditorium at Whitworth University.



HEALTH & MEDICINE

Study Shows Black Students at White Colleges Face Unique Hidden Mental Health Challenges

By Zenitha Price

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Afro American Newspaper

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Black college students who attend predominantly White institutions harness a particular level of pluckiness and mental fortitude in order to achieve—usually having to prove their intellectual worth in the face of glaring or more covert bigotry. But that mental toughness and perseverance can take a toll on their psychological health, according to a new study from Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

“Weathering the cumulative effects of living in a society characterized by White dominance and privilege produces a kind of physical and mental wear-and-tear that contributes to a host of psychological and physical ailments,” said study co-author Ebony McGee, assistant professor of diversity and urban schooling at Vanderbilt’s Peabody College. “We have documented alarming occurrences of anxiety, stress, depression and thoughts of suicide, as well as a host of physical ailments like hair loss, diabetes and heart disease.”

Those findings were explored in the paper “Reimagining Critical Race Theory in Education: Mental Health, Healing and the Pathway to Liberatory Praxis,” which McGee co-authored with David Stovall, associate professor of African American studies and educational policy studies at University of Illinois at Chicago.



Using critical race theory, the pair challenged the celebration of “grit” as a guiding principle for achievement among Black students, saying the resulting mental health risks are often overlooked.

“We have witnessed Black students work themselves to the point of extreme illness in attempting to escape the constant threat of perceived intellectual inferiority,” McGee said. “We argue that the current enthusiasm for teaching African American students with psychological traits like grit ignores the significant injustice of societal racism and the toll it takes, even on those students who appear to be the toughest and most successful.”

The study compared such high-achieving Black students to the historical figure John Henry—a slave who literally worked himself to death trying to prove his worth.

“John Henryism is a coping strategy often adopted by high-achieving African Americans, who may unconsciously (and increasingly consciously) sacrifice their personal relationships and health to pursue their

goals with a tenacity that can be medically and mentally deleterious,” the study states.

The researchers urged more comprehensive examination of the mental, physical and emotional harm faced by African-American students and called on colleges and universities to make systemic, holistic changes to promote the wellness of those students.

“The process of healing from racial battle fatigue and institutional racism requires significant internal commitment and external support,” the study states. “Black college students are brilliant, talented, and creative, and they dream as big as other students. Pursuing higher education should not make them sick.”

The study seems to buttress findings from a Gallup study, on which the AFRO reported back in October. According to that report, Black alumni of historically Black colleges and universities tended to thrive more – in several areas of “well-being” – than Black graduates of predominantly White institutions.

“Although HBCUs are struggling in a number of areas, their overall success in providing Black graduates with a better college experience than they would get at non-HBCUs needs to be examined more closely, and potentially modeled, at other institutions,” the researchers wrote. “The profoundly different experiences that Black graduates of HBCUs and Black graduates of non-HBCUs are having in college leave the HBCU graduates feeling better prepared for life after graduation, potentially leading them to live vastly different lives outside of college.”

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Aging & Long Term Care - ADVOCACY. ACTION. ANSWERS

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

GONZAGA BLACK STUDENT UNION

By Bailey C. Russell

This year Gonzaga's Black Student Union has been extremely active! We started off September with a great family barbeque in Mission Park. This is an annual tradition to reunite all old and new Black Student Union members, as well as acquaint everyone with the new elected officers. As we transitioned into fall we oversaw a lot of important events.

Starting in October, we held an event entitled "Gumbo and Good Discussion" for club members only. We served homemade Louisiana gumbo, made by our very own Ms. Stacey (the official mama of the group!), as well as homemade banana pudding, cornbread and rice. After dinner we watched the documentary "Who is Black in America", hosted by CNN and followed its viewing with a discussion on the light skin vs. dark skin issue in the black community and how we can end its presence and heal its wounds. It was a very healing and honest discussion.

When Halloween came around, Gonzaga's Black Student Union, La Raza Latina and Gonzaga's Student Body Association, held an information night entitled "My Culture is Not a Costume". The goal of the event was to combat the painful costumes degrading minority cultures that pop up every year during Halloween on Gonzaga's campus. Our aim was to combat the idea that these costumes were all in fun, which is incorrect, before someone decided to wear



one. The event filled the space we rented and was followed by a panel of professors and faculty. We considered this event a success, because this year a smaller number of offensive costumes were reported to have been seen.

We held our first retreat for the club in 5 years, the first weekend in November! It was held at Zephyr lodge, located by Medical Lake. We bonded, had multiple breakout sessions, workshops and a keynote speaker. We ended the retreat with a group viewing of "Dear White People" and the myriad of layers it was trying to pull back in regards to the current collegiate experience for black students.

The Mizzou incident launched our club into a flurry of unexpected events at the end of November. But that's the nature of

Civil Rights involvement. We were getting countless concerns regarding the administration's likely response in the event of a similar incident occurring at Gonzaga. What would they do? How would they respond? Most importantly, could a Mizzou incident occur at GU? So the Black Student Union wrote a detailed email to the president of our school, Dr. Thayne McCulloh, asking that he hold a discussion allowing all students to ask questions regarding diversity, race and the low minority population at Gonzaga.

The event consisted of a panel with President Thayne McCulloh, Academic Vice President Raymond Reyes and Vice President of Student Development, Dr. Judi Biggs Garbuio. It was held in the Hemmingson Ballroom which seats 300 people; the room was packed. The Mizzou panel has been one of our most successful and pride inducing events, because it moved the Gonzaga community a little bit forward on the discussion of race. And every step is a step.

As the first semester came to a close, we completed our first semester service project with Restoration Church, cleaning and helping them to prepare for their annual Thanksgiving cookout which feeds over 100 hungry community members. Before Christmas break we started to outline what we wanted the annual Black Student Union dinner to represent to not only the Gonzaga, but the Spokane community. However,

our last meeting before break consisted of a mini Christmas party—of course.

2016 started off with a bang for our club. We attended the annual MLK March in downtown Spokane, and prior to that, attended the call to action protest for Tamir Rice after the no indictment was announced. After MLK events and celebrations, we had to focus on our annual dinner which feeds over 250 people and was set for February 27th. That meant we had about a month to get the big picture filled in with the details. Though we started planning back in July, the final product is never finished until the curtain goes up. Some moments were fun, some exciting, some stress inducing, but when the 27th came, the dinner went off smoothly, the food was delicious and memories were made. What more could a small collegiate club ask for?

So where is Gonzaga's Black Student Union now? Breathing a deep sigh of relief that our dinner was successful and taking in a breath of thankfulness for how close we've all become over this past year. We are looking to finish out the year strong with our second service project and possibly a mini workshop on discrimination in the workplace, as well as collaboration with the Gonzaga Bulletin on the media's portrayal of black Americans. We cannot believe the year has flown by so quickly but time has its own agenda. We're just thankful for the events our short year together has given us!



JAZMINE AND RODNEY MCGEE

Brother & Sister Win Chase Youth Award

By Jazmine McGee

Both of us, Jazmine and Rodney (RJ) McGee are members of the "Yes, I Can" program at East Valley Middle School. This program is where middle school kids spend a period each day with special needs kids.

We help them with their class work and just get to know them. My mentee is named Layla and she has come a long way with this program. She now walks around the halls in the morning and even participates in school basketball. RJ helps the kids with their Math and has no particular mentee.

We all were nominated for the Chase Youth Awards on Thursday, March 10 at the Fox Theatre. The mentors were nominated for the Leadership category and the mentees were nominated for the Personal Achievement award.

To be nominated for each of the categories was a special recognition, but to be selected for this award is amazing. We are both very proud of this honor.

The Chase Youth Awards, which are presented each year, honor outstanding youth, teens and adults who are making a difference in the Spokane community. For more information contact the Chase Youth Commission at <http://chaseyouthspokane.org>.



OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE SERVICES PROGRAMS

DELTA SIGMA THETA FOUNDERS DAY LUNCHEON

A Sisterhood Called to Serve: Transforming Lives, Impacting Communities

The Spokane Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. hosted the Pacific Northwest Founders Day Luncheon on March 12, 2016 at The Red Lion Inn At the Park. The theme was "A Sisterhood Called to Serve: Transforming Lives, Impacting Communities."

