

**“THROUGH HER EYES”**

“Cain’s background? Eighty-three arrests, pregnancy, incarceration. Then with the guidance of a prison program, she embarked on a remarkable “upward spiral” after years of hustling on the streets of Annapolis, MD where she turned to prostitution to feed a crack addiction.”

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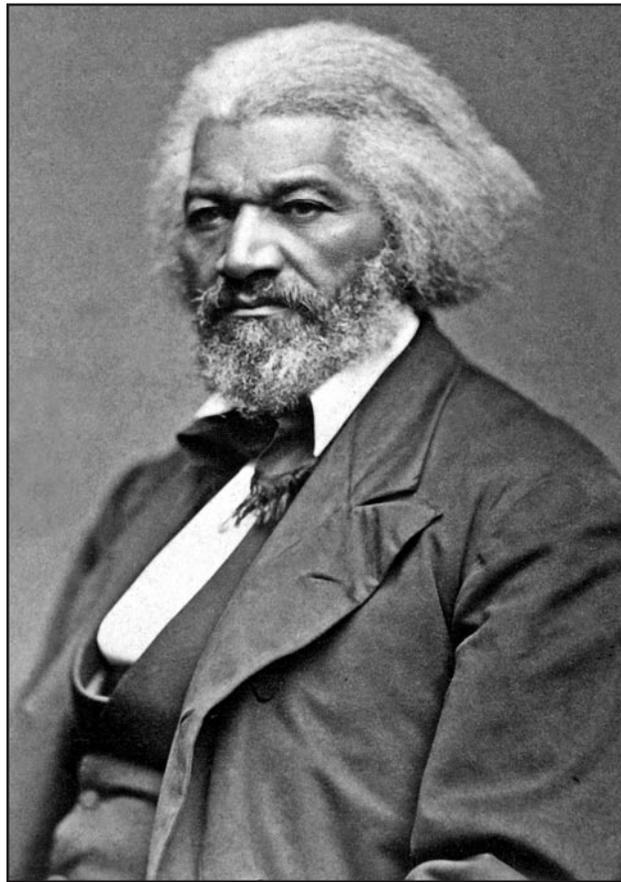
# BLACK LEADERSHIP POWERLESS BY CHOICE

By Frederick A. Hurst

Although there are many good things about Black leadership in Springfield that will be in my next article on Black Leadership, this article is about the bad things.

I’ve watched and studied the current condition of Black leadership in Springfield and concluded that we have too many “Black leaders” and too little Black leadership. It’s getting to be embarrassing to watch. And I find myself constantly asking myself, “Is this what we have wrought?”

How is it that Springfield has four Black city councilors – two elected at-large – and so little gets accomplished that benefits the Black community? Actually, we should be running the city through a natural alliance between Black and Hispanic councilors and those White folks who would quickly understand that demographics rule. It’s not a race thing. It’s a power thing. The Protestants understood it. The Irish after them understood it. And the Italians understood it. And all of them understand it today. It seems that the only ones who don’t understand it at an operational level are our so-called Black political leaders who seem to think that power derives from their ability to compete with each other for preeminence and White approval.



*Frederick Douglass*

Photo taken from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

I know it’s not the biggest issue, but I was never more disappointed with our Black city councilors than when those who had the opportunity to do so refused to confront the city over the all-White staff at our golf courses. I am told they are scared of Kevin Kennedy whose son runs the golf courses in a city that is majority minority (I suspect they might be afraid of White folks in general). But who the hell is Kevin Kennedy but a person who is supposed to be work-

ing for “We the people.” I certainly won’t challenge his personal commitment or his official position as chief of Springfield’s economic development. But I also won’t be intimidated by his presence. I don’t mean to sound macho but if he wants to fight over doing what’s right, that’s fine. I’ve had bigger fights. And I can give little respect to a Black elected official (or, for that matter, a White one) who is afraid to do the job for which they were elected because of their fear of a man who, by definition, is their employee and the servant of the people whom they claim to represent.

