

THE

BLACK LENS

SPOKANE

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Remembering John Singleton



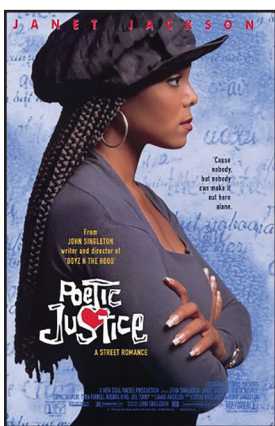
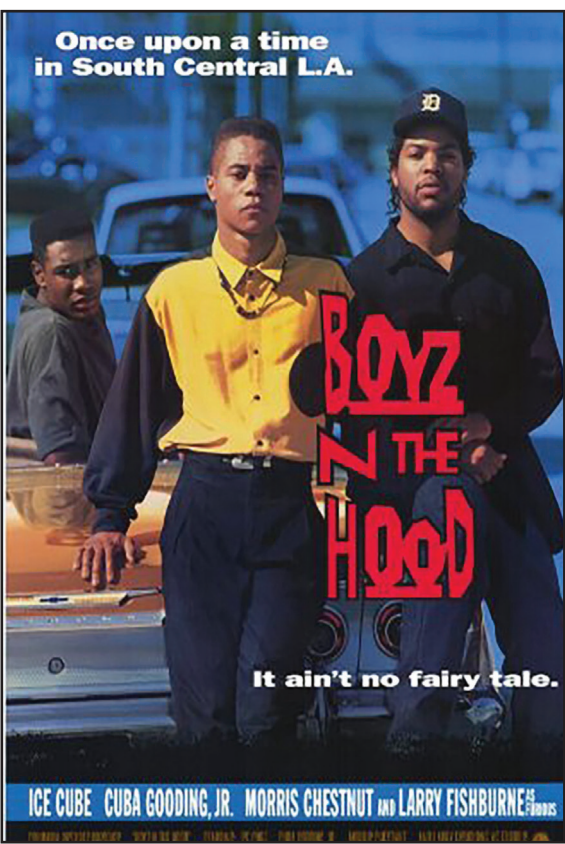
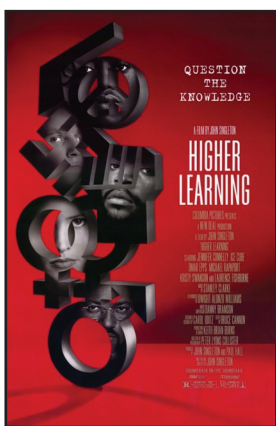
1968 - 2019

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent
(Source: Blackpressusa.com; Photo
Credit: George Pimentel Wikicommons)

Famed African American movie producer John Singleton, who at age 24 became the youngest person to be nominated for an Academy Award, died on March 29, 2019.

Singleton, best known for the hit 1991 movie, Boyz N the Hood, starring Ice Cube, had been on life support after reportedly suffering a stroke. He was 51.

Singleton was reportedly traveling back to Los Angeles from



Costa Rica when he mentioned experiencing pain in one of his legs, according to Newsweek. Following transport to a California hospital, Singleton suffered a stroke and was admitted into ICU.

Singleton's health continued to deteriorate and he was put into

a medically-induced coma just eight days after the stroke, TMZ reported.

His family ultimately made the "agonizing decision" to remove Singleton from life support, they said in a statement via Singleton's representatives.

"John Singleton (who was born in L.A.) is a prolific, ground-breaking director, who changed the game and opened doors in Hollywood, a world that was just a few miles away, yet worlds away, from the neighborhood in which he grew up," the statement read.

"We are grateful to his fans, friends and colleagues for the outpouring of love and prayers during this incredibly difficult time. We want to thank all the doctors at Cedars Sinai for the impeccable care he received."

According to Newsweek, Singleton's family also noted the movie producer's battle with hypertension, a high blood pressure ailment of which African Americans are particularly at risk for.

"Like many African Americans, Singleton quietly struggled with hypertension. More than 40 percent of African American men and women have high blood pressure, which also develops earlier in life and is usually more severe," the statement read. "His family wants to share the message with all to please recognize the symptoms by going to Heart.org."

Singleton was a father to seven children, including Justice, Maa-sai, Hadar, Cleopatra, Selenesol, Isis and Seven Singleton.

In addition to Boyz N the Hood, which received two Oscar nominations, Singleton also directed classic films like Poetic Justice, Baby Boy, Higher Learning, Shaft, 2 Fast 2 Furious, Billions and many others.

Environmental Racism Grows as Environmental Groups Turn Increasingly White



By Hazel Trice Edney
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Clean drinking water. Lead paint abatement programs. Affordable energy bills. These are the day-to-day environmental justice issues that are vital to the health and financial well-being of communities - especially low-income families.

But as environmental battles rage across the country, thousands of African-American children and adults are paying a heavy price with their health as elite environmental organizations are overwhelmingly managed by White leaders who appear to ignore key issues that disproportionately impact low-income communities, where African-Americans and other people of color reside.

As the diminishing African-American voices for environmental justice be-

comes more prevalent, attention appears to be turning away from environmental hazards disparately plaguing urban areas dominated by Black people across the country such as the following:

Cockroach allergens are detected in 85 percent of inner-city homes across the U. S. and 60 to 80 percent "of inner-city children with asthma are sensitized to cockroach based on the skin prick testing," according to the U.S. Institute of Health.

Approximately 11.2 percent of African-American children who live in urban areas are at risk for lead poisoning caused by lead-based paint, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A Center for American Progress report found that water contamination dispa-

rately "plagues low-income areas and communities of color across the nation" and that studies have "documented limited access to clean water in low-income communities of color."

These atrocities are being shoved aside by misaligned priorities. Instead of making a meaningful impact to health and pocketbooks, some environmental organizations focus on apparent vanity projects that garner media attention and money from well-heeled donors.

Among the best examples is an issue playing out in Minnesota, where national environmental groups - including Greenpeace, 350.org and the Natural Resources Defense Council - are waging a major battle described as "resistance against the oil pipelines."

Continued on Page 19

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

I-1000

Affirmative Action 2.0

As the Washington State Legislature was winding down its most recent legislative session, grappling with approving a multi-billion dollar state budget, which they did in the late hours of Sunday, April 28, they also did something in those final hours that caught me off guard. They passed I-1000.

If you are not familiar with I-1000, which many on this side of the state are not, the legislation, if it stands, will overturn the infamous (at least in communities of color) I-200, which has effectively banned Affirmative Action in Washington state for the past 20 years.

Supporters of I-200, like Tim Eyman, declared that the legislation was all about equality and fairness, and making sure that everyone is "treated the same". The voters believed him, passing I-200 in 1998 with over 58% of the vote.

The irony (and I would argue the insidiousness) of I-200-- which said the state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting-- is that it strategically used the language of the civil rights movement as a weapon against people of color.

Pretty clever.

What came as no surprise to those of us that have been banging the drums of racial inequality for decades, the passage of I-200 did exactly what it was designed to do. Under the cover of "fairness" and "color blindness", the law systematically created a mechanism that blocked efforts to address the historic impact that discrimination has had on communities of color and other marginalized groups in this state.

As a result, employers in Washington ran scared, seemingly frightened that even efforts on their part to create equity goals or to do targeted outreach to under-represented communities would be viewed as a violation of the law. So, most did nothing, and the impact on people of color, and in particular the African American community, has been devastating.



Since the passage of I-200, African-American unemployment has risen to nearly 7% and Hispanic unemployment to nearly 6%, the highest and 2nd highest in the state, according to data from Washington State Employment Security.

Additionally, according to Washington's Office of Women and Minority Business Enterprises (OMWBE), since the passage of I-200, state spending with certified minority and woman-owned businesses has dropped from 10% to 3%, causing a \$3.8 billion, 20 year loss to small, minority and woman-owned businesses.

And even more telling, according to data from the Washington State Department of Transportation, since the passage of I-200, white males, who are only 38% of the state population, have received over 80% of the Washington State Department of Transportation contracts.

Now, critics of I-1000, like the group American Coalition for Equality (ACE), who filed a referendum with the Secretary of State to repeal the legislation (even before the ink had dried), would argue, I'm sure, that these disparities in contracts and employment are simply the natural result of a fair and equal process and that white folks are hired more and receive more contracts simply because they deserve it more.

I would argue, however, that discrimination and preferential treatment (both implicit and explicit) have always been at play in employment and contracting, and in any number of other areas, it's just that white folks have primarily been the ones to benefit from it, and I would also argue that the folks who are fighting so hard against I-1000, the Tim Eymans and the Ward Connerlys of the world, and others like them, are very aware of that.

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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9TH ANNUAL

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14

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6-9PM

15

JUNE

BBQ AT THE PARK

2-5PM

16

JUNE

FATHER'S DAY BRUNCH

2³⁰-5PM

SAVE THE DATES

INLAND NORTHWEST JUNETEENTH COALITION

INWJC

2019 Juneteenth Celebration

Pillar Awards – Nomination Form

Each year the Inland Northwest Juneteenth Coalition honors Individuals, Businesses, Non-Profit Organizations and Church/Religious Groups for their dedication to uplifting the African American community in Spokane.

Winners are selected from community nominations.

Please make your nominations below.

****Nominations must be received by May 31.****

Individual

Youth

Adult

Business

Non-Profit

Church-Religious

Your Contact Information:

Name

E-mail

Phone Number

****You must provide your contact information in order for your nomination to be accepted. If your nominee is selected, we may need your help to reach them.**

Submit nominations online at inwjc.org, by e-mail to inwjc@ymail.com or you can mail this form to INWJC, 13514 W. Sunset Hwy, #509, Airway Heights, WA 99001.

The 2019 Pillar Awards will be held on Friday, June 14.

Happy Mother's Day

Mother V. H. Noble



Mom,

You have been a mother, aunt, sister in Christ, mentor and comforter to many from the time I can remember.

You have been a District Missionary for Holy Temple Church of God in Christ.

The love that you share with many will have an everlasting impact.

For that, mom, we just want you to know that you are a Virtuous Woman.

Happy Mothers Day & Happy Birthday!

Love Always,

Bobby, Rhonda and Sherri

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Rodney Robinson Named National Teacher Of The Year

(Source: Richmond Public Schools, rva-schools.net; Nigel Roberts, newsone.com; ccso.org; Photo Credit: Richmond Public Schools)

Virginia teacher Rodney Robinson was named the 2019 National Teacher of the Year in April by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Of Robinson, the council said, he "creates a positive school culture by empowering his students – many of whom have experienced trauma – to become civically-minded social advocates who use their skills and voices to affect physical and policy changes at their school and in their communities."

A graduate of Virginia State University, a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), Robinson currently teaches Social Studies and History to grades 6 - 12 at the Virgie Binford Education Center, which is a part of the Richmond Juvenile Detention Center.

Robinson is a 19-year teaching veteran who became a teacher, he says, to honor his mother who was denied an education as a child due to segregation and poverty in rural Virginia where he group up. "Segregation and poverty stripped her of the opportunity to graduate from high school and go to college," Robinson told CNN in an interview.

In an interview with the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Robinson said he decided to attend VSU because of his mentor in high school, Wayne Lewis, a Black assistant principal at is high school and also a VSU grad, spoke with him about the historically Black college while he was serving in-school detention for flipping over a desk after a teacher insulted the Black students in his class.



"I am honored and humbled to be the 2019 National Teacher of the Year. This year I hope to be the voice for my students and all students who feel unseen, unheard, unappreciated and undervalued in America." -Rodney Robinson

"It was the first time someone had talked to me about their college days," Robinson shared. "It really got me interested."

In 2015, Robinson started teaching at Virgie Binford Education Center, he says, to better understand the school-to-prison pipeline. The term is used to describe policies that have the result of steering students of color and other disadvantaged youth toward involvement with the criminal justice system

Robinson uses the whole child approach to education to help the students who are most vulnerable. His classroom is a collaborative partnership between himself and his students and is anchored in him providing a civic centered education that promotes social-emotional growth. Robinson uses the knowledge he has gained

from his students to develop alternative programs to prevent students from entering the school-to-prison pipeline.

Robinson earned a Bachelor of arts in history from Virginia State University and a master's in educational administration and supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has been published three times by Yale University and has received numerous awards for his accomplishments in and out of the classroom, most notably the R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence.

He is a member of Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney's Education Compact Team, which includes politicians, educators, business leaders, and community leaders, and is working with city leaders and local colleges to recruit underrepresent-

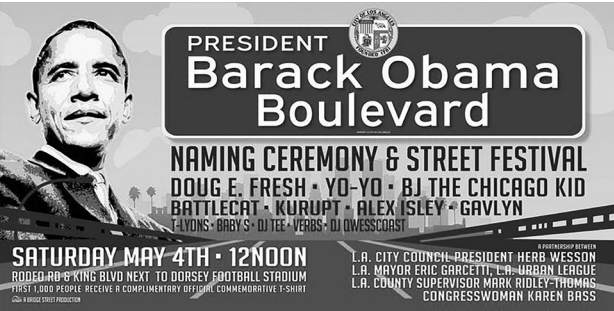
ed male teachers into the field of education. He has also worked with Pulitzer Award winning author James Foreman on developing curriculum units on race, class, and punishment as a part of the Yale Teacher's Institute.

Robinson is committed to using the platform that he will receive from the recognition to be a voice for the students that he serves. In his application, he stated: "We need equity. We need to understand that not every child in America starts at the same place in life and that some need more help to achieve. A one-size-fits-all model of equality does not work in education and education funding. Equity ensures that the students suffering from multi-generational poverty in the public housing communities of Richmond and Chicago, along with children in the mountains of West Virginia and the Dine Nation in Arizona and New Mexico, receive adequate resources to get the same quality education as those in the suburbs of Northern Virginia, Connecticut, and the Silicon Valley."

The National Teacher of the Year Program, run by CCSSO, identifies exceptional teachers in the country, recognizes their effective work in the classroom, engages them in a year of professional learning, amplifies their voices, and empowers them to participate in policy discussions at the state and national levels.

As the 2019 National Teacher of the Year, Robinson will spend a year traveling nationally and internationally to represent educators and advocate on behalf of teachers. Robinson plans to focus his year-long advocacy efforts on creating an equitable education for all students, and improving the teacher pipeline by recruiting more men of color into the field of education.

Los Angeles Rodeo Road to be Renamed Obama Boulevard



On Saturday May 4, 2019, the City of Los Angeles will officially unveil Obama Boulevard in honor of the 44th President of the United States.

The location selected for the ceremony and festival is where Obama Boulevard will intersect with Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, creating one of the most significant African American points of interest in the country. It also establishes a "Presidential Row," that is, Washington Boulevard, Adams Boulevard, Jefferson Boulevard and Obama Boulevard in America's 2nd Largest City.