Mona Humphries Bailey, the 17th National President, offered greetings to an overflowing audience of community members and sorors who travelled from across the Pacific Northwest to attend the luncheon.

Additional greetings were offered by Carletta Curry, Washington

State Coordinator and M'Kiela Rosales, Washington State Facilitator.

Sandra Phillips Johnson, Director of the Farwest Region, offered the keynote. In her speech, entitled, "Informed by the past, prepared for the future," Phillips Johnson reminded the sorors, "our work is not done." She continued, "we must renew our strength, to fight age old battles and some new ones."

Community Awards were presented to Ruth Nichols, Sherry Merritt, Faith Washington, Michael Bethely, the Juneteenth Committee and the Spokane Public Schools. Lexus Simmons of

North Central High School was awarded the Carolyn Clay 2016 Scholarship.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was founded on January 13, 1913 by 22 collegiate women at Howard University. It is a private, non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide assistance and support through established programs in local communities throughout the world.

The Spokane Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was chartered on July 14, 1979 by regional director Addie Jean Haynes and sorors from the Seattle Chapter.

Photos Courtesy: The Talent of Memories, Minister Robert Lee Robinson Jr.



YWCA HOSTS 7TH STAND AGAINST RACISM

The YWCA of Spokane will host its 7th Annual Stand Against Racism Courageous Conversation on Friday, April 29, from 11:30am - 1:30pm in the Comstock Room at the YWCA, 930 N. Monroe St.

Stand Against Racism is a signature campaign of YWCA USA which was founded in 2007 by YWCA Princeton and YWCA Trenton. The annual racial justice campaign is one part of the YWCA's larger national strategy to fulfill its mission of Eliminating Racism and Empowering Women. In 2015, nearly 750 sites in 44 states and the District of Columbia took part in a Stand Against Racism.

The foundation for an organization wide focus on eliminating racism began for the YWCA in 1946 with the development of the Interracial Charter, adopted by the 17th National YWCA Convention. The charter established that "wherever there is injustice on the basis of race, whether in the community, the nation, or the world, our protest must be clear and our labor for its removal, vigorous and steady."

Effectively, Regina Malveaux, CEO, YWCA Spokane, said, "the charter committed every YWCA to a sincere effort to



Regina Malveaux, CEO, YWCA of Spokane

work towards inclusiveness, and since then it has been a national mandate that every YWCA would work to be integrated and to work on the issues of social justice."

In looking through the archives of the Spokane YWCA, Malveaux says she was pleasantly surprised to discover evidence that the local YWCA had been committed to the charter, and was actually ahead of its time. "In the 50s there were tea groups

held for Japanese Americans and there was another set of social groups created to welcome African American women into this YWCA," Malveaux said, adding, "and one of our earliest programs was teaching English as a second language to new immigrants."

While on the national stage, the YWCA is widely known for its work in the areas of social and racial justice, locally most peo-

ple are more familiar with the human services work of the YWCA and the highly regarded work that the organization is doing in the area of domestic violence. They are less familiar with the YWCA's social movement work, and Malveaux feels that the YWCA's annual Stand Against Racism event is an opportunity to bring that important work to the forefront.

This year the YWCA's Courageous Conversation will address "How Communities are Impacted When Public Officials Normalize Hate," and it will "take a look at how some of the hateful rhetoric in our national, political discourse has found its way into empowering hateful people and hate crimes on the local level."

A diverse panel, representing local communities of color, will talk about local incidents of hate crimes and hate behavior, and how we as a community can be empowered to turn the dialogue around.

The community is encouraged to participate in what should prove to be a rich, informative and eye-opening dialogue between the community and the panelists.

For more information call Teri Mahan at 509-789-9289 or e-mail terim@ywcaspokane.org.

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

ROUGH MAGIC TO PERFORM AT GET LIT!

get lit!
PROGRAMS

Content sponsored by
<http://getlitfestival.org>



Cornelius Eady - Photo Credit: Chip Cooper

Born from poet Cornelius Eady's literary life and passion for music, **Rough Magic** is a New-York based six-piece band that combines poetry and song. The group taps into the tradition of the troubadour, evoking the sound and storytelling of blues greats like Muddy Waters, folk legends such as Woody Guthrie and the unexpected grooves and subject-matters of the Talking Heads. Poet Patricia Spears Jones went so far as to say, "Rough Magic is becoming poetry's house band."

As part of the Get Lit! Festival, **Rough Magic will perform live at the Lincoln Ballroom of the Lincoln Center Friday, April 15th at 7 p.m.** The night will begin with a short reading by the award-winning Eady and Robin Messing—poet, fiction writer, and Rough Magic's co-vocalist—before the band launches into their set, when attendees can look forward to hearing songs from their January 2013 CD/chapbook *Book of Hooks*.

Rough Magic's artistic project is rooted in a love for music and a desire to redefine and extend poetry's limits. Rough Magic employs lyrics from Eady and Messing, as well as other poets, such as Edna St. Vincent Millay, Alike Barnstone, and Mary Mo-leyneux. In 2013, the Poetry Society of America commissioned Eady to set Sterling Brown's poetry to music, and Rough Magic performed his compositions at a star-studded event honoring iconic Black poets of the 20th Century at Cooper Union's Great Hall.

Cornelius Eady is the author of eight books of poetry, the most recent of which, *Hardheaded Weather*,

was nominated for the NAACP Image Award in 2008. His 2001 collection *Brutal Imagination* was a National Book Award nominee, *The Gathering of My Name* was nominated for the 1992 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry, and his 1985 collection *Victims of the Latest Dance Craze* was winner of the Lamont Prize from the Academy of American Poets.

Eady has also worked in theater, writing the libretto for the opera *Running Man*, which was a finalist in 1999 for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama. Eady co-founded Cave Canem, a national organization for African American poetry and poets. Eady has been a teacher for more than twenty years, and is currently a professor at Notre Dame University.

The musicians of Rough Magic, in addition to Messing and Eady, include musical director Emma Alabaster, who provides vocals and plays bass, Concetta Abbate who sings and plays violin, and notable musician Charlie Rauh on lead guitar.

Rough Magic musicians have performed at numerous poetry festivities, cafes, backyards, and concert halls in New York City and internationally. Other poet and music greats, such as Oliver Lake, Bob Holman, Sapphire, Sharon Olds, Marilyn Nelson, Nikky Finney, Toi Derricotte, and Papa Souso, have joined Rough Magic on stage.

General admission is \$15. High school and college students gain free admission with student ID. Books and CDs will be available for purchase during the event.

For more information, visit www.getlitfestival.org.

HANNAH'S CREATION

Twelve Year Old To Introduce New Coloring Book at Aunties Book Signing

Five year old Hannah wondered about the images in her coloring book. Even at such a young age, she noticed that the people in the book didn't look like her. She asked her mother, Karen Herford, "are the kids on this page black?" Karen shook her head no, but said, "You can color them whatever color you'd like!"

Hannah used the brown crayons to color the characters on the pages, but that didn't satisfy her for long. "I was trying to make her okay with it," Karen said, but "she was serious, and she was not happy with what she was coloring."