In order to commemorate the event, the community will celebrate with a street festival and a day of musical performances, community vendors and food trucks.

The unveiling ceremony will take place at 5pm and will include Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson, Los Angeles Urban League President Michael Lawson, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Congresswoman Karen Bass, Church of God In Christ Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, President of the LA County Federation of Labor Rusty Hicks, as well as local, state and federal elected officials.

Archbishop Wilton Gregory Becomes First Black Person To Lead US Catholic Church



Source: Jazzi Johnson, blavity.com; Ed Condon and JD Flynn, catholicnewsagency.com/news; photo credit: CNA file photo)

The New York Times reports that on the fifty-first anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Archbishop Wilton Gregory was appointed by Pope Francis to the highest Catholic rank in the United States, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington. The Times also reports that Gregory is anticipated to become a Cardinal, which would give him the power to vote for the next pope following Francis' rule. Gregory will be the first African American in the history of the Catholic church to hold each of the positions.

Seventy-one year old Gregory, currently the Archbishop of Atlanta, is considered a progressive. He has been vocally critical of the rampant sexual abuse within the church, insisting on instating the Dallas Charter, a zero-tolerance policy for children sexual abusers. He has also challenged the church on its controversial stances against abortion and homosexuality.

Archbishop Gregory will be sworn in on May 21.

Rapper Big Sean Sponsors Entrepreneurial Contest For HBCU Students



Source: Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, jbhe.com)

Rapper Big Sean's non-profit organization, the Sean Anderson Foundation, partnered with Ally Financial and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund to host an entrepreneurial competition for students from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). The

contest, "Moguls in the Making," gave HBCU students the opportunity to plan, develop, and present a business plan in front of their peers and a panel of judges. They also participated in workshops focused on various topics such as financial literacy, idea pitching, and building business models.

The event received over 500 applicants, which were narrowed down to 50 student participants from 10 HBCUs. The represented colleges were Alabama A&M University, Elizabeth City State University, Florida A&M University, Howard University, Jackson State University, Morgan State University, Norfolk State University, Virginia State University, Tennessee State University, and North Carolina A&T State University.

The winning team came from Florida A&M University. The students received internships at Ally Financial, a \$5,000 scholarship each, and MacBook Air computers.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Texas Executes Man Convicted in 1998 Murder of James Byrd

(Source: Anne Branigin, [theroot.com](#); Elliott C. McLaughlin and Steve Almasy, [cnn.com](#); Biography.com; Juan A. Lozano and Michael Graczyk/AP, [fayobserver.com](#); Photo Credits: AP/Byrd Family & AP/Juan Lozano)

One of three white men convicted in the brutal murder of James Byrd Jr. in 1998, John William King, was executed by lethal injection on April 24 in a Texas prison. King's is the second execution resulting from Byrd's murder, which has been described as one of the most gruesome hate crimes in U.S. history. Lawrence Russell Brewer, King's accomplice, was executed by lethal injection in 2011, the first time in Texas history a white person received a death sentence for killing a Black person. The third man, Shawn Berry, was sentenced to life in prison for cooperating with authorities and is eligible for parole in 2038.

Born on May 2, 1949, in Beaumont, Texas, James Byrd Jr. was the third of eight children born to his parents, Stella and James Byrd Sr. They were raised in Jasper, Texas, a town of roughly 8,000 people. Byrd's mother served as a Sunday School teacher and his father was a deacon at the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church. Byrd played piano in the church and graduated from Jasper Rowe High School in 1967 as part of the last segregated class in its history.

According to news reports, Byrd, the father of three children: Renee, Ross and Jamie, accepted



a ride from three white men in the early morning hours of June 7, 1998. He was brutally beaten and his face spray-painted. A logging chain was tied around his ankles. He was dragged behind a pickup truck, down an asphalt road for almost 3 miles. Reports say Byrd was alive for at least 2 of the miles, managing to stay conscious while he was being dragged, until his head and right arm were finally severed by a culvert. Byrd's headless torso was dumped off alongside a road in front of a Jasper church.

CNN reported that prosecutors said Byrd was targeted because he was Black and presented evidence that King had been an "exalted cyclops" of the white supremacist Confederate Knights of America and regularly drew lynching scenes. He had tattoos that included a burning cross, the double lightning bolt insignia of Adolf Hitler's



paramilitary Schutzstaffel, a robed Ku Klux Klansman, a swastika, the words "Aryan Pride" and a Black man hanging from a tree.

CNN also reported that gang experts testified that King, who maintained his innocence, was recruiting others to his cause — an all-out race war — and that "leaving Byrd's body in front of the church, rather than obscuring it, demonstrated that the crime was meant to spread terror."

The viciousness of the murder prompted national attention. Byrd's funeral, paid for by Dennis Rodman, was attended by Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and NAACP President Kweisi Mfume, as well as hundreds of mourners.

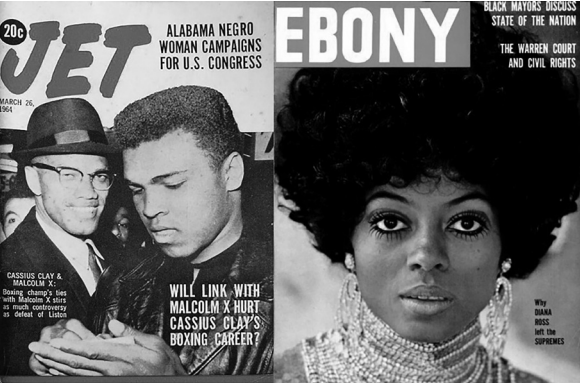
On May 11, 2001, Texas Governor Rick Perry signed the James Byrd Hate Crimes Act into law. The law strengthened "penalties for crimes

motivated by a victim's race, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual preference, age or national origin" in the state of Texas. The Byrd family also worked with Matthew Shepard's family to pass the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which was signed into law on October 28, 2009, by President Barack Obama. The act recognized the importance of prosecuting violence motivated by racism and other bias-related crimes

The city of Jasper, which was vilified nationally as a result of the murder, built the James Byrd Jr. Memorial Park in Byrd's honor, and a bench in Byrd's honor, engraved with the words, "be the change you want to see in the world," was placed outside the courthouse where two of the trials took place. In 1999 Jasper residents also tore down a wrought-iron fence that had separated the graves of its Black and white residents in the Jasper City Cemetery (where Byrd and his mother are buried) since 1836.

Byrd's family established the James Byrd Foundation for Racial Healing following his death. The foundation conducts diversity workshops, offers scholarships to people of color and runs an oral history project with more than 2,600 personal stories about racism. Mylinda Byrd Washington, one of Byrd's sisters, said "I hope people remember him not as a hate crime statistic. This was a real person. A family man, a father, a brother and a son."

Johnson Publishing Files for Chapter Seven Bankruptcy



(Source: Corilyn Shropshire and Lolly Bowean, [chicagotribune.com/business](#); Photo Credit: Nancy Stone/Chicago Tribune)

Three years after selling both Ebony and Jet Magazines to a private equity firm, Johnson Publishing filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy liquidation in April. The seventy-seven year old company was founded in Chicago in 1942 by John H. Johnson. In 1945, Johnson launched Ebony, a monthly lifestyle magazine, and six years later, he launched Jet, a digest-style weekly publication.

Both publications were iconic in the Black community and chronicled Black life in America for decades, featuring human interest stories and celebrity and lifestyle photographs. Jet featured news of Black America's struggle for civil rights, including photos of Emmett Till's battered body in his casket. In 1973, the company debuted Fashion Fair cosmetics, one of the first cosmetics lines for women of color, and for fifty years sponsored the Ebony Fashion Fair, a traveling runway show led by Johnson's wife, Eunice Johnson, with designs modeled by African-American women and men.

In 2005, John Johnson (87), who was succeeded by his daughter Linda Johnson Rice as CEO, died of heart failure, and as advertisers shifted to digital platforms, Johnson Publishing began to struggle. In 2010, the company sold its 11-story office building for \$8 million. In 2014, Jet became a digital-only publication, although at the time it had a circulation of more than 700,000 and was the third-largest circulation magazine for the African-American market. In 2015, Johnson Publishing put its entire photo archive up for sale. A company news release said "a confluence of adverse events and factors outside of the company's control" led to the bankruptcy decision.

In Spectacular Comeback Tiger Woods wins First Masters in Forteen Years



(Source: [apnews.com](#); Aliya Semper Ewing, [theroot.com](#); David Westin, [augusta.com](#); Photo Credit: Andrew Davis Tucker, [The Augusta Chronicle](#))

Tiger Woods erased a two-shot deficit to win his 5th Masters and 15th major title on April 14 in what is being called one of the greatest comeback stories in modern sports history.

Formerly ranked number one in the world, by 2014 Woods had slipped in the rankings and was outside of the top 1,000, suffering through intense back problems that affected his golfing. In 2017, he was arrested after being found asleep at the wheel of his car. Test results showed five different drugs in his system, which Woods claimed were prescription painkillers for his back. He plead guilty to reckless driving and was placed in a diversion program. Woods admitted to CNN that he was struggling with depression. Later in 2017, Woods had a successful spine-fusion surgery that led to his first win in five years.

Woods trailed by four in this year's Masters after opening at 70. He was one back after a second-round 68 and was down by two shots after his third-round 67. Francesco Molinari, who defeated Woods in last year's British Open, was up by two shots after 54 holes, but had two double bogeys. Woods evened the score, shooting 2-under-par 70 and finishing 13-under at 275.

Woods' fifth Masters title moved him past Arnold Palmer and now puts him one win behind Jack Nicklaus for the most Masters victories in history.

West Point gets its First Black Superintendent in School History



(Source: Associated Press; Noah Nash, [Armytimes.com](#); Photo Credit: U.S. Military Academy via AP)

Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, a 1983 U.S. Military Academy graduate who has held high-ranking Army posts in Europe and Asia, will become the first Black officer to command West Point in its 216-year history, academy officials announced. Williams will assume command as the academy's 60th superintendent during a ceremony in West Point's Jefferson Hall, school officials said.

Williams, a native of Alexandria, Virginia, has served as the deputy chief of staff for the U.S. Army in Europe and the deputy commanding general for support for the 2nd Infantry Division in South Korea. Most recently Williams was commander of NATO's Allied Land Command, based in Turkey.

West Point, which was founded in 1802, didn't graduate its first Black cadet until the Reconstruction era in 1877. No Black cadet had graduated in the 20th century when Benjamin O. Davis Jr. arrived in there in 1932. Davis ate alone, roomed alone and was shunned by fellow cadets because he was Black. After graduating in 1936, he went on to command the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II and retired as an Air Force general in 1970. West Point recently named its newest cadet barracks for Davis.

The announcement of Williams' appointment comes less than a year after an African-American cadet and Rhodes Scholar, Simone Askew, was selected to take the top position in West Point's cadet chain of command. Williams takes over from Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr., who's retiring after more than 40 years in the Army, including the last five years as West Point's superintendent.

D.C. Music Store Wins Against Gentrification Threat

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

(Triceedneywire.com) - The first indication that something wasn't quite right on the corner of Florida Avenue and 7th Street N.W. was the eerie silence that punctuated the ordinarily bustling corner in a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood in Northwest Washington.

The second indication came in a tweet.

"I'm not a fan of gogo, but the dudes down at Metro PCS on Georgia have stopped playing their music. Apparently, the new [white] neighbors were complaining about the "noise," Howard University student Julien Broomfield wrote on Twitter along with the hashtag #DontMuteDC on April 7.

The MetroPCS store in Shaw had gone silent and, according to its owner, had been ordered to stop playing go-go music outside of the store or face lawsuits.

Owner Donald Campbell's store offers phone services and also plays and sells go-go music — the booming, percussive sound native to D.C. — since opening 24 years ago. He says traffic to his store has been steady through the years.

DCist reported that Campbell said the report came from a resident who lives in the luxury apartment development, The Shay, that opened in 2015. The building, built by JBG Smith and now owned by Gates Hudson, offers luxury apartments and retail spaces.

"There really hasn't been a significant change up until they began bothering us about the speakers, but I guess they want to dictate what we can and cannot play," Campbell explained. "That's the biggest thing I've seen mostly."

The concierge who answered the phone on April 8 said, "No thank you. We're not going to be able to answer any of your questions," in response to questioning.

Moments before, the building released a statement on Facebook.

When Broomfield, a Howard University senior, realized she could no longer hear



the go-go music playing from the store, she took to social media. "I've only been here five years, I can only imagine how native D.C. residents feel," she said addressing her reason for tweeting.

Her original Twitter thread gained public attention from media outlets, citizens and D.C. Councilmembers. Her thread also sparked a series of protests starting with one on April 9, led by Kymone Freeman, Co-Founder of We Act Radio. Freeman said he was inspired to organize the rally because he feels this is bigger than just the music.

"What we're addressing here today is that gentrification is indeed cultural genocide. Them taking that speaker may be a small thing to some people, but it's actually a very large piece in a big puzzle," he said.

Reaction to the news of the silencing of the MetroPCS store reverberated quickly through D.C. and the country. By April 8,

#DontMuteDC was trending in the District. Protesters demonstrated in the parking lot across from the MetroPCS for days, playing go-go music. A larger demonstration on 14th Street NW on April 9 brought out D.C. celebrities such as Wale, whose early music drew inspiration from go-go. Mayor Muriel Bowser (D) and Ward 1 councilwoman Brianne Nadeau wrote to T-Mobile, which owns MetroPCS.

The noise complaints highlight ongoing, and for some, painful changes in the neighborhood. And The Shay, the apartment building Campbell said complaints stemmed from, rests squarely in the middle.

The apartment is located on what used to be a flea market where neighborhood residents gathered and sold goods. Today, apartments in the building can cost as much as \$3,200 a month. Just 19 units in both buildings at the Shay are designated as affordable units.

The apartment building came under fire previously for advertising apartments with a billboard that featured a white woman gazing down on the neighborhood — seemingly at residents who couldn't afford to live there even if they wanted to — proclaiming "she has arrived."

As the city grows, the District has experienced the highest "intensity of gentrification" of any city in the nation, according to a study by the National Community Reinvestment Coalition. The study also found that 20,000 African-American residents were displaced from the city between 2000 and 2013. According to the Washington Post, Shaw's demographics shifted from 70 percent black in 1970 to just 30 percent in 2010.

Just blocks away from the store on U Street lies what was once known as "Black Broadway," where pianist Duke Ellington and Dr. Charles Drew would congregate.

"[Segregation] kept us all in the same community and patronizing our own businesses. We learned to produce and provide everything we needed, and because of that, the community flourished," B. Doyle Mitchell Jr., whose grandfather founded Industrial Bank in 1934, told Washingtonian in 2017.