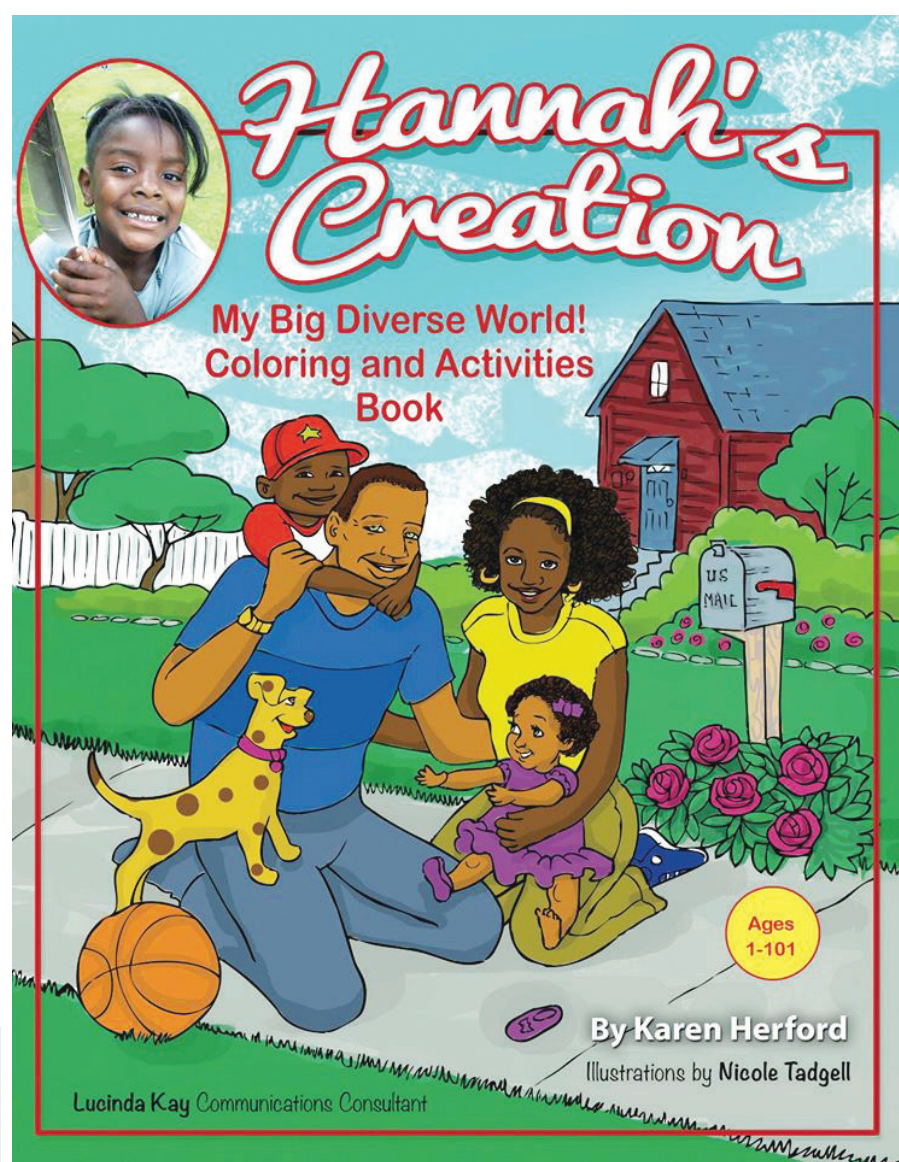
Hannah asked her mother, "can we get some coloring books where the kids look like me?" They ventured out to local stores, and even had friends check bigger cities, but they couldn't find any activity books that represented Hannah or her vibrant and diverse life. Hannah asked, "Can we just create our own?" and Karen replied. "You bet."

Little did Karen know that the project would end up taking seven years to complete. "It was expensive," Karen said, and they went through several illustrators to get to the right one, but Hannah was involved at every step of the way, reviewing the illustrations and offering feedback. "I don't like that foot, she would say, and so we would change it." Karen says it was Hannah that kept moving the project forward. "She kept pushing, and that's what pushed me to step outside of my boundaries"

Seven years later, twelve year old Hannah and her mom are ready to share their masterpiece. *Hannah's Creation Coloring and Activity Book* is a collection of activities that encourage brainpower and imagination. The pages are full of diverse, hand-drawn images, and include activities for girls and boys of ALL ages, races, and cultures.

Hannah will be introducing her book at a book signing at Aunties Bookstore.

Hanna's book signing will take place on **Friday, April 29 from 4-6pm at Aunties Bookstore**, 402 W. Main Spokane, WA 99201. You can purchase copies of Hanna's Creation at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane or online at Amazon.com. A portion of the proceeds from each book will be donated to the Martin Luther King Center in Spokane!



IN THE SPIRIT

HOLY WEEK MINI REVIVAL



Minister's Fellowship Invites Seattle's Rev. Dr. Robert L. Manaway

In addition to the annual Sunrise Service that is hosted by the Spokane Minister's Fellowship each year on Resurrection Sunday, this year the Minister's Fellowship added a Mini-Revival to celebrate Holy Week.

The services, which were held at Holy Temple Church of God in Christ on Indiana Avenue, took place over three evenings, starting on Wednesday, March 23 and lasting through Friday evening, March 25.

The featured speaker for all three evenings was Rev. Dr. Robert L. Manaway Sr. of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Seattle, WA, who applauded the Minister's Fellowship for working together. "This doesn't happen everywhere," he told them, there are churches on the same block where the pastors won't talk to each other because they don't like each other."

Rev. Manaway kicked off the revival with a fiery sermon titled, "I Can Breathe Again." Reading from Ezekiel-37, he focused on "The Valley of Dry Bones", asking the pastors and congregants "have you asked why your valley is so dry?", and encouraging them that "it's time to start evaluating how dead your situation is." The bones obeyed and the wind obeyed, he told them, "looks like everything listens to God but us." But, he said, "bones can start coming together, if they get a real word."

The revival included praise and worship, scripture readings, musical selections from The Spokane Community Gospel Choir, and prayers and closing remarks from members of the Minister's Fellowship. This year's Sunrise Service was held at 6am on Sunday morning, with Rev. Dr. C. W. Andrews offering the spoken word.



PASTOR HAPPY WATKINS HELPS FIG TREE CELEBRATE 32 YEARS

The Fig Tree, which published its first issue in May of 1984, is a monthly publication that focuses on connecting the faith and nonprofit communities in the Inland NW (Eastern WA and Northern Idaho), by covering stories of people living their faith and values, connecting diverse people, encouraging respect and listening, and inspiring people to action both locally and globally.

Supported by donations, as well as by advertisers and underwriters, the Fig Tree hosts two fundraising events each year, the annual Benefit Breakfast and Benefit Luncheon. Reflecting Diversity, Deepening our Roots, was the theme



for this year's Benefit Luncheon on March 11 and Benefit Breakfast on March 16, which both took place at Cataldo Hall on the Gonzaga University campus, and celebrated the Fig Tree's 32nd year of publication.

Speakers at both events, which included Pastor Happy Watkins, who is on the Fig Tree's Board of Directors, and Spokane NAACP President Naima Quarles-Burnley, amongst others, talked about how the newspaper has been a voice for celebrating and honoring the diversity that exists in the region. Also featured at both events was a video titled "Reflecting Diversity", created by Deila del Rosaria, a recent Gonzaga University graduate, who worked with Fig Tree editor, Mary Stamp to feature diverse individuals from the Spokane community, who came together to recognize the important impact that the Fig Tree is having in the Spokane community.

"As a part of our effort to build understanding and collaboration in the community, we cover stories of people who are part of the region's diversity racially, ethnically, economically, religiously, spiritually, culturally and in global ties," Mary Stamp is quoted as saying in the March issue of The Fig Tree. "While other media may focus attention on what divides to create fear and build audiences," she continued, "we cover what we have in common, so we build respect. We celebrate the region's diversity and seek to build dialogue."

In addition to the monthly newspaper, the Fig Tree hosts the *Eastern Washington Legislative Conference* each year, to foster dialogue, discussion and reflection on issues involving media, journalism, faith and justice in the region. The Fig Tree also publishes a *Directory of Congre-*



Mary Stamp, Fig Tree Editor; Pastor Happy Watkins, New Hope Baptist Church; Naima Quarles-Burnley, Spokane NAACP President

gations and Community Resources, which is published cooperatively with the Community Colleges of Spokane HeadStart/ECAP, and includes contact information from congregations, ecumenical and interfaith ministries, multi-service agencies, human services, justice action resources, medical/health care resources, senior/retirement resources, youth and children support services, and emergency contacts. 10,000 copies of the directory are printed and distributed throughout the community each year.

The Fig Tree is published on the first Wednesday of each month (September through June), and is distributed by mail and in bulk to churches and community organizations in the Inland NW. The Fig Tree is also available online at www.thefigtree.org. For more information call 509-535-1813 or e-mail mary@thefigtree.org.

HONORING OUR ELDERERS

JERRELENE WILLIAMSON Spokane Citizen Hall of Fame Finalist

Jerrelene Williamson, founding member of the Spokane Northwest Black Pioneers, and author of the book “Images of African Americans in Spokane”, was recently nominated for a Spokane Citizen Hall of Fame Award in the Arts and Letters category.

The Spokane Citizen Hall of Fame recognizes individuals, both living and deceased, who have made outstanding contributions to the quality of life and the development of the City of Spokane.

Citizens are recognized for their achievement in one of six categories: Economic Development and Business (for entrepreneurial activity or significant contributions toward the economic betterment of Spokane); Education (for enriching and inspiring lifelong learning in our community); Public Service and Philanthropy (for exemplary voluntary and public service activities that benefit the community); Innovation and Leadership (for activities that cultivate strong innovation and leadership city-wide); Arts and Letters (for activities that enhance and support the artistic/cultural and literary life and well-being of the community); and Science, Health and Medicine (for individuals who have made significant contributions in the area of science, health or medicine).

One hundred thirty nominations were received from a public nomination process that was held by the Spokane Library Foundation and a selection committee, comprised of representatives from a cross section of Spokane citizens



that represent people in all six categories, including professional organizations, educational institutions and service groups, along with members of City Council and the Spokane Public Library Foundation Board of Directors, narrowed the nominations down to three finalists in each category.

Ms. Williamson was notified that she is a finalist, along with David Dutton and Jess Walter in the **Arts and Letters** category. Finalists in the other categories include: **Education**: Patrick Jones, Carla Peperzak, Tracy B. Walters;

Economic Development and Business: Stacey Cowles, Kerri Rodkey, Walt Worthy; **Innovation and Leadership**: Susan Ashe, Rich Hadley, Dr. Darin Neven; **Public Service and Philanthropy**: Jeanne Ager, Ira Amstadter, Marvo Reguindin; **Science Health and Medicine**: Dr. Greg Belenky, Dr. Jacob Deakins, Dr. Alan Hendrickson.

The Second Annual Spokane Citizen Hall of Fame Awards Breakfast will be held Thursday, April 14, 2016, from 7am to 9am at the Davenport Hotel to recognize the finalists and announce the 2016 Citizen Hall of Fame inductees. Additionally, the first Spokane Citizen Impact Award will be presented in honor of former Washington State University President, Elson S. Floyd, which will be accepted by his family and Washington State University on his behalf.

The awards breakfast, which is presented in partnership with the Spokane Public Library Foundation and the City of Spokane, is also a benefit that aims to both honor our great citizens of Spokane, while providing much needed funds to expand the business outreach services of the Spokane Public Library. Tickets for the breakfast are \$50 and available online.

To purchase tickets to the Awards Breakfast, or for information about the Spokane Citizens Hall of Fame Awards or the permanent online display honoring inductees, visit: <http://www.spokanelibraryfoundation.org/citizen-hall-of-fame>, or contact Sarah Bain at the Spokane Public Library Foundation: 509-444-5318 or foundation@spokanelibrary.org.

JAMES TROUTT National Racquetball Champion

At the age of 73 (soon to be 74), James Troutt has been playing racquetball for over 44 years. At a time in life when most people his age are likely to be slowing down, Troutt instead is still going strong, playing upwards of six racquetball tournaments per year, and he doesn't just play, he wins!

In fact, this year at the National Master's Racquetball Association (NMRA) Championships, held March 9-12 in St. Louis, MO, Troutt came in 3rd Place in the 70+ Men's Doubles category, playing with his partner Mitch Milewski.

The NMRA was created in 1971, when ten players gathered in New Castle, PA for a round robin tournament. That was the first national tournament for players 45+ years of age. Since that first tournament, NMRA's size has exploded to a record number of male and female participants in each of the two major championship tournaments that are sponsored each year - a National Championship in March and an International Championship in July.

Last year, Troutt participated in the NMRA International Championships that were held in Denver, CO, where he earned a gold medal, coming in 1st Place in the 65+ Men's Doubles category, playing with James Weathers, and also coming in 2nd Place in the 70+ Men's Double's category, playing with Fred Roe.

The tournaments are an open invitational style, with participants coming from all

over the world to play, which is one of the things that Troutt enjoys. He says that he is trying to get his children involved as well, because he “wants them to see that this can be done.”

Troutt also plays mixed doubles, and in addition to the NMRA tournaments, he participates in the Word Senior Games, which is an international senior sports competition that was founded in 1987 by Daisy and John H. Morgan, Jr. as a way of promoting good health and physical fitness.

In the 2015 Huntsman World Senior Games, as it is now called, over 10,000 senior athletes from every state and 19 countries participated in 28 different sports, including archery, tennis, swimming, table tennis, track & field, baseball, basketball, cycling, and racquetball.

Troutt was a gold medal winner at the 2015 Huntsman World Senior Games, winning first place in the 60-64 Mixed Doubles category, with his partner Betty Leth of Mesquite, Nevada.

The 30th Anniversary of the Huntsman World Senior Games will be taking place in St. George, Utah in October, 2016. James Troutt plans to be there and most likely he will be bringing home another medal.

For information about the National Masters Racquetball Association (NMRA) visit: <http://www.nationalmastersracquetball.org>. For information about the Huntsman World Senior Games visit: <http://www.seniorgames.net>.



BUSINESS/ECONOMICS

NEW BUSINESS HIGHLIGHT: CLASSIC CUTS

Jay and Brianna Troutt launched **Classic Cuts Barbershop** on February 23rd, but held their Open House on Sunday, March 13, to introduce the new business to the Spokane community, and one hundred people joined in on the lively celebration, that included food, music and lots of haircuts.

The Troutts have been thinking about opening the business for a long time. Jay spent the past five years cutting hair and building up his clientele, while Brianna completed her Master's Degree in

Business, using Jay's business as her example for assignments in her businesses classes.

The enterprising couple joins a growing list of African American entrepreneurs in Spokane, and they are excited to be launching their first business venture.

The community is invited to stop by **2311 N. Monroe**, Tuesday through Saturday, to say hi to Brianna or to get a cut from either Jay or Gabe.

For information or an appointment call (509) 714-3531.



DEBT AND TAXES: The biggest hindrance to a Care Free & Tax Free Retirement

By Otis Manning

The average person earns over One Million Dollars over their lifetime. Assuming you go to college and begin your career at age 25 and work for 40 years until age 65 and make a modest \$25,000 per year this equals One Million Dollars! (\$25,000 per year X 40 years=One Million Dollars). But where does all that money go ?

Living Expenses normally will take about 23%. Taxes will take up to 40% when you include Income Taxes,Property Taxes and Sales Tax. Debt takes a whopping 34%, which includes your home, car, credit cards, student loans, boats etc. Savings usually is only any remaining funds left over after everything else is paid out which comes to about 3% for most people.

If Debt can be eliminated rapidly this frees up more money for Retirement! The faster you can eliminate debt, 34% of your income can go into your Retirement Account instead of to banks, lenders and finance companies! Most people are only 3-4 paychecks away from financial disaster all because of debt.

Seven out of ten people will have a heart attack, stroke or cancer, known as the BIG 3, which are Critical & Chronic illnesses before age 65 and will require medical care which could deplete their assets, and if you are only saving 3% of your income this means you will retire with less than \$30,000 in assets. Based upon a \$25,000 per year income X 3% Savings =\$750 per year X 40 years = \$30,000.

There are Financial Strategies that can be implemented to help you: (1) Become debt free within 10 years or less including your home; (2) Protect yourself from the cost of Critical & Chronic illnesses, (3) Stop giving your hard earned money to banks, lenders and finance companies; (4) Have a Tax Free Retirement.



The reason debt has grown is because the rise in the cost of living has outpaced income growth over the past 12 years. (Source nerdwallet.com)

Due to advanced medical technology, if you had one of the above "Big 3" Critical or Chronic illnesses and survived, you may have health insurance to pay for the hospital and doctors, but if you are not retired yet where will the money come from to pay your living expenses and lost wages?

Sixty percent of bankruptcy cases are due to medical expenses. (Source: CBS News, National Business Group on Health)

Sixty-eight percent of all Americans will need some form of care. (Source: CDC.gov, longtermcare.gov,Morningstr.com)

How much do you need to save for Retirement? You would need \$500,000 to have a \$2500 per month income.

(Source: American National Insurance Company SPIA as of 1/6/15)

Taxes will go up in the future and if your Retirement Income is taxable this will reduce your income. Savings Accounts & CD's are taxable, 401K, IRA's, 40B's are all tax deferred however when you withdraw the money it is taxable. This is why having Tax Free Income is the best Retirement Strategy !

It is common knowledge that the rich pay the smallest percentage of taxes because they know the financial strategies to legally reduce or avoid paying taxes which enables them to keep most or all of their income.