Shaw suffered extensive damage after the 1968 riots that racked the city following the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. A report by the Washington Post said that businesses along the corridor where the MetroPCS is currently were hit heavily by the riots, with 200 of the 250 businesses in the area hit. Much of Black Broadway was also destroyed.

One block away from the store is, ironically, Chuck Brown Way — named after the father of go-go music.

"Go-go is D.C.'s indigenous music," Howard University professor Natalie Hopkinson, author of the 2012 book Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of the Chocolate City, told Complex in 2017.

Continued on Page 19

In Memoriam - Trailblazers

Judge Damon J. Keith

Civil Rights Icon Dies At 96

(Source: Angela Hornsby-Gutting, blackpast.org)

U.S. Appeals Court Judge Damon Jerome Keith, the son of Perry A. and Annie L. (Williams) Keith, was born in Detroit, Michigan on July 4, 1922. He earned a B.S. degree at West Virginia State College in 1943, an L.L.B. from Howard University in 1949, and an LL.M. from Wayne State University in 1956.

Keith's experiences in the then-segregated military reinforced his interest in the law and his commitment to fight against segregation.

Between 1952 and 1956 he was an attorney in the Office of the Friend of the Court in Detroit. He served on the Wayne County Michigan Board of Supervisors and the Detroit Housing Commission from 1958 to 1963 before entering a private law practice with a Detroit firm, from 1964 to 1967. He was politically and socially active in the Democratic Party and the NAACP.

In 1967, President Lyndon Johnson appointed Keith to a U.S. District Court in Michigan. Four years later, Keith ruled against President Richard M. Nixon in a case involving the wiretaps of phone conversations of a political activist. In United States v. Sinclair, the United States Supreme Court upheld Keith's decision unanimously. In 1977, Keith was elevated the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth District by President Jimmy Carter.

Among Keith's honors and awards are the American Bar Association's Thurgood Marshall Award (1997); a Distinguished Public Service Award from the National Anti-Defamation League; the Edward J. Devitt Award for Distinguished Service to Justice (1998); and the NAACP's highest award, the Spingarn Medal.

Judge Jerome Keith died in Detroit, Michigan on April 28, 2019. He was 96 years old.



Kristoff St. John

Of 'Young and the Restless' Dies at 52

By Nsenga K. Burton, Ph.D.
NNPA Newswire Editor
(Source: Blackpressusa.com;
Photo: Screen capture, CBSN / YouTube)

Long time Young and the Restless actor and fan favorite, Kristoff St. John, was found dead in his home on February 3, 2019, by a friend. He was 52.

St. John had been struggling recently with the death of his son Julian, who died by suicide in 2014 while in a mental health facility. The popular actor had been released from a psychiatric facility days before where he was being treated for depression. He previously took a leave of absence from 'Young and the Restless' in October 2017 to undergo psychiatric treatment after a reported mental health-related scare.

St. John made his acting debut on the hit television series, 'That's My Mama,' as a child actor, followed by numerous appearances on shows including 'Roots: The Next Generations,' 'The Cosby Show,' 'A Different World,' 'Martin', and 'Living Single.' He first appeared on 'Y&R' in 1991.



St. John was nominated for two Daytime Emmys for his role as Adam Marshall on the first Black cast soap opera, 'Generations.' He won two best supporting actor Daytime Emmys in 1992 and 2008 for his role as Neil Winters on the Young and the Restless and he also won 10 NAACP Image awards for best actor in daytime television.

In addition to acting, St. John was a writer, host and producer of media content. His film work included The Champ (1979) and Pandora's Box (2002).

The coroner ruled St. John's death an accident resulting from hypertrophic heart disease, with alcohol as a contributing factor.

NAACP UPDATE: SPOKANE

<http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com>

Making Health Care Work For You - Part 2

At the Doctor's Office.

Last month we discussed ways you could prepare yourself for your appointment with the doctor. This month we will review ways you can navigate that visit and come out the other side feeling that it was productive and helpful.

First of all, always remember that you are the customer and that healthcare providers are providing you a service. Ask for and expect good customer service. If you don't like the quality of the service you are provided, tell your provider in what way your expectations were not met. If that doesn't result in better care, then please take your business to someone who will do better!

1. When you finally get to see the doctor be sure to **give her all the information she needs** (you wrote it down, right?) and answer her questions as honestly and completely as you can. She can't help you if she is seeing only part of the picture that is you.

2. **Ask questions!!** Be sure that you understand everything that the doctor told you. If you think you might have more questions after the visit, ask about the best way to get in touch with the doctor (or her nurse or medical assistant) to have those answered.



Photo Credit: Istock-DMEPhotography

3. Medications are not one size fits all. Some medications which work well on white people, do not work as well, and may even be dangerous for African Americans. **If your doctor prescribes a new medicine, be sure to ask if it will be effective for you.** You can also double check with your pharmacist or do your own research online.

4. **If you are worried that you may not be able to afford a medication that has been prescribed for you, tell your doctor.**

There may be a less expensive alternative. Also check the cost of the medication at different pharmacies, as prices can vary significantly.

5. **If the doctor's diagnosis doesn't sound right to you, say so. If you are still not satisfied, ask for a second opinion.** (Be sure to check your insurance for the cost of this.) Do your own research on your condition. A good place to start is the Mayo Clinic website (mayoclinic.org) or Medline (medlineplus.gov).

6. **The best healthcare plan is one that you and your doctor create together.** If your doctor recommends screenings or treatments, or prescribes a medication, but you don't think that you will be able to follow up, let her know that. It is important that you are both on the same page about what will happen after your visit.

7. **Start keeping your own health records or journal,** including a summary of what you were told during office visits, any changes in your treatments or meds, dates and types of vaccinations or shots, lab results, and the results of any screenings, etc. Poor record keeping by healthcare clinics and hospitals can result in medical errors.

8. **Review your medical bills carefully for errors.** Be sure to compare the bill with the EOB (Explanation of Benefits) that you receive from your insurance company for that visit or procedure. Ask questions if you don't understand something on a bill or if it doesn't look right. **If you can't afford to pay, ask if there is an option for a payment plan.** Hospitals and large medical clinics can sometimes write off part or all of a medical bill if asked. (They may ask for proof of your income.)

This may sound like a lot of work but time spent advocating for yourself, especially in a system as complex as healthcare, is never wasted. Take good care of yourself and expect the healthcare system do the same. You've earned it!

Information provided by the Spokane NAACP Health Care Committee.

The Connection Between Stress and Strokes

By Glenn Ellis

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The idea of a stroke can be frightening because it comes without warning and can change your life forever. Unfortunately, nearly 800,000 people will experience a new or recurrent stroke every year, and stroke is a leading cause of disability in the United States.

In any given year, 100,000 African-Americans will have a stroke, and stroke is the third leading cause of death in the African-American community. **Overall, African-Americans suffer more strokes than any other group of people.**

Studies show that if you are Black and of African or Caribbean origin you are twice as likely to have a stroke, and at a younger age, than white people. The reasons for this are complex and not completely understood.

While stroke is a leading cause of disability, it is also the leading cause of preventable disability. In fact, research shows that up to 80 percent of strokes could have been prevented.

There are **two main types of stroke**, those that block arteries and those that cause arteries to bleed.

Hemorrhagic Stroke. These strokes are caused by bleeding in the brain. They happen due to a weak spot in the wall of the vessel, which can cause an aneurysm (bulging of the vessel wall). The vessels can also be weakened by chronic, very high blood pressure and break from force. When the vessel breaks, the blood leaks into surrounding tissue, and the brain doesn't get the oxygen and nutrients it needs.

Ischemic Stroke. These strokes result from blocked arteries, which often occur from cholesterol buildup, called plaque.

The risk of ischemic stroke - the most prevalent type of stroke, which is caused by a blood clot that blocks an artery - is three times higher in African-Americans than in whites.

Interestingly, nearly half of all stroke patients suffered from transient ischemic attacks.

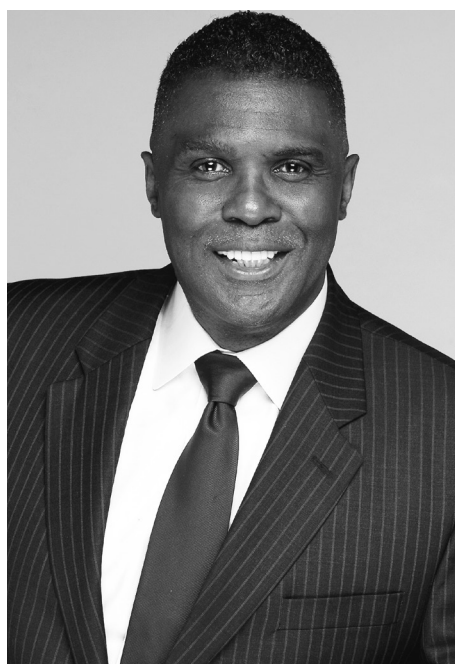
You can think of plaques like scabs on the inside of the vessel. As an example, if you have ever lifted up a scab on your arm, if you lift too far, you can cause it to bleed again because it's not done healing underneath. Then, you've created a new injury. In the case of your arm, a new scab forms by forming a clot, which is great for helping the skin heal. Similarly, plaques on the inside of the vessel can be fragile when blood flows past, causing the plaque to lift. But in your blood vessel, when a plaque lifts up and the body tries to heal it, like it would a scab on your arm, it makes a clot where that plaque lifted up, which blocks blood flow and can lead to an ischemic stroke.

We all know too much stress in our daily lives is unhealthy. It can cause headaches, upset stomach, anxiety, difficulty sleeping and a whole lot more. But, does stress cause stroke?

Chronic stress has been thought to be a risk factor for stroke. In studies, acute stress has been found to be a trigger for stroke, that is to say that strokes occur immediately after a stressful event more often than would be expected.

What's the connection between stress and stroke risk?

According to the American Medical Association, roughly 80% of doctor visits are stress-related, but what about major, deadly conditions like stroke?



A University of Michigan study found that men who were more physiologically reactive to stress (as measured by high blood pressure) were 72% more likely to suffer a stroke.

However, while stress is linked, but not firmly established as an independent risk factor for stroke, it's important to note that stress is linked with several firmly established risk factors for stroke, such as high blood pressure, smoking, and obesity.

It's important to be able to recognize the symptoms of a stroke as soon as possible. The quicker you can spot them, the sooner you'll receive medical attention and the better your chances of recovery are. The symptoms are generally the same regardless of the type of stroke. The **F.A.S.T. Guide** is an easy way to remember the signs of a stroke and check on a possible stroke victim.

Face drooping. Typically, one side of the face will droop or become numb. Ask the person to smile. If it's uneven, that's a sign.

Arm weakness or numbness. A stroke will leave one arm weak or numb, making it difficult for a person to hold both arms up at the same level. See if one arm stays lower than another.

Speech difficulty or slurred speech. A stroke causes confusion and makes it hard to understand speech. Check on whether the victim can repeat a simple sentence clearly.

Time to call 9-1-1. As soon as you recognize these symptoms, call 9-1-1. Even if these symptoms are only temporary, get the sufferer proper treatment. Keep in mind the exact time the symptoms started so you can reference it later.

By understanding the root causes of a stroke, you can minimize your risk of having one. Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one. Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. The reader should always consult his or her healthcare provider to determine the appropriateness of the information for their own situation or if they have any questions regarding a medical condition or treatment plan. Glenn Ellis, is a Health Advocacy Communications Specialist. He is the author of Which Doctor?, and Information is the Best Medicine. He is a health columnist and radio commentator who lectures, nationally and internationally on health related topics. For more good health information listen to Glenn, on radio in Philadelphia; Boston; Shreveport; Los Angeles; and Birmingham., or visit: www.glennellis.com

Heads Up (Spokane)

By Kiantha Duncan

Now It All Makes Sense.

I’ve been a mother for 28 years. Most of those years I have spent wondering if what I was doing was right. I wasn’t sure that my parenting style or skill level would be enough to pour into my son what would be necessary to make him a loving, strong but gentle and righteous man. I simply knew to give him all that I had and there were times when that wasn’t much.

Growing up as a child having experienced all ten ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and being raised between foster care and several family members, including my daddy, my Aunt Joyce and my Auntie Bebe, I didn’t have the pleasure of having felt a Mother’s love and tenderness.

Mother’s Day didn’t mean the same thing to me. I don’t recall ever in my life having given my Mother a Mother’s Day card or gift. That was simply not the mother/daughter dynamics of our relationship.

Looking back, Mother’s Day might have even brought me a bit of sadness because I knew that the day was made to celebrate both being a mother and having a mother. And I felt I knew nothing of either.

Then I had the opportunity to see up close and personal what a healthy mother/daughter relationship looks like and now it all makes sense. Over the last two weeks my mother-in-law has been in town visiting. She traveled from her home in Florida to spend some time with us here in Spokane. Over the past two weeks, we have had the chance to sit and visit with one another, learn about each other’s upbringing and laugh some hearty gut laughs.

I learned about her experiences as a child and how they shaped her into the woman that she is today. I listened intently as she shared stories with me of the things she has seen in her 80+ years on this earth.

I learned that in the city in which she was born and raised, the Black children did not have public schools and they weren’t permitted to attend the school where white children attended. She called it “regular school”. Instead, Black families in her community rallied together and advocated for the nearby white school district to send them a teacher so that their Black children could also have the opportunity to learn.

She shared with me that when the school district agreed to send a teacher, the church basement was the location of the school because there were no other resour-

es made available to this poor Black community in the south.

I pictured in my mind her walking three miles to and from school with all the other little Black children every morning, grateful for the chance to read and learn “rithmatic,” as she called it. I listened to stories of her mother and father many times not having much more than a “bunch of love to give” to her and her brothers and sisters.

While listening to stories about her mother, Mrs. Gladys Gordon, one of the many nuggets that stuck out to me was that she described her Mother as “the sweetest person in the world”. I was taken aback because the thought of there being Mothers in the world who have shown their children nothing but love, gentleness and kindness their entire lives must be the Mothers that Hallmark and Mahogany greeting cards speak about. The Mothers that give everything to their children. Every ounce of the salve that is a Mother’s love.

Over the time that Momma Dorothy was in town, I watched her love on her child every single day. They kissed in the morning, they hugged in the afternoon. Momma would say “you have a blessed Day” to her adult child every day she walked out of the door.

Momma cooked us dishes like chicken and rice, bread pudding, yams and other soul food that let us know that she loved us, although I’m certain there may have been times that her body didn’t feel up to it because she suffers from Arthritis. She did it over and over again, took any and every opportunity to show her child love.

Suddenly a light bulb went off in my mind. What I saw helped me understand why Mother’s Day is one of Hallmark’s and Mahogany’s most lucrative holidays. Selling anything from porcelain roses and figurines to cards written with words that would make any mother cry.

In truth there are many mothers like my birth mother, who were not able to demonstrate that kind of love as a result of the traumatic childhood she experienced. The residual effect of adverse childhood experiences has an intergenerational impact. I have matured enough to now know that I can’t rightfully blame my mother for not giving me something she never had or that she could not give based on the results of her own trauma. So, I don’t anymore.



I believe the Mothers that greeting card companies write about are the Mothers who have gone without eating so that their children could, or like Momma Dorothy’s mother did, made sure that her children’s clothes were clean when they walked to the “school house” that was in the basement of the church.

I believe those are the same Momma’s that tell their children to “Have a blessed Day” and literally mean “I want you to have a great day and all that you touch be blessed”. The Mommas that kiss their children goodnight, even when their “baby” is almost 60 years old.

This is what Mother’s Day should celebrate. The sacrifice and love that mothers give of themselves to their children. I am grateful to have had the experience of witnessing this type of love up close. Momma Dorothy and her mother Gladys Gordon are shining examples of that love.

And for the mothers who have not been able to share that type of love with your children based on your own childhood trauma, if you in your heart did the best that you could with what you had, this Mother’s Day is also for you.

Happy Mother’s Day to all Mothers, those of us who did it right and those of us who gave it our very best.

Kiantha Duncan is a Principal Development Strategist with The Duncan Brown Group. She can be reached at 206-225-4736.

POETRY AT THE PODIUM

Open Call for Submissions



In 2019, Spokane poets will raise their voices at Spokane City Council Meetings.

Interested in reading?

Submit one poem via the Submittable portal below:
<https://spokanearts.submittable.com>





88.1/92.3 FM

Streaming at kyrs.org

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Mother's Day Is a Special Day

By Dr. Jeanne Baynes

Mother's Day is a celebration honoring mothers and celebrating motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers in society. It is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world. This article is dedicated to the many African American women who have shed tears, had struggles, and still have hope for their future and the future of their children.

The Black mother is the mother of life itself. My mother is deceased, however, she had a great impact on my life as a woman and mother. My grandmother was another woman who influenced my life. I thank them for the values they have instilled in me. I thank God for the strong and inspirational women who were active in my life.

A Black woman, Tarana Burke, created the "Me Too" campaign more than a decade ago. Today, women are addressing inappropriate touches and rapes that occurred years ago with men running for political office. Black women feel that they must tell their stories too. I hope someone is listening.

African American women have been subjected to inappropriate touches, molestation and rape for years. We had to endure these indiscretions on our bodies because the public did not place a priority on listening to us. We have cried more tears and endured more pain than what is going on in our society today.

What makes Black women cry? What breaks Black women's hearts? And what do we do with our despair? In the article, "The Tears, Struggles, and Hopes of Black Women" by Celeste



Henery, published in Black Perspectives on October 26, 2017, Henery explained Black women's tears and the images of long faces at funerals of Black boys and men. The tears of Coretta Scott King, Mamie Elizabeth Till Mobley and Myrlie Evers-Williams have carried the grief of the Civil Rights Movement.

More recently, the tears along with the steady gaze and voices of Sybrina Fulton and Lesley McSpadden, the mothers of the unarmed shooting-victims Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, have shouldered the heartbreak and determination of the current fight for racial injustice. Let's also not forget that Sequette Clark had to bury her son Stephone Clark, who was killed by Sacramento police, and Antwon Rose, Jr.'s mother, Michelle Kenney had to bury her son as well.

Black women crying have performed the emotional labor and facilitated the collective mourning for the human tolls of anti-Black racism.

Miss Henery does not try to disentangle Black women's tears from the lives of others, but to draw attention to her concern for Black women's internal lives and what tears they might shed for themselves.

In the current moment, feelings of outrage and hurt in the US flow freely and are well practiced. Less desired, accommodated or expressed, however, are the uneasy feelings of sorrow, powerlessness and despair, especially from people of color in general and Black women in particular.

Stereotypes of Black women's strength compound the tenderness of these emotions, as they allow little room for displays of individual hurt or heartbreak. Being tearless faces the risk of reinforcing such stereotypes of human durability.

God Bless our African American mothers who have children in the criminal justice system. Women in particular—mothers, daughters, siblings, partners, grandmothers—often face a large burden when their relatives or loved ones are incarcerated. Not only do they take added responsibility for care giving and maintaining their households, they also hold the emotional weight.

Take a moment and thank your mother, alive or deceased, for the unconditional love and the support that she has provided for you.

Mothers, enjoy your Mother's Day and let your family or someone close to you indulge you.

*This is a letter to my Mother,
Mildred LaVerne Pendleton Aston*

A Love Letter to My Mother

Dr. Jeanne Baynes

I wake up each day feeling your touch and listening to your voice.
A voice from a mother who has been a force in my life.
She may not be on earth, physically, but spiritually, of course.
Assuring, loving, dotting, honest, compassionate, and sometimes sarcastic.
Yet these are the emotions and memories that are everlasting.
You taught us to love ourselves and believe that we are capable of anything
God sends our way.
You represent strength, seriousness, authority and power.
The struggles, challenges and obstacles you had to face each day.
God brought you through it, and made you the Queen on the throne.
Your strength and faith have traveled through our blood to our backbone.
You said to show everyone, even your enemies the genuine respect that every human being deserves.
These ideas have stayed with me as I journey through life.
I will remember the fun times and unhappy times when we lost our brother as a child.
However, mother, I will always love you in spite of the strife.
I heard your cries at times during the night when the bill collectors pursued.
Remembering the times you were always ready to laugh with us in a discreet and pleasant mood.
My mother is an African American woman, Yes Black like the absence of light.
Her song of endearment, faith and hope will be with me forever like a beacon of love.
LOVE YOU MOMMY



Build Your Future Job: Skilled Trade Preparation & Summer Programs



When Tuesday, May 7, 2019, 5:30 – 7:30pm
Where East Side Library, 524 S. Stone
Category Job Help
Details Come learn what it takes to join the skilled trades from Beckie Sommerville of WorkSource Spokane and Sarah Cottam from Associated Builders and Contractors. Skilled trades include construction, heavy equipment operation, welding, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and more! You'll learn about trades training youth programs and how to get into apprenticeship programs, even if you are over 18. Build your future with these better paying, in-demand jobs. Women and minorities are encouraged to attend.

Carl Maxey Center Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 18
10am - Noon
3116 E. 5th Avenue
Spokane, WA

You are invited to join the Carl Maxey Center Board as we celebrate our accomplishments, report back to the community about our activities over the past year, and ask for your feedback on plans for the future.

For more information visit:
carlmaxeycenter.org

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Bol Pennington: Act Six Scholarship Recipient

On March 8, 2019, Act Six announced the 138 student leaders that have earned scholarships to eight northwest and eight midwest colleges. Bol Pennington, who attends Mica Peak High School in the Spokane Valley, is one of the scholarship recipients. He will be attending Whitworth University in the fall.

Bol was born in Sudan and was brought to the United States by his mother who wanted a better life for her children.

"At the time, it was just me, my mom and my older sister," Bol said, "We escaped Darfur and my mom was pregnant with me. We traveled from our hometown in Sudan to Egypt. We stayed there for a little bit and then eventually we left there and came to America around 2004."

Bol's family was sponsored by a local family, the Lewis', which brought them to the Spokane area. He was introduced to Act Six by Starr Chavez, who is on staff at his school. She saw the information and encouraged him to apply and he has been thinking a lot about what he wants to do after he graduates from college.

"I picture myself loving my job and just giving back in some way to my community and making a difference here in Spokane where I grew up. I love seeing my community grow and there's so much I can do for my community. I really feel like I can make a difference. Coming from Sudan, I have a lot of family back there that I want to help, and my family here that I want to help as well. So getting this scholarship really gives me more drive to help more than just myself."

Bol's advice to others his age is rooted in the depth of his life experiences. "Everyone goes through something in their life that impacts how they see their lives," he says. "I went through a lot of stuff, so I know for me, in my perspective, there's only two options in this world. You can either blame everyone and always be upset about what's happening to you and always be down, knowing that there's no future, or you can look ahead and have the will power to just always move forward and use it as a motivating factor to make yourself stronger."

Bol's mother passed away last year and thinking about the sacrifices that his mother made to give him the opportunities that he currently has is one of the reasons that he says he has been able to persevere.

"Looking back, I was in her stomach. She escaped the war while I was in her stomach and traveled to Egypt. She did whatever she could do to get us to America, to where we can live our lives. She didn't want to come to America because of her. She wanted to come to America because of us. And you know, she sacrificed so much coming here. It wasn't easy for her. She didn't have a lot of money. She didn't have a lot of things, but she still was happy, and she did whatever she could to make us happy too. It really motivates me because if my mom was going to do everything, what is there that I can't go through, her own blood."

Despite the challenges he has been through, Bol says, the best thing about being in Spokane has been the support that he has received.

"The best thing is knowing I have such a great support system here in America. I have my immediate family. I have my adopted family. I have my family at my school. I have so many people who are just interested in who I am and are willing to go out of their way to support me and I'm just so thankful that I have all of that support here."

While attending high school, Bol was also attending classes at Spokane Community College. He says he is considering many majors, but is focusing mostly on a career that will allow him to give back to the community that has been so supportive of him.

"There have been a lot of majors that I've really wanted to study, engineering, health science, computer science, but I really want to do something that I can give back to the community and to my family."

Act Six is a leadership and scholarship program that connects local faith-based com-



munity affiliates with faith and social justice-based colleges. This year's selected students come from 92 different high schools, representing Tacoma-Seattle, Portland, Spokane, Yakima Valley, Chicago, Indianapolis, and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Students were put through a rigorous three-month competition, competing against more than 1,300 applicants. They were selected for their commitment to serving on campus and at home, passion for learning, eagerness to foster intercultural relationships, and willingness to step out of their comfort zones.

Eighty percent of Act Six scholars earn their bachelor's degrees within six years, more than double the rate for low-income, first-generation students nationwide. Two-thirds of the program's graduates are working or serving back in their home communities. Scholarship recipients participated in community celebrations during the month of March. Following the celebrations, scholars began an intensive six-month training program that involves weekly meetings with Act Six staff, retreats and campus visits. To learn more about Act Six visit: www.actsix.org.



Black is Beautiful

By Jaeylin Snyder

Black is beautiful. Milk chocolate, dark chocolate, caramel and mocha skin has a savory vibe to it. There is something about a Black woman that takes the flavor every time. Success, beauty, spirituality; melanin queens are gifts sent straight from God. There are almost 48 million African Americans in the United States, making up 14.6% of the population in 2017. Of that total, 52% of the population is female. Black women are given the least amount of support, but despite that, there are prime examples of Black women who triumphed over the stereotypes in the face of adversity.

Madam CJ Walker, born Sarah Breedlove on December 23rd, 1867, was the first African American self-made millionaire. She was one of those people that saw a problem, and she did something about it. When her hair began to fall out at an earlier-than-normal age, Walker decided to start a business, manufacturing and selling African American hair care products. Walker was an entrepreneur, philanthropist and a political and social activist. At the time of her death on May 25th, 1919, Madam CJ Walker's fortune was worth more than \$1 million.

Maya Angelou, a civil rights activist, author and poet, was born April 4th, 1928. At the age of 7, she became a victim of sexual assault that was so traumatic, she went mute. This, however, didn't get in her way of going on to write bestselling books and poetry, such as I Know



Why the Caged Bird Sings, which was the first nonfiction best seller written by an African American woman. Up until her death, on May 28th, 2014, Angelou continued to touch hearts and inspire young people to be greater than their circumstances.

Mae C. Jemison, born October 17th, 1956, was the first African American female astronaut. In fact, she was the first African American woman to be in the NASA astronaut training program on June 4th, 1987. Jemison's persistence and hard work is what got her on the Endeavour, nothing else. Mae C. Jemison also noted that society should recognize how much both women, men

and members of other minority groups can contribute if given the opportunity.

Oprah Winfrey, my personal favorite, born January 29th, 1954, is a philanthropist, television producer and an amazing actress. At an early age, Winfrey experienced sexual abuse at the hands of adult men that her family trusted while living with her mother in a poor, Milwaukee ghetto. As a teen, Winfrey engaged in high risk activity, and eventually was sent back to live with her father. Winfrey's life turned around after this, and she grew up to be one of the most successful Black women ever, and one that I know I look up to.

The moral of the story is the fact that we can not let our color, nor our gender, nor our circumstances, hold us back. Every Black woman on this planet deserves a chance to be heard, to heal and to build a life she deserves. I know I do.

My name is Jaeylin R. Snyder. I am a sexual abuse survivor, an aspiring movie producer, and a soon to be Lute at Pacific Lutheran University. As I sit here and write this article, I can only hope the best future onto myself and my melanated community. Come triumph and tribulation, I know we can make it.

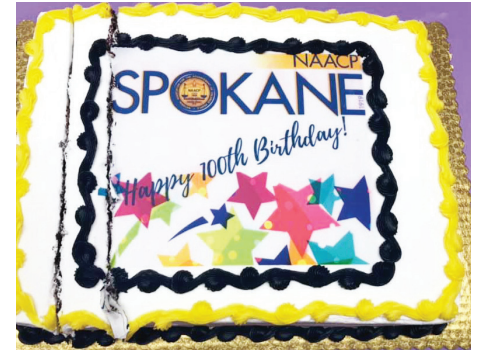
I would like to thank Sandy Williams for giving me this opportunity to have my voice heard one last time, as I make my way to college and begin to build my life from here. You have given me the opportunity to better my writing, start a portfolio and given me an outlet for my work, and I will always be grateful for that.



100 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

<http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com>

The Spokane branch of the NAACP celebrated its 100th anniversary at Calvary Baptist Church in Spokane on April 15. The Spokane Branch was chartered April 14, 1919, spearheaded by several Black men and women in Spokane, including Calvary's Pastor, who served as the first president. Early meetings of the branch were held in the church, so the Spokane branch returned to its roots to celebrate this important anniversary. The celebration was presided over by current NAACP President, Kurtis Robinson. The keynote speaker for the evening was Kiantha Duncan, a member of the NAACP Executive committee and a program manager at Empire Health Foundation. Power 2 the Poetry offered spoken word. Following the celebration, NAACP Exec Committee members served a meal to those in attendance.