These same financial strategies are AVAILABLE TO YOU by consulting a Financial Advisor knowledgeable in these areas.

In summary, because most people are:

- 1) In debt
- 2) Not saving enough
- 3) At high risk for Critical & Chronic illnesses as we age
- 4) Going to pay higher taxes in the future

Wise Retirement Planning is VITAL! Some additional benefits of the above Tax Free Retirement Accounts are you can access the funds at any time for any reason without penalties!

If you are interested in implementing these Financial Strategies in your Retirement Planning contact a Financial Advisor.

For additional information on this article you may contact: Otis Manning, President, Retirement Solutions, email:om-business7@aol.com.

Disclaimer: This article is not intended to give legal, tax or investment advice. You must consult your own adviser in order to determine what is best for your specific situation.

SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

MARK NEUFVILLE: PROGRAMMING ROBOTS

Experimental Workshop to be Offered at SFCC Spring Quarter

Mark Neufville, adjunct faculty at Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) in the Math, Computing and Science Department for nearly four years, will be offering an experimental robotics workshop for Spokane Community College students starting Spring Quarter.

The course will teach students how to program the NAO Robot, which is a fully autonomous, human-like robot, that has the capability of communicating and responding, and moving around. The code for the NAO robot is written in python, so Neufville will be teaching students how to program in python, and how to write programs that will allow the robot to perform specific tasks, and communicate.

Born in Jamaica, West Indies, Neufville, who described himself “as just an average kid,” came to the United States in 1977, landing in New York. Although he had a partial scholarship to go to one of the universities in NY for a mechanical engineering degree, he chose instead to enlist in the military and served in the Marines for 14 years.



While in the Marine Corps, Neufville took college courses, and when the Marines started getting computers, he was one of the ones selected go into the computer field. But it was a truck accident in 2004 that started him on his current path, after he was placed on L&I from 2004 - 2011. Neufville started his education at ITT Tech. “I’ve always been a technical person, math and science is one of my strong points. So I pursued the computer field while at ITT.”

But, he says, he discovered that there was a possibility that the degree from ITT might not get him exactly where he wanted to go, so he started taking classes at SFCC at the same time.

Neufville received an A.A.S. Degree from ITT in Information Technology, as well as a B.S. in Information Systems Security. He also received an A.A.S. from SFCC in Information Technology and a Certificate in Computer Forensics.

After Spokane Falls Neufville went to Eastern Washington University, where he received a B.S. in Applied Technology and a Master’s Degree in Education.

In his computer related classes, Neufville says he was the only African American. “I took a lot of pride in that. Being from our community we get a lot of negative stereotypes, so I took pride in my educational ability and the fact that math and science are two of my stronger aptitudes.”

African American students are not engaging in math and science courses at the same rate as other groups. “It’s a challenging field, computers, engineering, math, science, it’s challenging, but those are the fields that we need to excel at, so that we can stay in the mainstream and stay major players in society.” *The robotics workshop starts on April 4, and will be taught on Thurs & Fri, from 10-1.*



#YES WE CODE

Van Jones To Teach 100,000 Black Children Computer Coding



#Yes We Code is a national initiative, based in Oakland, CA, that has a goal of helping to train 100,000 low-opportunity youth to become high-level computer programmers.

The initiative was founded in 2014 by Van Jones. Jones is a Yale-educated attorney and the author of two New York Times best-selling books, *The Green Collar Economy* (2008) and *Rebuild the Dream* (2012). He has also been honored with numerous awards and spotlighted on several lists of high achievers, including: the World Economic Forum’s “Young Global Leader” designation; Rolling Stone’s 2012 “12 Leaders Who Get Things Done”; TIME’s 2009 “100 Most Influential People in The World”; and the

Root’s 2014 “The Root 100.” He is presently a fellow at the MIT Media Lab.

#Yes We Code is working with grassroots coding organizations, major technology partners, celebrities and political leaders to provide youth with the necessary resources and tools to become world-class computer programmers. By learning this highly valuable and relevant 21st century skill, Jones believes that young people will be able to shift the trajectory of their futures and transform their relationships with their communities and their country.

For more information about #Yes We Code and how you can support the effort, visit <http://yeswecode.org>. For information about Van Jones: <http://vanjones.com>.



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OUR VOICES

AN OPEN LETTER FROM A GONZAGA STUDENT

Why I Fear G.U.

By Ricky Johnson

After living the first 18 years of my life on the East Coast, (both the north and south) I joined the military, where I have lived across every region of the United States, and across multiple countries during my enlistment. After being medically retired in mid 2013 I found myself here due to my fiancé getting orders to Fairchild. This is my 3rd semester here at Gonzaga with next semester being my last, and from the beginning I have expressed my concern with the culture that is GU. Our institution looks great in their mission statement, but has a campus that seems to be divided in their understandings of how to live that mission.

On one hand you have a group that feels like the school is too liberal, and is catering to the minority population. This opinion in recent weeks has been written about in the papers, discussed in the news, and talked about on social media.

On the other hand there is the other side of this argument, the group that feels like the school is not tolerant enough and the minority voice is being silenced. I fall into this latter group, as I have seen so much in my short time here that I am genuinely concerned about the welfare of my fellow minorities, whether that is by race, gender, sexual orientation or religious affiliation.

I find it kind of odd and convenient that the diversity and inclusion the campus “talks” about can be found on the 3rd floor of Hemmingson. There you will



find what I call diversity hall where UMEC, LGBT Resource Center and TVRAS office are all out of sight, and out of mind. Diversity and inclusion on the campus doesn’t and shouldn’t stop on the 3rd floor of a building.

I regularly check Yik Yak and the disgusting, blatant, racism, sexism and disrespect for the other is never addressed on a bigger scale at GU. To sit in a classroom (often as the only student of color) knowing that behind the veil of anonymity, some of my classmates feel that I am inferior to them is nerve racking. Do you have any idea what that does to a person’s psyche? I am older than your traditional student and have seen a lot, so I fear that if it bothers me, what must that 18 year old that doesn’t have the lived experience feel?

This brings me around to the very disturbing thing that I witnessed at the [February 24] Dinesh D’Souza event. I am

one that believes in order to have growth you need differing views so that you can have a healthy debate. I have no issue with the Young Republicans wanting to bring in a speaker for the campus. I did take issue with the fact that the speaker they chose to bring was so radical in his views, but I decided to give it a chance and to hear what he had to say.

I will never forget the part where D’Souza justified slavery and said, “what were the Europeans to do?” He followed that up by dismissing the atrocities done to Native Americans and all but blamed their weak immune system for their deaths. My fiancé is 100% Navajo and to hear a man dismiss the history of America here at Gonzaga, ESPECIALLY at Gonzaga, with its disappointing history with the local tribes is scary as hell to me. He also dismissed the history and inaccurately stated “gays weren’t lynched like blacks.” What message are we sending to the youth with this rhetoric?

I sat in the back, as I often do, due to my PTSD, and watched as fellow classmates and community members stood and gave this man an ovation.

I do not hold Dr. McCulloh personally responsible for the actions that are happening on this campus, as I do not believe it is his ideology. He is, however, the President, and unfortunately things like this fall at the President’s feet. It is my opinion that it is imperative to put things in place that promote a safe environment for the growth and prosperity for ALL of GU. I am sure that something positive can come out of this moving forward.

BEING v DOING

By C.S. Jones



There exists
In our world
A struggle
Between
Being and doing

From the birth
Of time
To
The current day
This is my story

Our story
The story
Of a generation
An era
Lost in translation

As confusion reigns
supreme
We thrash
Struggle
And rage
Against a system
Outdated
And wicked

As the generations
Before us
Thrive on manifest
destiny
And the generations
After us
Manifest a destiny
Of their own
choosing

We strive
To be heard
To be understood
Excepted
And loved

Our lives
Our realities
Our desires
To be forever
Remembered

An attempt
To translate
The wisdom of the
past
Into the
Commonsense of
the future

As we stand
stranded in the
present
Between human
beings
And human doings

Struggling
To just
be...

MEMORIES OF MY EXPERIENCES WITH BILL CLINTON

By James Wilburn, Jr.