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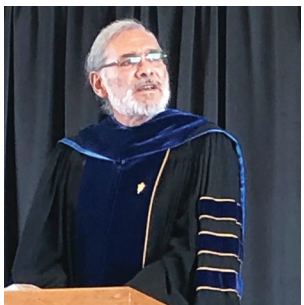
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2019 AFRICAN AMERICAN GRADUATION



"Consider This A ReWrite"

By Nodia Rogers

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I shall die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

Growing up I didn't know a single Black child
who didn't know how to pray.
I also didn't know a prayer
without a Black child in it.
My grandmother used to tell me that prayer was
the DNA strand left behind by my ancestors.
She said slaves learned how to pray
the same way they learned how to breathe.
It was essential to life.

Growing up I realized so much of my ancestral
DNA was tied to slavery
Tied to a people beaten black and blue
Transformed to a people Black beaten by blue.

I was taught I came with bruises
and bullet holes
I was taught to be wounded
without having ever seen the wound
Had my children prescribed death
before ever being in the womb

Ironic isn't it?

How they only tell history
as its written by them.
How they start with the slave narrative
as if that was the beginning.
Let's go back to the beginning
and tell you the history they missed.

Truth is, they took Scientists
I'm talking biologists and chemists
Doctors
Healing hands
Hands.

They took hands of harvest, hands of pride,
worker hands, human hands,
They took hands that never gave up
And they broke them
Told them choose death or choose bondage
Enslaved them

Made them forget
that when white men came to our land
they stood at the feet of kings
Bowed at the presence of queens
And stood amongst royalty
And gave an entire group of people amnesia

They forgot the African man
and made him slave
They took the African woman
and made her slave
They took the African children
and made them slaves
They take Black children and make them slaves
Even though our ancestors proved
that to be myth long ago

They stopped fitting the box of slavery
before slavery was over, Nat turner
They stopped fitting the box of oppression when
they parked in seats, thank you Rosa
And we all thought it would be different
when Ruby built bridges
We were singing the song of our ancestors
Still wading in the water of their troubles
But tired of waiting
And there's always the part of the narrative
they refuse to write.
Always the part they refuse to speak



These graduates.
All 150 of our ancestors' children
Are amongst the generation of Black people
refusing to wait
Refusing to let them continue
to Michael Brown the situation.
Their version of our history doesn't allow
this moment to be possible
But Today you see the part of the story
they left out.

Consider this a rewrite
A retelling of the story they had no business
telling in the first place

Today, we break apart the relationship
between slave and Black
And we walk.
Heads held high
Ancestral slave feet to the floor
And we use these hands
These once slave hands,
These once worker hands
Now educated hands
To accept part of a God made plan
A diploma.

Consider this your
public service announcement.
Your new history book
Your proof
Your evidence
Because today there is a generation of Black
no longer holding back

So I'm sorry,
if you pictured a typical graduation ceremony,
Better yet you're welcome
Because this graduation is Black
And by Black, I mean it's taking back Black
In all its Beauty
For all its Legends
It's soaking in its ancestry
Breaking out of its confinement
And fighting for its kind

An ancestor's dream come true
A grandmother's prayer answered
A reclaiming of our culture
Because it was never there's to take

150 of us stand here
Because were taking back the pieces
they took without permission
We're taking back the people
they took without permission
And reminding them
That Black and slave are not synonyms
That Black and thug are not synonyms
That Black and uneducated are not synonyms
And the only thing synonymous with Black
Is excellence

And if you don't believe me
If you still think this story to be myth
There's 150 caps, gowns, stoles, and cloths,
and crowns to prove it.

APRIL 27, 2019 - GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



Group Photo Courtesy Rev. Robert Robinson, Talent of Memories





Deva Baily Logan, Founder & Curator

"At some point in time, all brown people have been the only one in the room, particularly in Spokane. We are not all the same ethnicity, heritage, or culture, yet all of us have a shared experience of living in brown skin."
- Deva Logan

Shades of Me is an annual art show created to showcase the artwork of brown artists in Spokane and the Inland Northwest.

Shades of Me is the brainchild of Deva Logan, and event planner, art curator, fashion & personal stylist, and photographer. As an artist, Deva regularly attends art events locally and doesn't see brown female artists represented. It troubled her to know so many brown women artists that are talented and capable but not receiving a platform.

The name **Shades of Me** was inspired by the multiple shades of brown that we come in, from the blackest of black to white-passing. **Shades of Me** welcomes artists from diverse backgrounds, including Native/Indigenous, Black American, African, Caribbean/West Indian, Latinx/Afro-Latinx, South & Central American, Pacific Islander, and Asian.

Shades of Me was invited to have their inaugural show during the Inland Northwest Women's Show which took place from April 5-7, 2019 at the Spokane County Fair and Expo Center. Artists that joined Deva in this year's event included: Amanda Roy, Brianna Wooten, Brittany Trambitas, Frances Mortel, Latrice, Patty McClain Osborne, Sable McCambell, Shantell Jackson and Tierra Duke.

For more information visit: <http://www.shadesof.me>



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Apply Now to Join the Next Generation of Social Justice Advocates

The Advocacy Institute is a new intensive, week long training in professional advocacy skills for Spokane high school students.

Do you have a strong sense of justice, but you might not have thought of being a professional advocate because you don't see a lot of lawyers, social workers, political advocates, and others in the professional advocacy community who look, live, or think like you? Then you should apply for the first ever Advocacy Institute.

Professional advocacy needs better representation from people with disabilities, people of color, the LGBTQ community, and other under-represented groups. Do you have Autism, a learning disability, or a physical or psychiatric disability/mental illness? Are you LGBTQ, Latinx, Deaf, blind, Native American, African American, or an immigrant? Maybe your family does not have a lot of money, you live in a foster care setting, or you have been involved in the juvenile justice system.

If you have a perspective the advocacy community and decision makers need to hear more from, Disability Rights Washington wants you to apply for the inaugural Advocacy Institute.



Students selected for the Institute will work alongside professional advocates over a week to develop an advocacy plan on a specific topic. The detailed advocacy plan will incorporate advocacy tools such as coalition building, traditional and social media advocacy, legislative advocacy, and civil rights law.

Participants will put the plan to work in the real world. What we develop together, we will use together to make change. You and professional advocates will work together as a team of equals. The knowledge you bring to the table and the knowledge

professional advocates can share will strengthen our collective efforts.

Disability Rights Washington is a non-profit, social justice organization with offices in Spokane, Seattle, and Olympia. Our mission is to advance the civil and human rights of people with disabilities. That means creating a better, more equitable world.

For over 40 years Disability Rights Washington has worked on numerous social justice issues such as overhauling our youth mental health system, improving police training and accountability, making our communities more physically accessible, and

ending the warehousing of people with disabilities in jails.

Disability Rights Washington wants to expose you to the types of professional advocacy skills used in these types of advocacy campaigns and expose you to some of the people who do this work while you are in high school because you have important, systemic issues to tackle now and you can use the skills and connections you get from the Advocacy Institute to work on solving those issues.

As you put these skills and connections to work in your life, you will gain successes and valuable experiences that will support you in building the resume you will need to claim your spot in the professional advocacy community.

The Advocacy Institute will be held Monday July 29 – Friday August 2 from 9am-5pm each day. The application window is open now and will close on May 27.

To apply visit: <https://www.disability-rights-wa.org/2019/04/17/advocacy-institute>

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* The study was conducted by Samir B. Patel, MD, of Elkhart General Hospital in Elkhart, Indiana.

Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

Mysterious Ways



This column is dedicated to exploring the intersection between Spirituality, politics, current and cultural events in our communities, our country and our world. I know that intersection exists because Holy Spirit is always at work in the world. But sometimes it’s hard to find the sacred amid so much that appears profane. At times I have to dig deep, pray hard, and try with little hope of success to meditate my way to some illumination. How do we recognize Divine Spirit in a world that seems so hopelessly broken? We certainly can’t see it if our minds and hearts are so clogged with caustic thoughts and toxic information that there is no room for anything hopeful and inspiring to come in, let alone take root.

Periodically, I need to do a mind/spirit cleanse. I’ve needed it for a while now. I started simply by cutting 24-hour Cable News out of my life. I went cold turkey. Oh, the peace! No more incessant recounting of tweet after tweet, word for word, day after day! No more hours of rhetorical punditry and indignation. To quote Shakespeare, no more “...sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

I’m not burying my head in the sand. That serves no good purpose. I still get my news feeds online every morning, but I pick and choose carefully what I read.

Without question it’s important for me to know that three Black Churches in a ten-days span in a single Louisiana Parish were burned down by a white supremacist. These churches were over 100 years old and had served generations of Black families. It fills me with grief and anger. I could and have often done little but sit and stir in my anger, anticipating the next hate crime, which inevitably comes. I could accept that as the end of the story. But God so often moves in mysterious ways.

Within hours after last month’s accidental fire that severely damaged the 850-year-old Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, French billionaires pledged millions of dollars to restore the venerable structure. The mega-rich from around the world quickly followed suit. That didn’t sit well with many French people, who were rightly incensed that those with enormous wealth would jump to rebuild the Cathedral, having declined to put their abundant resources toward addressing the impending crisis stemming from France’s growing social and economic disparity. American companies like Apple and Disney also pledged large sums of money to help restore Notre Dame Cathedral. Imagine if all those mega-dollars were being used to resolve America’s long-standing issues of economic disparity.

Here’s the unexpected wonder of it all. Immediately following the Notre Dame fire, there was a sudden outpouring of money to rebuild those three Black churches set afire by an arsonist in Louisiana. Before the Notre Dame fire, GoFundMe had raised only \$50,000 to help rebuild the churches. The Cathedral fire began on Monday, April 15, and burned through Tuesday the 16th. By Thursday April 18th, two days later, GoFundMe reported \$1.8 million dollars had come in to rebuild the St.

Landry Parish Churches. And it didn’t just come from rich people. Pledges of \$25 and \$50 dollars poured in. We know there’s a direct correlation because those who donated said as much. One donor wrote on the online fundraising website, "I donated because if billionaires can give billions to rebuild Notre Dame, I can at least donate \$50 to rebuild these churches."

“It gives you a new hope in society,” said Gerald Tous-saint, the pastor of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, one of the three churches struck by the arsonist, "It gives you a new hope in people because it shows a lot of people have a good heart."

As Jesus said in his teachings, those that have eyes to see and ears to hear will see and hear. In other words, not everyone is able to perceive and receive compassion and generosity. If we drop our defenses and put our egos on the back burner, we will recognize Spirit at work, even in times of crisis.

Instead of wallowing in the negative, I’ve begun searching for information, organizations and websites that offer some good news; some example of good work; some reason for hope. I found the Aspen Institute’s Weave the Social Fabric Project. Look up this project and prepare to be inspired! The Project created a document called the Relationship Manifesto.

This is from the Manifesto’s introduction:

“The Social Fabric Project began with the idea that America’s social fabric is being ripped to shreds by distrust, loneliness, alienation, inequality, racism, spiritual emptiness and tribal enmity. But we also knew that there are people fighting these scourges, successfully, at the local level all across America. We wanted to learn what they could teach us. We wanted to shine a light on their examples and magnify their effect.”

Here is the unexpected wonder of this piece of good news. The Director of the Weave the Social Fabric Project is David Brooks. Yes, the David Brooks who was a center-right political and cultural commentator back when there was still such a thing as the center-right. David Brooks is the kind of conservative that practiced critical thinking and was able to enter into civil debate with those who disagreed with his opinions. He is a long-time columnist for the New York Times and a frequent PBS commentator. Never a Trump supporter, Brooks unequivocally stands against the so-called neo-cons, the alt-right wing of the Republican Party. He also left the Republican Party, because it had fallen in-line with Donald Trump’s initiatives, which he rightly considers neither conservative nor moral.

Brooks started to win me over when I stumbled on a recent essay, he wrote for the New York Times entitled, *The Case for Reparations*. Giving full credit to Ta-Nehisi Coates’s earlier article by the same name for The Atlantic, Brooks confesses he’d been openly critical of Coates’ argument for reparations to African-American decedents of slaves. But Brooks traveled around

the country building relationships with people of color, particularly African Americans; he listened openly and deeply to our stories; this radically changed his understanding of the Black experience in America, and subsequently also changed his mind on the issue of reparations.

Brooks came to realize that there is a dimension and depth to the racial divide that other social divides in America don’t have. In his words, “One way to capture it is to say other divides are born out of separation and inequality, but the racial divide is born out of sin.”

Wow! What happened, Mr. Brooks? What happened to David Brooks was a full-on Dark Night of the Soul experience—a spiritual crisis. He tells his story in his recent book, *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life*.

Brooks had achieved great success, but he was a miserable man. His marriage had fallen apart, and work had become his whole life. He was in psychological anguish. His suffering might have broken him, but instead it broke him open. Like many who have taken the arduous journey toward renewal and enlightenment, he did his time in the wilderness. In solitude he reflected on his life and his lack of awareness about its true meaning. He was, as many of us are, sleep walking through life. He awakened to experience the world in a new light. He writes in his book: “When people are broken open in this way, they are more sensitive to the pains and joys of the world.”

Out of the ashes of his old self, David Brooks arose with new understanding of what it means to be truly alive, to live a moral life, and to have purpose that is greater than ones’ self-interest. Brooks says: “The basement of your soul is much deeper than you knew. Some people look into the depths of themselves and realize that success won’t fill the empty spaces. Only a spiritual life and unconditional love from family and friends will do.”

Here we have it. Two very different stories of hope and renewal. An accidental fire that nearly destroys a famous 850-year-old Gothic Cathedral in Paris, France spurs enormous generosity that will restore three, humble by comparison, 100-year-old Black churches in Louisiana, destroyed by a fire intentionally set by a hate-filled man.

In the second story we bear witness to the spiritual transformation of a public figure who until recently lived his life in a bubble of privileged white power. He now works to heal the torn social fabric of America by promoting the work being done by ordinary-extraordinary people, to create inclusive, compassionate, moral and equitable communities across the country.

The world can break us, or it can break us open. Out of the ashes arises hope, new possibilities, and renewal. Holy Spirit is always at work in the world, but our hearts and minds must be open if she is to work through us.

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Simply Wholesome

A Two-Part Conversation with Los Angeles Restaurant Owner Percell Keeling Part Two

By Sandra Williams

*If you're Black and you live in Los Angeles, the odds are pretty good that you know about **Simply Wholesome**. The Black-Owned health food store and restaurant, visited by a whose who of local dignitaries and celebrities, has been an institution in the city for over thirty years-- and is still going strong. While on a trip to California, I had the opportunity and pleasure of sitting down with owner **Percell Keeling** to talk about the history of **Simply Wholesome** and to pick his brain about what are some of the secrets to his success. This is Part Two of excerpts from that interview. (See April 2019 - Page 10 for Part 1.)*

So how did you get this place that you're in now?

Well that is a very interesting story too. I had been across the street for eight years and it was time for me to renew my lease....