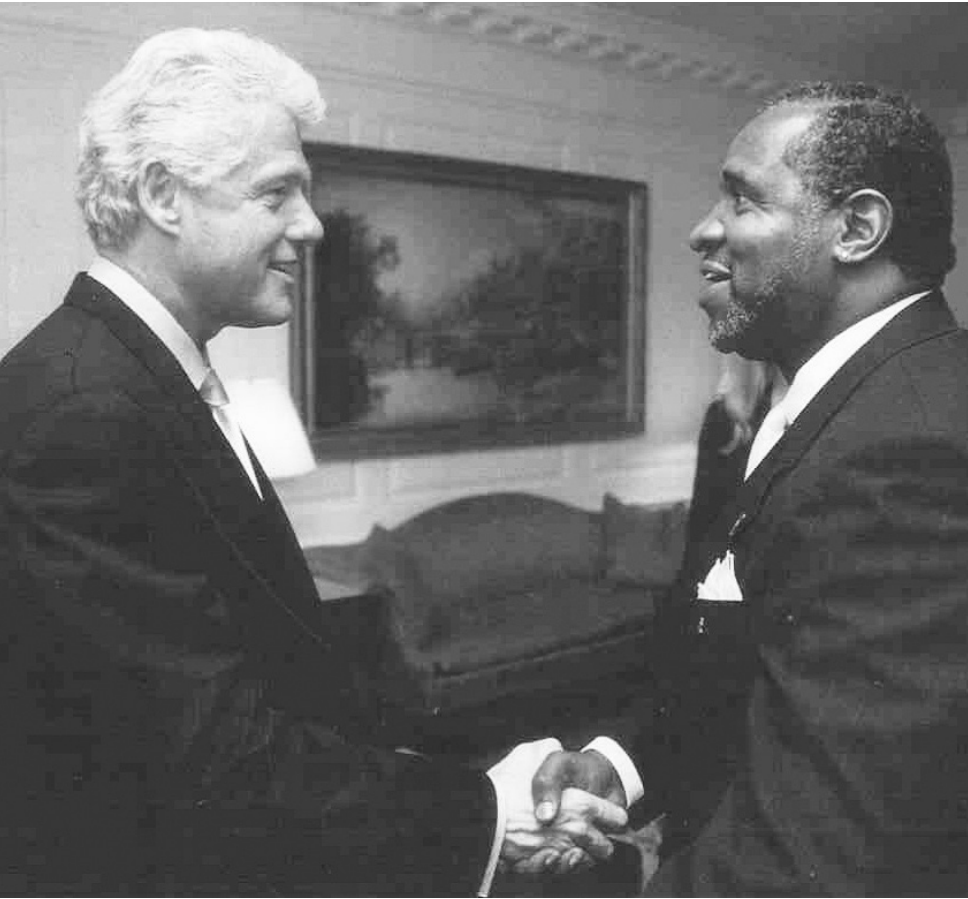
President Bill Clinton’s visit to Spokane awakened some very striking and vivid memories of my tenure as Mayor of Sunset, Arkansas. I was reminded of the working relationship we had during Clinton’s Governorship in Arkansas, and his United States presidency.

In an interview with the Arkansas Democrat newspaper, I spelled out a detailed agenda to improve the quality of life for a predominately African American city in a European American dominated state.

On August 20, 1987 I received a letter from Governor Clinton in response to the article and that was the beginning of our working relationship.

Later on in that year, I received Governor Clinton’s appointment to the Outdoor Recreation Grants Advisory Committee. Following that initial term of service, I was reappointment for several more years.

During my tenure, I realized that the \$50,000.00 match required to receive a grant was out of reach



for African Americans and other low to moderate (LMI) communities. So, we created the “FUN Park Grants Program,” which was designed to assist small incorporated cities with populations of 2,500 or less and unincorporated rural com-

munities” in developing community parks (www.outdoorgrants.com/Parks%20Grants/). These grants where significant because the \$25,000.00 grants only required a match of “in kind” contributions, such as appraised donated property and labor valued at minimum wage.

When Governor Clinton became President of the United States, he ordered a study of the poorest region in our nation: the Mississippi Delta, which included Sunset, AR, Memphis, TN and many cities from the State of Illinois to the Louisiana Bayou along the Mississippi. I was asked to serve on the committee that was to oversee the study.

When our study was complete, we took our report to Washington, DC for a conference on the Delta that was facilitated by Vice President Al Gore.

After the Delta Conference, I was invited by President Bill Clinton to the White House where I had an opportunity to take a photo with the President on May 10, 2000.

This was a much honored day in the life of a young mayor, ME, James Wilburn, Jr.

OUR VOICES

Why Black People Should Not Vote In The 2016 Presidential Election

By Tariq Nasheed

(Reprinted with permission. Forwarded by: Romeoal Watson)

It's Presidential election season, and like clockwork, the Democratic candidates are pandering for the Black vote with the same empty rhetoric that we hear every four years.

Hillary Clinton is on the campaign trail doing the latest negro dances like the Whip and the Nae Nae. And Bernie Sanders is surrounding himself with groups of Black people without actually committing to doing anything specific for Black Americans.

It's no secret that many Black Americans are disheartened by president Barack Obama's hateful neglect of the issues plaguing Black society. Consequently, this has caused many Black people to be disheartened by the election process in general.

History has shown, when people are not interested in participating in the election process, this is a sign of potential rebellion. Centuries ago in Europe, rulers were either born into political positions or appointed by small organizations into rulership. The general public did not elect the kings and queens. And whenever the general public became dissatisfied with their rulers, they simply rebelled. And often-times, these rebellions were violent.

When the United States was formed, the power elite wanted to prevent the "storming of the castle" mindset that could potentially overthrow the appointed leadership. So the general public was allowed to participate in an election process to give the impression that the popular vote elected a President into leadership.

So now, when people became dissatisfied with their leadership, they were now told that they shouldn't be too upset because they were the ones who chose the leaders. The reality is, Presidents are selected by the Electoral College, and not by the popular vote. But it is still imperative for the general public to participate in the process, so they will not rebel against the people put into office.

In 2008 and 2012, President Obama received around 90% of the Black vote. And since he has been in office, there has been a government backed, and white supremacy fueled, wave of violence and terror reaped upon Black Americans that has captured the world's attention. And Obama, as well as the other Democrats and Republicans, have continued the political tradition of benign neglect when it comes to addressing the desperate needs of Black society.

Now its election time. The GOP frontrunner Donald Trump, whose extreme rhetoric has galvanized the white supremacist crowd, is being heavily promoted by the media to scare Black voters into participating in the elections. Now Black voters feel that they have to make a choice between Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders: two candidates who have not committed to actually doing anything specific for Black people. And Black people feel that they have to vote for the lesser of two evils because they are afraid of what will happen if Trump got into office.

The reality is, Black people should not vote for any of these Democratic or Republican frontrunners. If we are honest with ourselves, exactly how much worse would it be for Black society if Trump was elected? We have been programed into believing that the Democrats have treated Black society better than the Republicans. And both parties are dominated by white supremacy, and they have both maintained systematic white supremacy over Black people collectively.

When Bill Clinton was in the White House, Bill Clinton-with the full support and backing of Hillary, implemented some of the worst crime laws that targeted Black people and created a wave of extreme mass incarceration that is still plaguing Black Americans today. Barack Obama has sat in the White House and watched unarmed Black men, women, and children get slaughtered by race soldiers who have infiltrated law enforcement. And not only has he not lifted a finger to do anything to thwart or address this, he called Black people "thugs", for reacting



#DONTVOTE

to this wave of racial violence out of desperation and abandonment.

Black people need to understand that the Republicans and the Democrats are two faces on the same coin. Lets not forget:

*Ferguson prosecutor Bob McCulloch who allowed Mike Brown to be killed with impunity was a Democrat

*Ohio prosecutor Timothy J. McGinty who allowed 12-year-old Melanoid child Tamir Rice to be killed with impunity was a Democrat

*Chicago prosecutor Anita Alvarez, who has repeatedly protected race soldiers who kill Black people with impunity, was a Democrat

With all of these racial injustices under the watch of the Democrats, Black people still feel that there should be this blind allegiance to whatever Democratic candidate that's pushed in front of us.

And I say its time we say no.