At that point in my life I'd gotten married. I had two children, eight months old and about a year and a half to two years. I had bought the house. The fish. The dog, the cat, the white picket fence. I had the American dream. When I went to renew my lease, I knew she was going to go up, but she went up on my rent fifty percent. And I'm like, fifty percent? I said, "Jan," that was her name, "that's ridiculous." I said, "I upgraded your property. I kept your property from getting burned down when we had the uprising in '93. I pay my rent on time." That woman looked at me. Didn't blink and said, "either pay or leave." After eight years.

It was like somebody took a knife and stabbed me in the heart. All of a sudden, I realized that my existence was dependent upon somebody else's decision.

I was in La La land. I was in that comfort zone where everything was going well. I had thought about opening up some other spots. I had thought about maybe renting another spot. I had bought another house and I was renting it out. I was going to get an apartment building, but I had never thought about owning the property where my money was coming from, never thought about securing the spot that was generating my income.

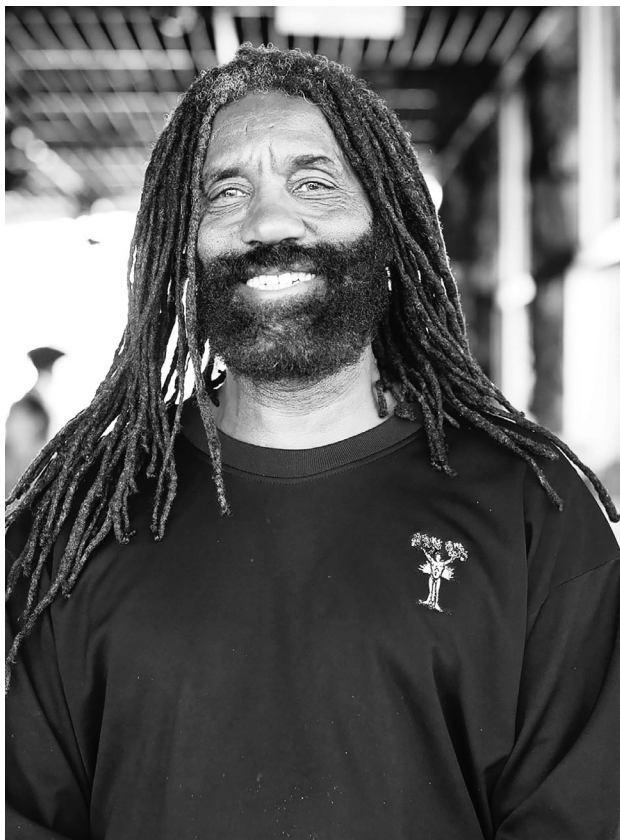
So, when she said that, I said dang, my income can go to zero overnight on somebody else's decision, and that was a very, very unsettling position to be in, because now I had a young family, a house note and stuff that was dependent on me. I could personally live in my car and survive, but I had babies and a wife.

I remember walking out of that meeting and walking behind the counter across the street at my old place. This property here had been sitting vacant for at least seven or eight years, and on that day it was like somebody took blinders off. I'm looking out the window every day for eight years, seeing it and not seeing it. If you can believe that. And all of a sudden, it's like somebody took blinders off and I saw the property and I said, I've got to have it. I have to have my own stuff so this will never happen to me again. And I went to work. To get this.

How did you make it happen?

It was very challenging. I used to see the owner come over here and check on the property. He had a sign up for sale, and I remember, I would run across the street and I'd say, I'm interested in buying your property. I said, I own a business across street. He looked across the street and he said, "you can't afford this." I would run back across the street like a dog with my tail between his legs. Then a month or so later, I'd see him again and run back over and I said I'm still interested. He told me that he had somebody that was going to pay cash for the property. On whatever day he told me it would happen, it didn't happen, so when I saw him again, I came across and I gave him an offer. I put up the down payment and then I financed the difference. When I got to the closing, I was happy, but I was also nervous because now I had a big note every month.

It was very interesting because a lot of politics got involved. I was green. I didn't know about politics. I'm not really a political type of person. But I realized that to get



to certain levels in business, or in life in general, politics becomes a part of it. It's not how much money you have. If you don't know the right people. It ain't gonna happen. Period. I didn't know that. I believed in the American dream. I believed you work hard, go to school, get good grades, don't get in trouble, and if you got money, a down payment, you can qualify. But that's some B.S. I'm a perfect example of that. I had all of that and I caught pure hell.

How did you get through that?

I got through it because I had to get through it.

What have you learned in the process?

Well first of all, I've learned that the myth that we don't support each other is B.S. Simply Wholesome is still standing today because of people like you and I. Not everybody. I've got my haters out there like anybody else. But we do support each other and it's very important.

I learned we need to become more independent and control our own future, because when you depend on other people to make your thing happen, that means you have to jump through a hoop. And if you don't do what they want you to do, then they can pull that plug at any time. Those years of working for 30-40 years and getting a pension and all that stuff is over. You've got to do for yourself.

Another thing that hurts us a lot, in my opinion, is that we don't trust each other.

Why is that? Why don't we trust each other?

It's a divide and conquer type of thing. We did it in the 50s and 60s because we had to. Because the system said you can't come here to eat. You can't do this. You can't do that. They had restrictions. So we were forced to work together, and it worked. But as soon as integration, in my opinion, popped up, then the individuals that could take off and move into other areas, that's what they did and they left everybody else back. It was like, hey I worked hard, you gotta do like me. Some of it, I think, is that a lot of us don't want to reach down and pull somebody else up. You can be good friends if you're at the same level or below them, but if it looks like you're moving up a little bit higher, then all of a sudden they trip.

It kind of hurt me. I wouldn't let them know because I thought they were my friends, but I remember going through a phase where I thought maybe I'm ego tripping, you know, because people were starting to make me feel like I'm doing something wrong. But I remember talking to an older customer that was in business. I explained what I was going through because I couldn't figure it out. I was trying to connect with everybody. He said, "Hey Percell, you've got to realize that you're the same person, but other people view you differently. So just keep doing what you're doing, don't worry about those people, you'll pick up other people along the way that think like you."

What advice would you give to young African-Americans if you could talk to them in the way that you wish someone had talked to you?

One thing I would tell them is something I got from my 10th grade Algebra teacher, Mr. Landers. He was the first Black teacher at my high school. He used to tell us, "Think, reason and be wise, and utilize your time because you're only hurting yourself." I couldn't get it then, what he was really saying. Think, reason and be wise, and utilize your time because you're only hurting yourself. He was so right, because time waits for nobody. If you don't think and you don't reason, and you don't be wise and utilize your time, as time progresses, you're going to look back and you will find that it's going to hurt.

I would tell them, we're all here on borrowed time, and we don't know when that time is going to be. I would tell young people don't dwell on what happened yesterday, because you can't go back and change it. The decisions you make today can determine what's going to happen to you tomorrow, a week from now, a year from now, or ten years from now. You have that control. So, I look in those terms, something I can control and be happy, whatever it may be.

I would also say, you've got to be realistic. This is not for everybody. You've got to know when to throw the towel in and say hey, okay, this is not working. It might be hard for you to digest, but you've got to be realistic. You can't B.S. yourself. You can B.S. other people, but if you get to the point where you start believing your own B.S., you're in a whole lot of trouble.

That would be the key. Everybody will find their destiny when it's supposed to come. What I got into, what I'm doing today, I didn't know that's what I was gonna do. But one day I woke up to say, hey, I like this!

Why do you think you succeeded when a lot of people strike out, have what is a good idea, but they don't succeed?

That's a good question and I've asked myself that question many a time in my quiet time. Why me? I don't have an answer for that. I'm just doing what I do. I've been fortunate that thus far it's worked out. I don't really have a road map. I try to treat people the way I want to be treated.

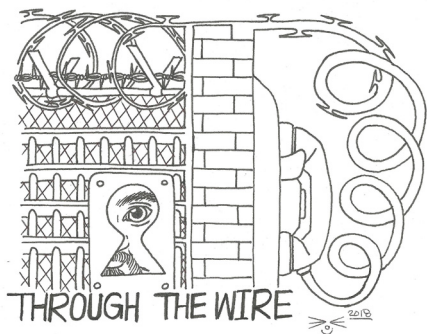
And I like to be free. I guess I would say, for me, it's being free. Totally free. I mean, the cars that I drive are convertibles. They're not hard tops, they're not sun roofs. And I'm a distance runner. I've always been a distance runner. I don't run the 100 or 200. I like to get out and just explore. I've been places on my feet that you can't go in a car. Trails all over the city and other cities. I think that I have to be free. I can't be closed in.

What's next?

I don't know. I'm at that point in my life where part of me wants to stretch out and expand what I'm doing and employ more young people and touch more lives. I've been fortunate that people all over the country, different nationalities not just African-Americans, are interested in Simply Wholesome. They say, you should put one here, you should put one up north, one in Chicago, put one here and there. I've thought about it. But then I say to myself, do I want to deal with the headaches at this point in my life.

But at the same token, I'm fortunate enough at this point where I'm stepping back from the business and the business is pretty much running itself. I have more time to myself, but I get bored because I'm used to working. I realize I'm not the type of person who can do nothing. So, it's a good question. I'm trying to figure out what I want to do. I'm just taking it right now one step at a time, like I have been, and not really dwelling on it. I just keep waking up every day. Maybe five years from now, I can sit down with you and say, you know, I realize I'm doing this now and this is what I like to do, like I grew into where I'm at today.

Simply Wholesome is located at 4508 West Slauson Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90043. For more information call (323) 294-2144 or visit: <http://www.simplywholesome.com> or @simplywholesomelosangeles on Facebook.



THE BLACK PRISONERS CAUCUS

Airway Heights

Presumption of Innocence

By Harry “Brocq” Whitman and David “Diesel” Hall

As a man of African descent born in America, I question whether America has forsaken its long stated principle embodied in its constitution and all aspects of reason and justice, a principle proclaimed amongst all civilized nations, the “presumption of innocence”. The American “presumption of innocence” provides that when any person, American citizen or not, is accused of a crime or some unfavorable conduct that person “shall be presumed innocent” in the hearts and minds of his fellow citizens until reasonably proven otherwise.

This principle can be traced as far back to an ancient anecdote of the emperor Julian which illustrates the enforcement of the presumption of innocence in ancient Roman law. Even text from the Bible demonstrated the presumption of innocence when God promised Abraham that He would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah “for the sake of 10”(innocents), and the two Angels did not begin to destroy the city until Lot finally escaped into the mountains. (Genesis 18: 32; 19: 22-23).

The U.S. Supreme Court noted that this principle found in Roman law, “was amongst many other fundamental and humane maxims of that system preserved for mankind by Canon law...” “I conceive that that this presumption of innocence is to be found in every code of law , and religion , and humanity. It is a Maxim which ought to be inscribed in indelible characters in the heart of every judge and juryman...”

Thus, our society’s belief, reinforced over the centuries, that ALL are innocent until the state has proven them guilty... is implicit in the concept of ordered Liberty. “Prior to conviction, the accused is shielded by the presumption of innocence, the bedrock , axiomatic an elementary principle who's enforcement wise at the foundation of our criminal law.”

Most Americans tend to favor this notion of the presumption of innocence and fair trial in theory. In practice, it depends on what they think of the accused, his social status, race, how outraged they are by the crime, and how convinced they are of his innocence or guilt.

You may not think about this very often, but when you don't like the accused, when he is a minority, when you are inclined to believe him guilty or when the crime was particularly horrific, you are less likely to be tolerant of the notion of him being innocent until proven guilty by a jury of his peers beyond a reasonable doubt. You get impatient about a vigorous defense and start huffing a little at the notion that he may walk on a technicality, forgetting that the law is a tapestry woven of thousands of technicalities.

From my childhood, being a member of this suspect class, I have both witnessed an experienced the trauma associated with our Blackness. The accumulated insults an indignities perpetrated by racial assumptions that have been destructive in ways difficult to measure. Constantly being watched, suspected, accused, doubted, distrusted and even feared is a burden strapped heavily upon the backs of people of color and woven into the fabric of American Society.

I am convinced that I am living in a culture where it is assumed that a young Black man is always conspiring, conniving, or must be doing something wrong, without a hint shown in his actions. Johnnie Cochran wrote in his book, “A Lawyer's Life” that “This isn't only a case of driving while Black ... It's walking while Black, it's living while Black, it's breathing while Black.”

However, there is some evidence that this assumption of guilt is trending beyond race. There seems to be an unspoken acceptance of guilt, simply because someone made an accusation. Judge Kavanaugh, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, was accused of sexual misconduct that allegedly occurred thirty-five years ago. Without passing judgment on whether he was actually innocent or guilty, I do find it very disturbing that some Americans assumed his guilt the moment the allegations were broadcast on national news and before anyone could verify the accuser’s story.

Immigrants, specifically Hispanics , who currently reside in this country without having gone through the proper legal process or who are desiring to enter the U.S. , are accused of being criminals regardless of the evidence to the contrary that these innocent families (men, women, children and babies) are simply traveling in a group seeking refuge from the violence and oppression of their native country.

There is a reason that we depict justice as a woman holding evenly balance scales and wearing a blindfold. The law should be applied evenhandedly regardless of the race, social status or what we think of the accused. In a free society, there must always be a line

between a vigorous prosecution and official misconduct, between advocacy and unfairness, between justice and injustice.

Long ago, I stopped believing in justice, but I still believe, in a terrible way, there is a balance in life. I know that what's happening to people of color is part of that, just as I know as we have for centuries, in the end we will survive.

When I reached a legal age adult, I walked out of my parent’s house to face the world and assumed that there was logic to human events. That if you did A then B would follow. If I worked diligently and imaginatively at something that gave me pleasure, I would succeed. If I married for love and was kind, I would be happy. If I raised children with discipline and loving guidance, they would turn out well and make me proud. What I found instead is that life is not like that. I was naive, a child under an adult delusion.

Life is an ongoing war against unseen an usually undefined enemies. My own naivete was my worst enemy. Fate forces us to experience different things to test us. I failed that test the moment I succumbed to the allure of the streets and crime, and as a result, I faced the criminal justice system for the first time in my life and became a deserted spaceship careening mindlessly amongst the stars.

In truth, it was simply because I was born Black. Yet , as an English court once wrote in 1846, “truth like all other good things may be loved unwisely, may be pursued too keenly, may cost too much.”

Contact The Black Prisoners Caucus with any comments or questions: www.bpceast@gmail.com

Post Prison Education: Planning Your Education

Part One

By Em Daniels

Education can be a path to upward mobility, personal development, and knowledge of the world we share. It can also be a path to significant debt, feelings of personal failure, and confirmation of cultural myths about who can succeed and who can’t. While there is no one “right” way to prepare for any big endeavor, even a small amount of thought and planning goes a long way.