In this 2016 presidential election, Black people should not vote at all. This is because Black people are the only group of people who will give away their vote without requiring anything in return. Black people simply vote out of "tradition". This is why candidates like Bernie Sanders will surround himself with Black Civil Rights figures. Because when this generation of Black people see Sanders with a group of people who "fought for the right to vote", on a subconscious level, many of us feel an obligation to carry on this tradition.

But we need to understand when certain traditions are no longer practical and they actually work against us. Black people have been systematically mistreated in this country with the full backing and support of the government, non-stop for centuries. We have been enslaved, Jim Crowed, lynched, impoverished, miseducated, poisoned, mass incarcerated, etc., based on race. And these actions have been refined so that they are still carried out in more covert ways today. And Black people need resources specifically allocated towards us, to correct these white supremacist

actions that have placed us in this position collectively. And voting for people who will not do anything to address these issues is complete insanity.

Hillary Clinton and her husband placed masses of Black men in the new slave plantations, which is the prison industrial complex. Many people don't know that it is mandatory for prisoners to work in federal prisons. And the products created from this prison slave labor are sold on the open market. This is no different from antebellum slavery that occurred on the Southern plantations. So many Black people are weary about supporting Hilary in the elections.

But many Black people are gravitating toward Bernie Sanders. Yet when Sanders is asked about reparations, he has repeatedly shot that idea down. He has claimed that "reparations would be divisive". Yet other specific groups have received monetary and tangible resources from the government.

*It wasn't "divisive" when Japanese Americans received reparations from being placed in internment camps in the US

*It wasn't "divisive" when Jewish families got payments for the holocaust from the US

*It's not "divisive" when Native American groups get billions of dollars in money and resources from the US

*It's not "divisive" when Hispanic and gay groups are addressed and their specific needs are being met

Yet, when Black people who have been specifically disenfranchised, and disempowered by racially based laws and policies in every area of activity in our society, ask for the damage from these policies to be corrected, we are told that would be "divisive".

This is why Black people should not vote for Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders. And obviously we should not vote for Trump. What we should do is leverage our vote by withholding our vote. If no candidate will commit to doing something specifically for Black people, then we simply should not vote for them. If Black people choose to vote, they should vote independent. Or Black people should vote in their local election where the popular vote has more of an impact.

Bernie Sanders has a tendency of using the "I'm going to help everybody, and Black people are included in that" type of rhetoric. That is not good enough. This is a trick bag that Black people were put in starting in the 1960's with the whole "minority" label. Officials pretend to do things for Black people by giving things to "minorities". But minority is such a broad term, Black people are never given the proper resources that's needed because the resources are given to "minorities" like white women, Asians, white Hispanics, white gays, white handicap, etc, first.

Bernie Sanders is currently trying to appeal to the Black population by stating how he "marched with Dr. Martin Luther King". The thing is, Dr. King specifically stated he wanted reparations for Black Americans because we deserved it. So if Sanders is going to invoke the name of Dr. King yet dismiss Dr. King's wishes for Black people, it is disrespectful. And if Sanders is not willing to commit to allocating resources specifically to Black people-who deserve resources more than any group, then he should not get the Black vote.

As famed economist Dr. Claud Anderson has stated, Black people do not need anymore rights...we need resources. And if Black people support the Don't Vote Campaign (by using the hashtag #dontvote) we can withhold our vote and leverage it to make politicians work for our support.

Because supporting people without requiring anything in return is the epitome of the slave mentality.

Tariq Nasheed is a New York Times Best-Selling author and critically acclaimed filmmaker of the hit documentary series Hidden Colors (www.hiddencolorsfilm.com) Follow Tariq on twitter @tariqnasheed

Waiting in Line for Bernie

Photos From the Bernie Sanders Rally

Courtesy of Robert Lloyd, Photographer



To see more photographs from the rally and other events in Spokane visit <http://4comculture.com>

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Continued From Page 1

Additionally, Clinton talked about the prescription drug and heroine epidemic, student debt, the need to make college more affordable for everyone, prison reform, immigration reform, and health care reform. These are all issues that, while I may not agree exactly with Clinton’s position, to a large degree I support.

So for me, it wasn’t a question of what was said that I felt myself taking issue with, it was more about what was not being said.

Glaringly absent for me was an honest mention about issues of race. For example, when Clinton said that we needed prison reform because there were “too many people in prison,” I was waiting for him to say who those too many people are. That they are primarily people color. But that wasn’t mentioned. In fact, racial justice, as an issue, was no where to be found. Something that I find unsettling from a candidate that is overtly courting the Black vote. I wandered if Clinton’s message would have been different if I had been in the south. Just a thought.

Finally, Clinton’s mantra throughout his speech was, about rising together. “Whether you caucus for Hillary or not,” Clinton said, “ultimately depends on whether or not you believe we can all rise together.” He assured the crowd that “nobody will be left behind.” I tried to believe him, I really did, but what I couldn’t help thinking was if you can not even speak my name or name my issue, how can I trust that I will be included in your “rising together”.

Bernie Sanders is clearly telling his supporters that his campaign is about starting a revolution. “Truth is not easy to talk about,”

he told the crowd, “we want to hear nice, pleasant things, but sometimes the truth is not nice or pleasant.” I was intrigued.

It wasn’t more than a few minutes into his speech before Sanders touched on the “Birther movement” calling it “a very serious and ugly effort to delegitimize the presidency of Barack Obama.” He told the crowd, “it’s a funny thing, President Obama’s father was born in Kenya, my father was born in Poland. But nobody has ever asked me for my birth certificate. Do you think it might have something to do with the color of my skin.”

Bam, there is was, and with that I was hooked, although you wouldn’t have known it from my outward appearance, since the press corps was pretty stoic and jaded. I don’t think I have ever heard a political candidate running for president, including Obama by the way, that dared to be that candid about race. And he didn’t stop there.

Sanders talked about voter suppression of people of color, a rigged economy, named the unemployment rates for African American youth, and he even mentioned the unmentionable, that too many times we see unarmed people, “often African Americans”, being shot and killed by police.

Many critics say Sanders, like most politicians, is just pandering to Blacks because he needs the Black vote, and the end result for Blacks will be the same. That may ultimately be true, but what I know for sure is that it was refreshing in an overwhelmingly white crowd to hear a presidential candidate finally, truthfully, addressing race as important.

REASON TO BE CONCERNED: COMMUNITY FORUM

Continued From Page 18

It was to these community leaders and their constituents to which McDevitt addressed the majority of his remarks.

The discussion, facilitated by the Justice Department’s Community Relations Services, aired public concerns including distrust, apprehension, and a sense of disconnect from the SPD.

“The developmentally disabled community is still afraid of you,” said one male commenter, calling to mind the death of Otto Zhem in 2006.

“I’m not afraid of the police, I just don’t trust them,” said one Native man, who said he had to take down the eagle feathers from his rearview mirror in order to cross Spokane without being pulled over.

A Black commenter said he was pulled over by the SPD eight times in two years, and furthermore, had been questioned on his destination twice before lights were flashed.

After community members raised concerns about the SPD at large, focus returned to the fitness of Police Chief McDevitt to address these concerns in light of his divisive editorial.

“I apologize for the hurt,” McDevitt said several times, adding that the uproar caused by his article showed him how far he personally has to grow to promote racial equity in Spokane.

“I am a product of white privilege,” said McDevitt, “Part of my success is due to the fact that I am a white male. ... Someone said “use that white privilege as a tool,” and that’s what I intend to do.”

Indeed McDevitt is not new to the worlds of racial equity and police reform work. He served as a member of the Spokane Regional Criminal Justice Commission (SRC-JC), and in that capacity coauthored the “Blueprint for Reform,” a report on criminal justice reform submitted to Mayor Condon, the Board of Spokane County Commissioners, and the Spokane City Council in December of 2013.

In 2001 McDevitt was appointed by President Bush to serve as the US Attorney for Washington’s Eastern District, and reappointed by President Obama. Most notably, it was as US Attorney that McDevitt initiated the investigation into Otto Zehm’s death.

In an effort to address concerns about police behavior and operations, McDevitt praised the SPD’s growing body of community engagement programs, and noted that the SPD is “undermanned—underpersonned by approximately 40 officers.”

Still, when pressed by NAACP Vice President Phillip Tyler to publically repudiate his Spokesman editorial, McDevitt proposed instead that he receive a “report card” detailing his effectiveness in addressing racial equity issues; a relatively empty gesture, as McDevitt made it clear he intends to leave his position on July 1.

If racial equity workers must wait until after McDevitt’s term as Law Enforcement Director is complete to respond to his actions, McDevitt will be able to leave office without repercussions, regardless of his performance.

However, McDevitt did make himself available to community members for “coffee talks,” and after the meeting, distributed cards containing his email and phone number. The tone of his response to community concerns overall was receptive, even apologetic.

What continues to raise red flags is his failure to take responsibility for the loose facts and problematic tone in his editorial. While McDevitt apologized profusely for the hurt caused by his article, he said nothing to suggest that he does not continue to stand by the claims made therein.

If in fact McDevitt does believe in the extreme criminality of Black people, that police killings primarily result from a lack of cooperation, and that racial profiling is, on some level, “rational,” we have reason to be concerned indeed.

CITY HALL PROTEST

Continued From Page 1

In planning the protest, the group decided that what they wanted was to say that Black Lives Matter and to raise awareness about McDevitt’s appointment and their concerns about his Op-Ed Piece. They felt that the best way to express their concerns about what McDevitt had written was to let his words speak for themselves.

“We decided to blow up the op-ed article,” Kitara explained. “It would be a better way not to defame McDevitt’s character, but to use his own words from the Op-Ed. So we enlarged that,” and Kitara knelt in silence holding the words.

The organizers also decided that it was important for people who saw the silent protest to understand what they meant when they said Black Lives Matter, so they created a banner that read, “Black Lives Matter doesn’t mean that Black Lives are more important. It means that they should be just as important.” Several people thanked the protesters for including the explanation, saying that they thought Black Lives Matter meant something else.

“So there was also education that occurred,” Kitara added. “You have people who think that when

we say Black Lives Matter, that we feel that no other lives are important and that’s just not the case. We’re just trying to say that Black Lives Matter also.”

The response to the protest, which took place before the weekly City Council meeting, was a positive one, Kitara says. People offered encouragement, took photos, and some even joined in on the protest after reading the information. One young man who showed up for a different protest, ultimately put down his sign and picked up one of theirs.

The end result, Kitara says, is that “we gained supporters in the movement, instead of people coming against it,” and she feels that their message was delivered.

“We expect more from those in leadership, especially when it comes to a leader being the head of law enforcement. We want to make sure that the leadership that’s chosen understands cultural competence and that Black Lives do matter, and that there’s a historical context. You can’t just quote a statistic and not understand the systemic barriers and institutional barriers that exist that cause those particular statistics to be what they are.”

APRIL EVENTS

APRIL 6

STOP BULLYING NOW COMMUNITY FORUM

Coming together as a community to find solutions to save our children
6 pm

Restoration Church

2815 W. Sunset Blvd, Spokane

APRIL 10

CONCERT: KEITH SWEAT

One of the most popular R&B/soul producers, singers and songwriters of the late '80s and '90s.
7pm

Coeur D'Alene Casino

37914 South Nukwalqw, Worley, ID
Tickets (\$35, \$45) available at the casino or Ticketswest.com



APRIL 11-17

GET LIT! LITERARY FESTIVAL

Featuring local and national authors and musical performances at locations around Spokane. Sponsored by EWU.

For more information & schedule visit www.getlitfestival.org.

APRIL 14

CITY OF SPOKANE JOB FAIR

The City of Spokane is hosting its first annual job fair. Representatives from different City departments will be available to discuss the various careers within their departments; Civil Service Department will host information sessions and a sample testing session; Public Safety Testing (PST) will also provide information for those interested in working for Spokane Police and Fire Departments.

10AM - 4PM

1614 N. Rebecca Street, Fieldhouse Building (Fire Training Center), Spokane
For more information, citizens should contact Civil Service at 509-625-6160 or civilservice@spokanecity.org.

APRIL 14

CONCERT: SALT-N-PEPA WITH SPINDERELLA & EN VOGUE



7:30pm

Northern Quest Resort and Casino
100 N. Hayford Rd., Airway Heights
Tickets: \$55/\$75/\$95

Box Office: 509-481-2800 or 877-871-6772

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

APRIL 15

ROUGH MAGIC

Rough Magic, a New-York based six-piece band that combines poetry and song, will be performing as a part of the EWU Get Lit! Literary Festival.

7pm

Lincoln Ballroom - Lincoln Center

1316 N Lincoln St, Spokane, WA 99201

General admission is \$15. H.S. & college students free with student ID.

For more information, visit www.getlitfestival.org.

APRIL 18

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for monthly meeting
7-9pm

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

APRIL 23

2016 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION CEREMONY

Come join us for the 20th Anniversary of celebrating our African American graduates from Spokane K-12 schools, colleges and universities

1:00pm

Whitworth University Campus

Cowles Auditorium

300 W Hawthorne Road, Spokane, WA

Graduate applications are due April 8.

For more information or accommodations contact Dan Whye at 509-434-5183 or daniel.why@ccs.spokane.edu

APRIL 29

YWCA - STAND AGAINST RACISM

Courageous Conversations: How Communities are Impacted When Public Officials Normalize Hate

The YWCA will host its 7th Annual Stand Against Racism Courageous Conversation to focus on the impact of hateful rhetoric by public officials.

11am-1pm

YWCA - Comstock Room

930 N Monroe St, Spokane, WA

For more information contact the YWCA at 509-326-1190 or visit: <http://www.ywcaspokane.org>.

APRIL 29

HANNAH'S CREATION BOOK SIGNING

Join twelve year old Hannah as she introduces her new Coloring Book

4-6pm

Aunties Book Store

402 W Main Ave, Spokane, WA 99201

Copies of Hanna's Creation are available for purchase at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane or online at Amazon.com. A portion of book sales will benefit the MLK Center.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Looking for a new career?

Come and learn about the many departments and opportunities here at the City of Spokane.

Thursday
April 14, 2016
10am - 4pm

JOB FAIR!

Fire Training Center
1614 N Rebecca Street
Fieldhouse Building

Department employees and equipment will be on hand for demonstration and information. Come and take a sample Civil Service test and learn about how to apply for City jobs. A representative from Public Safety Testing will also be holding sessions for those interested in law enforcement / fire positions.

Career Sessions Available:

10:30 am - 11:00 am	Applying for City jobs (take a sample Civil Service test)
11:00 am - 11:30 am	Applying for Police Officer and Firefighter positions - PST
2:00 pm - 2:30 pm	Applying for Police Officer and Firefighter positions - PST
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Applying for City jobs (take a sample Civil Service test)

Questions? Please call: (509) 625-6160

Persons with hearing disabilities may reach us through the Washington State Relay System at 7-1-1

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COME WORSHIP WITH US

And enjoy a SPIRIT filled Worship!

Come and receive Jesus:

He delivers

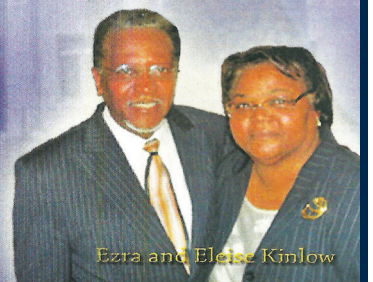
He saves

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

MORNINGSTAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Walter J. Kendricks, Pastor

3909 W. Rowan
Spokane, WA

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

509-534-4878

1996 **20th Anniversary** 2016

Spokane's African American Graduation: A Cultural Salute for Outstanding Academic Achievement

"We've Come this Far by Faith"

Please join us for a cultural ceremony and presentation of awards to celebrate African American graduates from K-12 schools, colleges and universities from Spokane and surrounding areas.



Also Honoring
Founding Members
of the
African American
Graduation
Committee

Saturday, April 23, 2016, 1-3pm

**Whitworth University
Cowles Auditorium
Spokane, Washington**

Reception will follow the ceremony —

Location: Hixson Union Building, Whitworth Campus

Applications due April 8, 2016

The African American Graduation Celebration Committee — *special thanks to:* Inland Northwest Juneteenth Coalition, Community Colleges of Spokane, Eastern Washington University, Gonzaga University, Whitworth University, Washington State University (Pullman and Spokane Campuses) and Spokane Public Schools

For information or special accommodations contact Dan Whye at (509) 434-5183, Daniel.Whye@ccs.spokane.edu