One of the most important things you can research before starting school is yourself. Finding out about your interests, strengths, talents, skills, and weaknesses is how you start to uncover the type of work that interests you. Colleges all have career development assistance for students and potential students. Many also offer low cost classes. It’s better to spend some time up front researching your interests, looking at career fields, and what type of work is available in that field before you start paying for college level coursework.

Outside of school, having even a vague idea of what you’d like to do means you can look for opportunities that move you closer to that goal – personal and community projects, volunteering, networking and professional organizations, and letting other people know what you want so they can help you.

There are three main educational ‘paths’ for adults: finishing your high school credential, obtaining a college degree



(two year, four year, and beyond), and professional development (certifications and credentials).

High school credentials include completing the credits necessary to receive a High School Diploma (HSD), or a GED®. Whether to pursue a HSD or GED® depends on how many credits you need to complete your HSD, and that depends on where you attended high school. If you took GED® tests while you were incarcerated, depending on how long ago, they may still be valid and GED® testing centers can help you track down that information. If you are over 21 and are close to having your diploma, there are High School 21+ programs that can help you finish.

The next step is college. Colleges vary widely in mission, the students they serve, areas of focus, career preparation, and cost. It is critical to do your research before committing to either a specific college or course of study. Colleges are grouped, loosely, into two- and four-year schools. With the increase in part-time attendance, however, it can take longer than two or four years to complete a degree. Online programs can also offer options for self-paced study, so students have more flexibility.

Two year colleges, or community colleges, are public and receive most of their funding from state governments. They are open-access schools, which means they accept students regardless of SAT scores, high school credentials, conviction history, immigration status, income level, and other identifying information. Many have a vocational, or professional-technical focus, although they also prepare students who want to transfer to four year institutions. Most community colleges also work closely with trades and apprenticeship programs, which means you can get a certification or degree as well as learning a trade.

Community colleges offer an incredible array of classes, programs, services, and resources for the community, and they serve students at every level of education. If you are not sure where to start or what you want to do, community colleges are an excellent place to begin.

Four year schools can be public or private. Private schools receive most of their funding from private donations and tuition. Which type of school you attend will likely depend on what course of study you decide to pursue.

Continued on Page 19

Environmental Racism

Continued From Page 1

They also are running major fundraising campaigns off of pipeline protests – even though the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration notes that pipelines are “one of the safest and least costly ways to transport energy products.”

Meanwhile, these organizations are all but ignoring the real issues facing Minnesotans. A report indicated that the state’s urban areas have unsuitable and outdated infrastructure, allowing storm water drainage to become a crisis. Yet another report found that the Twin Cities air pollution kills nearly 2,000 people a year taking its greatest toll on those in poverty, who also disproportionately shoulder the burdens of asthma, unclean drinking water, and lead poisoning.

While the environmental groups are shoving environmental health issues aside, they also are promoting an agenda that will drive energy bills even higher for Minnesotans who are already spending far too much of their hard-earned money on energy costs. Families in Clearwater County spend 45.9 percent of their income on energy bills, while Roseau County families spend 44.5 percent – and virtually every county across the state sees energy bills eating away at more than 30 percent of income.

The story is the same across the country, as Alabama families spend nearly 50 percent of their income on energy and Michigan families spend 30 percent and above.

Some believe that these skewed priorities may be happening in part because of the lack of diversity in the environmental movement. A study by Green 2.0 recently found that the movement is only “getting more white,” as it continues to leave out people of color.

The report indicated that nearly 70 percent of the Environmental Defense Fund’s (EDF) staff was White. It also concluded that “the top 40 environmental foundations have gotten more White across full time staff, senior staff, and board members.”

Green 2.0 is pressing to deal with the racial inclusion issue in order to infuse greater sensitivity into the environmental justice movement. Whitney Tome, executive director of Green 2.0, said in a statement, “Communities of color

bring to bear experience and perspective on both problems and pathways to power building. As an organization, we plan to take a more aggressive approach to calling out the environmental movement for their lack of diversity.”

She continued, “For the past five years, we’ve been working to ensure that the environmental movement and its leaders reflect the current U.S. workforce demographics.”

These racial and economic disparities are happening around the country. For example, Louisiana ranks second-worst among U.S. states when examining a wide range of environmental indicators, including water and air quality, energy use and recycling, according to a recent analysis.

While some environmental groups in the area have used their presence to fight issues that impact everyone, such as air quality or safe drinking water, other organizations, with the backing of Greenpeace, are instead focusing on anti-pipeline and anti-energy activism in the state.

The singular focus on one environmental issue while appearing to ignore others implies the presence of environmental racism, a long-used description of the practice of allowing toxics to exist in communities of color.

Meanwhile African-American led organizations are pushing environmental justice agendas, underscoring the importance of such issues in communities of color.

“Clean water is a basic human right,” National Medical Association President Niva Lubin-Johnson, wrote in a commentary posted on Seattlemedium.com last fall. “At the National Medical Association (NMA), we see firsthand how this crisis in clean water creates a variety of healthcare problems for black patients and their families.”

Instead of seeking ways to make energy more elusive and expensive for communities of color, activist groups could use their initiative to aid in the abating of these most fundamental challenges that continue to push headwinds against many Black families and other families of color.

“This is just the beginning,” says Tome of Green 2.0. “Environmental groups are now on notice.”

Gentrification

Continued From Page 6



“It came about in the years after the Civil Rights Movement, when D.C. was devastated by the fires of the riots in 1968 that burned Black communities. It’s the art form that emerged from the void created by white flight and Black middle-class flight.”

Go-go, a percussive subgenre of music with roots in funk, has withstood the test of time. When the District was called the “murder capital” of the country, when crack cocaine flooded the streets, when “go-gos” were shut down throughout the city, one could count on Campbell’s store to play the music.

Despite changing demographics in the city, go-go is still the official sound of Black D.C., and the music does not seem to bother many of the other businesses surrounding the MetroPCS.

The manager at the CVS Pharmacy across the street, Betrece Jackson, says the store and their customers actually enjoy the music. “It doesn’t bother us over here at CVS; the customers actually love it.” She also added, “The issue is the neighborhood is changing, and the new people that are coming into the neighborhood may be the ones that are complaining. The music is fine with me. D.C. is the city of go-go!”

Gabriela Briones, the business manager of Halfsmoke which is across the street, said, “This is directly impacting the community by removing a staple. Taking away their music is like taking the culture out of D.C. and removing it from Shaw’s history.”

The store has received support throughout the region. “People are coming in here shaking our hands and waving at us. The people of D.C. have been very supportive. We’re appreciative,” Campbell says.

Even the CEO of T-Mobile weighed in.

“The music will go on, and our dealer will work with the neighbors to compromise volume,” John Legere said April 10 on Twitter.

“They’ve earned their right to play it,” Briones added. “Everyone knows Metro PCS is where you can hear the go-go music and even go get go-go CD’s. There was definitely a better way to handle this situation, especially if you’re trying to move into the city.”

Post Prison Education: Planning Your Education

Continued from Page 18

It will also depend on what you can afford, what funding package the school can offer, scholarships, how comfortable you feel on the campus, and a variety of other factors.

While it is important that you consider your conviction history, do not automatically assume a particular path is closed to you. Talk with someone who knows and who has worked with other people who have been successful.

It is also important to be realistic and be open to other possibilities. Part of my work with students who have conviction histories is to discuss challenges unique to them, as well as those faced by most other students.

The majority of the advice I offer is the same as I would offer students with no conviction histories – do your research, plan well, practice patience, and slow down.

Lastly, there are **certifications and credentials**. Almost all colleges offer some

form of non-credit professional certification and credential programs. Examples are various types of software and hardware certifications, Commercial Driver License (CDL), flagging certificate, and a variety of Continuing Education Units for different industries.

Every college has different offerings and options for funding. While colleges can often help students find ways to pay for these courses, they are usually not eligible for federal financial aid because they are non-credit.

In my next article, we’ll look at three major planning considerations for anyone with a conviction history who wants to change careers or return to school.

Em Daniels is currently the ReEntry Program Navigator at Spokane Community College and Community Colleges of Spokane. She is part of a statewide network of Navigators on campuses and inside correctional facilities, all working to make education more accessible for more people. She is a master educator and has been working in the fields of justice and education for many years.

OUR VOICES

Isn't It Time?

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Black women in Houston, TX and across the nation began preparing to use our political power during a recent event held at Texas Southern University. Presidential candidates attended to begin a conversation with Black women regarding what's important to us, and what we're looking for from candidates in 2020.

Isn't it time for us to begin using our economic power, too? A few months ago, the Black Leadership Alliance, Clear the Airwaves and the National Congress of Black Women began the campaign called RESPECT US, to urge corporations that spend millions of dollars in advertising on radio programs that play hate music that disrespects our communities, and in particular, Black women and girls.

We've made every effort to get the attention of the guilty parties, but it's as if they don't care and relish making it possible for stations to play the degrading, hateful music that worships murder, illegal drugs, shooting up neighborhoods and misogyny.

We recognize there are Black franchisees of McDonald's and Subway Restaurants, but that's not a good reason for accepting the disrespect of our people. Franchise owners should be the first in line influencing their corporate offices to spend their advertising dollars on programs that uplift us. Franchise owners don't get a pass just because they want to earn a dollar off the very community they should be uplifting. Some franchise owners make modest donations to certain community activities. That's all the more reason they should want to clean up the filth their corporate owners are paying for.



We've made every effort to communicate with McDonald's and Subway Restaurant corporate offices, but have been ignored. We've taken the same step with other heads of corporations that disrespect our community, but the time has come for us to move to action.

Juneteenth has some meaning to us, so we're asking you to join us on the weekend of June 21-23 to join with brothers and sisters in Atlanta, Washington, DC, Philadelphia, New York and Chicago to support our effort on this Juneteenth Economic Withdrawal Weekend. Don't Shop at McDonald's and Subways Restaurants, because when you do, you are supporting these offenders, and disrespecting the com-

munities some try so hard to clean up and protect. It's the duty of all of us to support events and projects that are in our best interest. We oppose vulgar hateful rhetoric that encourages the killing of Black people and the abuse and degrading of Black women and girls in particular.

Below are actual lyrics from current rappers:

"Wet your mamas house (meaning to spill blood) wet your grandmamas house. Keep shooting til somebody die. Spray your block down, we not really with that rah rah sh*t. Glock cocked now, I don't really give no fu*k bout who I hit. Coupe got the missing roof, your boo come up missing too. Poof, I just stole your boo, now ooh, she got to eat the whole crew. We done with her come and pick your b*ch back up."

There are many more rappers putting out this same kind of filth. In the words of the late Dr. Frances Cress Welsing: "We're the only people on this entire planet who've been taught to sing and praise our demeanment (calling ourselves bit*hes, ho*s, dogs and ni**as)...If you can train people to demean and degrade themselves, you can oppress them forever. You can even program them to kill themselves and they won't even understand what happened."

McDonald's and Subways are major sponsors of these disrespectful songs. They've chosen instead to continue paying to sponsor this hateful rhetoric. No other group has to ask sponsors to withdraw from offensive media. Sponsors do so willingly. Respect yourself, and demand that all others RESPECT US.

Dr. E. Faye Williams is President of the National Congress of Black Women and host of WPFW-FM's "Wake Up and Stay Woke."

Are Vigils the Answer to Stopping Crime?

By Hollis Wormsby, Jr.

There was a vigil held in Bessemer (Alabama) on Monday night on behalf of more than 100 victims of violent crime from western Jefferson County. Those who organized the vigil were well intended and did no harm – but I wonder how much good it did. This vigil followed the form of many others with local elected officials speaking on the impact of gunfire in our communities and families talking about the never-ending pain. No disrespect to the families, but we also need to talk about the cause of violence in our communities.

One step to reducing crime in our community begins with getting control of the kids in our own homes and my home is no exception. Yes, it is important to set standards where we live and this is something I have failed to do. So do not get the impression that I am writing from the perspective of someone who thinks he knows it all. I am writing from the perspective of someone who understands not being able to teach values that are important to young lives. What I say to myself is, "You might not be able to achieve your goal, but it is still your job to get up each day and try."

Our kids watch more TV than any other race, are more often left unsupervised and in too many cases, including in my own

home, and are not taught the values they need to succeed in the workplace. If our kids are not taught the responsibility of regular chores how are they going to understand holding down a job.



Another thing that we must teach is respect for authority. If our children are not required to show respect in our own homes how are they going to respect teachers, principals, law enforcement or others who may not care as much about them as you do.

I am a systems engineer by training so in my world the solution to any problem is a series of logical steps dedicated to a specific purpose. Yes, there are emotions some may need to share at the vigils, but if we are to really address the violence in our communities, we are going to have to own up to the root causes and work to identify strategies to address and improve those problems. Or at least that's the way I see it.

Hollis Wormsby has served as a featured columnist for the Birmingham Times for more than 29 years. He is the former host of Talkback on 98.7 KISS FM and of Real Talk on WAGG AM. If you would like to comment on this column you can email him at hjwormsby@aol.com

Promise Forever

By Danielle Hunt



I love you forever, so hold
this place in my heart,
Promise to never forget me,
when this whole world
falls apart,
Let us share this moment
always, for it may never
ever come again,
My love , my peace, my best
friend to the very end,
Taught me in this life
all that I could ever know,
Please please stay in this fight,

Cause I cant bare to ever let you go,
This pain that I feel , I know I cant trust it,
But I follow my heart, and all other things
I truly love, lovesick,
The path of this life goes down
a very very thin line,
You may be all I have left, until the very
end of our time,
So promise me, promise me,
promise me please,
That one day you'll stay forever,
And not be lost between the memories,
But if my time shall soon come to ever pass,
I'll be sure to remember all the good times
we'll still have as we laugh,
Even if I end up not being chosen,
You kept me safe, protected me,
my heart remains forever unbroken,
I'll paint you life's picture,
just promise me you'll always keep it,
Cause I'll still be here when this life is too undefeated.

OUR VOICES

I'm Glad Tiger Woods Won the Masters, I Just Wish He Stood up for the Black Community.

By Etan Thomas

(Reprinted from the Guardian, theguardian.com)

Michael Jordan called it the greatest comeback he has ever seen. After all the trials and tribulations, all the ridicule and mockery, all the personal and professional humiliations, Tiger Woods shocked the world by fighting off a field of younger competitors to win his first major title in over a decade at Augusta National Golf Club.

You may not have a pulse if you didn't feel at least a little warm inside as Tiger passionately embraced his son behind the 18th green, a scene reminiscent of the bear hug that he shared with his late father Earl Woods after winning the Masters for the first time back in 1997. As a father, I can honestly say that it almost made my allergies start acting up.

Couple that with the fact that it happened at the Masters on a course that was literally built on the grounds of a slave plantation, one that no Black golfer had ever even competed on until Lee Elder in 1975, at a club that didn't even have a Black member until 1990.

Couple that with Tiger's personal history with Augusta: the TV interview as a teenager when the reporter asked which tournament most captured his imagination and he answered "the Masters" and the reporter asked why and a confident, wet-behind-the-ears, 14-year-old boldly answered "because of how Blacks have been treated there, like they shouldn't be there, and if I win this tournament it would be definitely be big for us".

Couple that with the instances of publicly expressed bigotry that Tiger has been made to endure over the years, including but hardly limited to racist remarks by Fuzzy Zoeller, Kelly Tilghman and Sergio Garcia.

Couple that with the way the mainstream media built Tiger up as a golf Superman only to tear him down almost gleefully as they discovered his kryptonite. The sense persisted that many in America were almost cheering when he no longer performed at a Tiger Woods level of domination, transforming him into an object of sneering and taunts. (Even this year, an Augusta patron was spotted wearing a t-shirt with his mugshot on the front.)

And now, finally, Tiger was able to relish the satisfaction of reprisal, like Arya Stark with her needle sword as she exacted her revenge on everyone who meant her nothing but harm. This was Tiger's moment to bask in his glory.

But even with all of that, I found it extremely difficult to fully embrace the moment because there's another aspect to the story lurking around the corner to meet me, much to my surprise, like Jaime Lannister locking eyes with Bran Stark.

The fact that Tiger has stood unapologetically alongside Donald Trump is particularly troubling to me. Now let me say I have absolutely no problem with Woods voicing a political opinion that differs from mine. I'm not a person who wants to silence anyone who has an opinion or supports a position that I don't agree with and attempt to discredit them, demean them or personally attack them in any way shape or form.

Just as I applaud LeBron James and Steph Curry and the entire Golden State Warriors under head coach Steve Kerr for taking the stance that they didn't want to attend the White House after their NBA championship because their politics didn't align with Trump's, I also have to support somebody like Tom Brady's choice to not want to attend



when President Obama was in office because that's his right, even if I don't agree with it.

If I don't, I fall into the same category of a Laura Ingraham, who told LeBron and Kevin Durant to shut up and dribble simply because their opinion differs from hers.

But that said, I do believe that we should be able to "disagree without being disagreeable" as Obama always said, and I have the right to disagree with anyone as long as I remain respectful and avoid personal attacks and simply stick to the issues on which we differ.

When you align yourself with someone like Trump, you're condoning a man who is exactly what former ESPN commentator Jemele Hill called him: a white supremacist or a supporter of white supremacy and white nationalism. When you boast about being longtime friends with Trump, when you accept the Presidential Medal of Freedom that he is giving you, at least in part because of your professed allegiance to him, you are in fact choosing a side.

Trump has a well-documented history of looking to inject himself into the national discourse and praise the people, especially the Black people, who publicly praise him. So Trump will publicly support Jim Brown and Kanye West and Steve Harvey and Ray Lewis and Tiger Woods because they have publicly kissed the ring. He will use them each as his Black Friend who agrees with him and supports him and loves him (a thing I still can't believe Jim Brown actually said).

But Trump honors these athletes and showers them with awards out of self-interest: because he thinks honoring those who pledge fealty to him will entice others to do the same. The implication being, of course, that you'll be subject to his wrath if you choose another direction.

It's like he thinks he's Daenerys Targaryen: like when he ordered athletes to kneel for the national anthem or he would unleash his fire-breathing dragons (Fox News) to incinerate them where they stand, calling for them to not only be fired but expelled from the country.

It's this alliance which personally makes Tiger's win at the Masters a little bittersweet because I've seen this all before. I remember how OJ Simpson wanted nothing to do with the Black community to the point of rejecting Dr. Harry Edwards when asked to lend his support to the Olympic Project For Human Rights before the 1968 Olympics and combine his voice with all of the other Black athletes at

the time. Edwards' plan was to place the collective voice of the Black athlete on an international platform to take a stand on the horrific ways in which Black people were being treated in America.

Simpson's response was: "I'm not Black, I'm OJ."

Not too far off from Tiger's infamous proclamation on Oprah that he wasn't Black but "Cablanasian".

Now make no mistake, Trump isn't the first president to use sportspeople or entertainers as props. It has been happening for decades. But it hasn't really been seen with a sitting president whose politics are so directly against the Black community at this level, since Nixon was endorsed by James Brown.

The question recently came up on my radio show, The Collision: Where Sports and Politics Collide, why do we have to put all of this on the shoulders of Tiger Woods? Why can't he just play a game he loves and enjoy his life? Nobody asks Phil Mickelson or other white athletes to put their necks on the line and risk it all by using their platforms by speaking out on injustice. Is that unfair to Tiger? Should we not defend his right to not be political?

It turns out, as Dr Edwards once told me, OJ was making the same case to him that people are currently making for Tiger. Why can't he just play ball and live his life and do his commercials and enjoy his riches and rewards without doing anything that could, and most likely would, jeopardize his earning potential.

Dr Edwards' answer was simple: "Nobody asks Larry Bird to stand up for all poor white people in French Lick, Indiana. So why should I be obligated to move away from everything I have worked for and be asked to make this tremendous sacrifice and stand up for all Black people in America. That's a legitimate question. Now, what's equally legitimate is, if you decide not to do that, there's a price to be paid for it and Black people have every right to collect that cost."

He continued: "It goes back to an old saying, what does a man gain who wins the world but loses his soul? Black folks know that, they feel that. And even though they cheered when OJ beat the rap on those two murders, they weren't cheering for OJ."

You can root for everything Tiger's Masters victory meant – the silencing of the many hordes who rooted for his downfall and who reveled in his struggles and wore t-shirts with his mugshot – without rooting for Tiger himself. Because I know a Jon Snow-Arya Stark embrace between Woods and Trump is just around the corner, sending an unmistakable message on exactly what side he has chosen.

It's not for me to speak for an entire community or tell people what to do, but it's the reason I had trouble fully embracing the jubilation of Tiger's victory.

Etan Thomas is a retired professional basketball player who self-identifies as "The Activist Athlete." Thomas has released four books, a collection of poems called "More Than An Athlete" (Haymarket Books), "Fatherhood: Rising To The Ultimate Challenge" (Penguin), "Voices Of The Future" (Penguin), and his latest work, "We Matter: Athletes And Activism," which is a collection of interviews mixed with the heartfelt commentary of his own, featuring the voices of athletes, activists, media personalities, scholars, and the family of victims of police brutality. Thomas currently writes for The Guardian and has previously written for The Washington Post, Huffington Post, CNN, ESPN, Hoopshype.com and slamonline. He frequently can be seen on MSNBC as a special correspondent for "hot topics" and co-hosts a weekly local radio show on WPFW 89.3FM, The Collision, where sports and politics collide. For more information visit: etanthomas.com.



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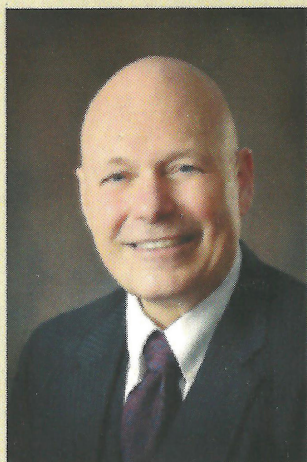
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Put our experienced team to the test!

Are You Interested In A Career in Real Estate? Call Me.

Career Opportunities SPOKANE

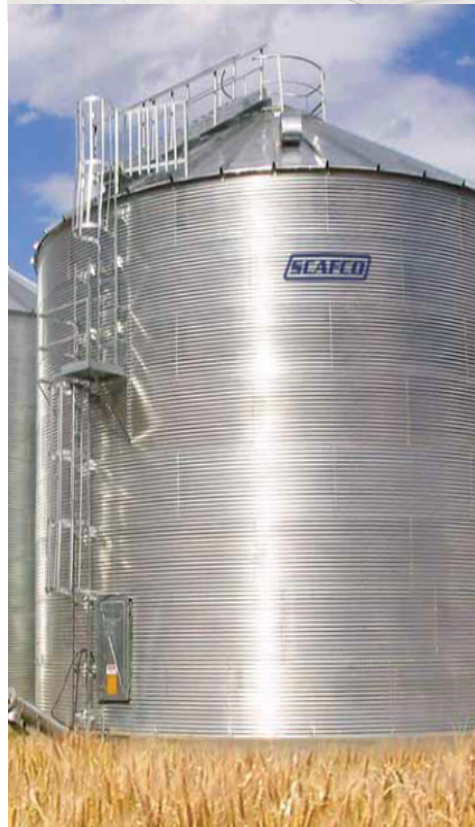
Long established manufacturing company is seeking energetic and hard-working individuals for management, sales, office, machine operators and laborer positions. To view all of our current openings, please visit our website

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

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

Benefits Package Includes:

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



SAINT
GEORGE'S

The Mission of Saint George's School:

Inspiring Scholars, Athletes and Artists to lead and serve others.

Saint George's School is an independent K-12 school, serving a population of approximately 350 students from the greater Spokane area. The school offers a vibrant and challenging academic program highlighted by the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and complemented by a well-developed set of enrichment offerings. Our mission is to develop the potential in each of our students, and at Saint George's you will find a community that is extremely dedicated to that mission. A talented faculty, a dedicated staff, a diverse student body, a beautiful campus, and state-of-the-art facilities all combine to make Saint George's an exceptional place to work.

We are hiring for the following positions for the 2019-2020 school year:

Middle School Science and Math Teacher (minimum .8 FTE)

Middle School English Teacher (minimum .8 FTE)

Lower School Physical Education Teacher (.6 FTE)

To find the complete job descriptions and application process. Please visit our website at www.sgs.org



The Spokane Regional Health District is Hiring for a **Health Coordinator**.

For more information visit:

<https://srhd.org/careers-volunteers-1>

Check Current Openings - Position to be posted in May.



DEMOLITION LABORERS

IRS Seeks Demolition Laborers.

Large Demolition and Industrial Dismantling Contractor is gearing up for a VERY BUSY summer.

We are an established, 34 year old contracting company with long term prospects, fully paid health care benefits and a 401K.

Job requires travel to job site locations throughout the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana).

We are looking for energetic persons in excellent health. You will be required to take a drug test and pass a physical examination.

Pickup an application at

12415 E. Trent Ave Spokane Valley, WA 99216, or download an application at

www.irsenviro.com

MAY EVENTS

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY AFRICANA STUDIES PROGRAM
PRESENTS

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

THURSDAYS

APRIL 25 - MAY 16 | 5:00 - 7:30 PM
RECLAIMING BLACK EXCELLENCE
SPOKANE PUBLIC LIBRARY SOUTH HILL
3324 S Perry St, Spokane, WA

APRIL 25, 2019

Dr. Okera Nsombi

Professor

EWU African Studies Program

*Is Black History or Black
Studies Relevant in 2019*

MAY 2, 2019

George Duvall,

Program Coordinator

EWU African Studies Program

*Love is Not Enough:
Growing Up Black While
Living With a White Family*

MAY 9, 2019

Professor Angela

Schwendiman, MA

Senior Lecturer

EWU African Studies Program

*Understanding the Speech Gap:
Saying Hello in Ebonics*

MAY 16, 2019

Dr. Gloria Baynes

Adjunct Professor

EWU African Studies Program

*The Struggle is Real:
Challenges Faced by African
American Female Athletes*

Send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com.

Friday, May 10 • 7:30 • Music Auditorium

Grammy award winner

**MAURICE
"MOBETTA"
BROWN
& SOUL'D U OUT**

soulful be-bop, hip-hop, rock, & jazz

**SPOKANE FALLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Jazz Presents**

**Maurice 'Mobetta' Brown • trumpet
Taka • keys | Joe Blaxx • drums | Parker McCallister • bass**

FREE Clinic: 3:30pm, Fri, May 10 • SFCC Band Room 113

**Tickets: advance (SFCC Cashier's): \$20/door: \$23
(discount for SFCC students)**

**Info & ticket link: [f](#) FACEBOOK:
SFCC Jazz Presents**

**Community Colleges of Spokane
Spokane Falls Community College**

**Use scan
code app
for tickets**



Community Colleges of Spokane does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation or age in its programs, activities or employment.

Spokane Chapter
Of The Links, Inc.
White Rose Brunch
&
Fashion Show
By Audrey's Boutique
May 18, 2019
11 AM - 1 PM
Benefiting the V. Anne Smith Scholarship Fund

Contact 509-838-2605 or find us on Eventbrite to purchase tickets

NORTHERN QUEST CASINO
AIRWAY HEIGHTS, WA
TICKETS: \$50 PER PERSON


Linked In Friendship, Connected In Service
Spokane (WA) Chapter

Spokane Links, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, affiliated with National Links, Inc.
All donations to our organization are tax deductible

Presented by The Black Lens and the Magic Lantern Theatre

“IT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL AS IF YOU’VE SEEN
THE FACE OF GOD.” ROLLING STONE

A M A Z I N G

G R A C E

A R E T H A

F R A N K L I N

WITH JAMES CLEVELAND AND THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY CHOIR

AN ALAN ELLIOTT PRODUCTION

NEON PRESENTS AN AL'S RECORDS AND TAPES PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH TIME 40 ACRES AND A MULE RAMPANT AND SUNDIAL "AMAZING GRACE"
STARRING ARETHA FRANKLIN JAMES CLEVELAND ALEXANDER HAMILTON CORNELL DUPREE KENNY LUPER PONCHO MORALES BERNARD PURDIE CHUCK RAINEY
THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY CHOIR C.L. FRANKLIN COLOR AND BALANCE REBECCA ARCE EDITOR JEFF BUCHANAN MUSIC MIXER JIMMY DOUGLASS
ORIGINAL ALBUM PRODUCED BY ARETHA FRANKLIN ARIF MARDIN JERRY WEXLER PRODUCED BY JOE BOYD ARETHA FRANKLIN ROB JOHNSON SPIKE LEE CHIEMI KARASAWA
SABRINA V. OWENS JERRY WEXLER TIRRELL D. WHITTLEY JOSEPH WOLFF EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS STEFAN NOWICKI JOEY CAREY ALEXANDRA JOHNS
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NEON TIME

#AmazingGrace

Seating is
Limited!

Black Lens Private Screening and Discussion
Saturday, May 11
6pm
Magic Lantern Theatre
25 W Main Ave, Spokane, WA 99201

Tickets
\$10

For advance tickets visit Blacklensnews.com. Advance tickets are encouraged. Most screenings sell out!