Ditto for Black aides to the mayor. Being a mayor’s Black aide does not necessarily a Black leader make. No White aide to the mayor has ever been promoted as the “leader” of the White community. In fact, we hardly know their names. When the mayor’s Black aides avoid attacking issues as simple as the racial makeup of our golf course staffs and the more complex issues revolving around the fact that Black folks are routinely shut out of the economic development dollars, they make it difficult for anybody to consider them leaders. They may be employees of the mayor. And I don’t begrudge them their paychecks. But

*continues to page 14*



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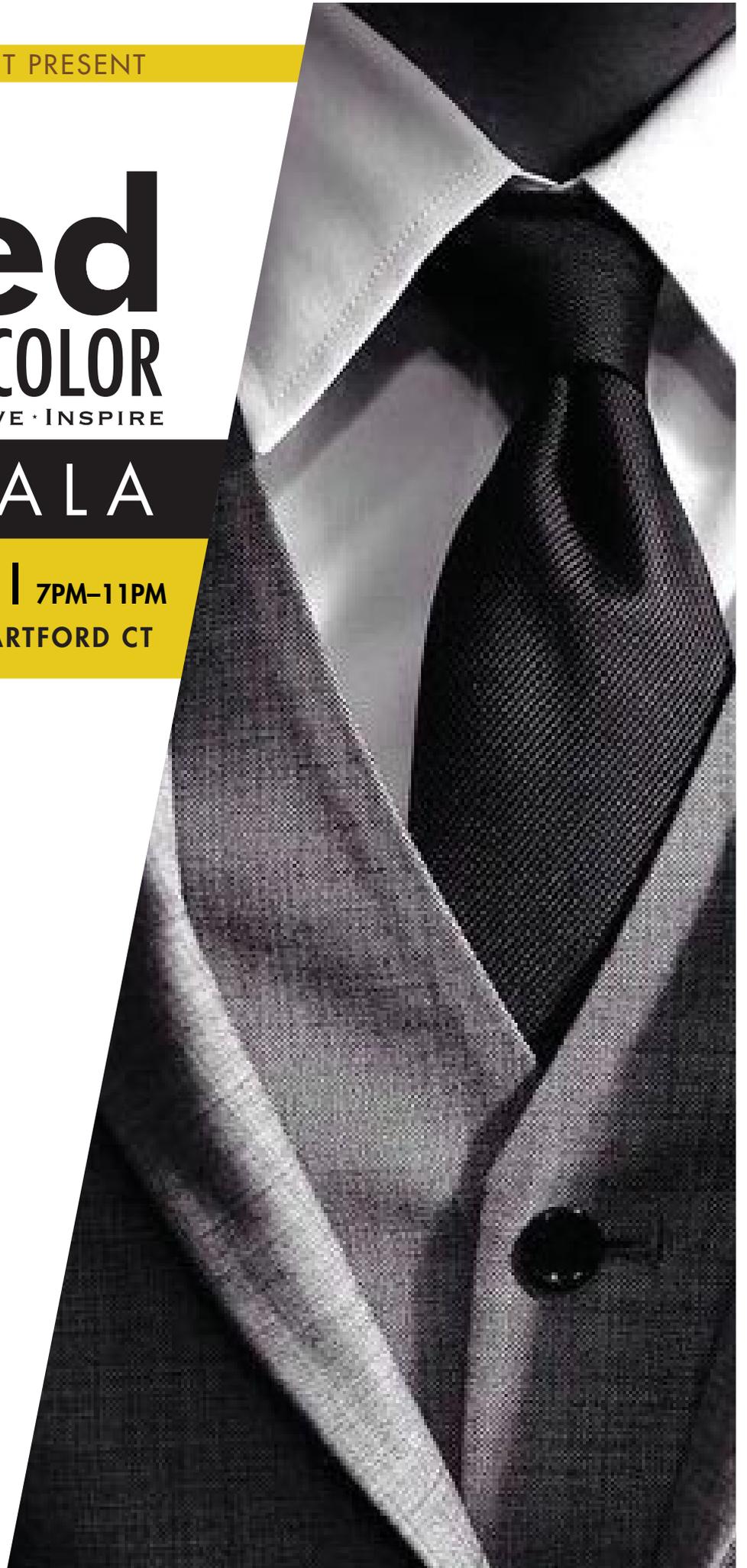
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**PUBLISHER:** Frederick A. Hurst      **EDITOR:** Marjorie J. Hurst

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: THIS ISSUE**

<i>Artist in Residence</i> Renée Flowers	<i>Leadership Pioneer Valley</i> Lora Wondolowski
<i>Business &amp; Workforce Dev.</i> Larry Martin	<i>Life's Challenges</i> Sweets H. Wilson, PhD
<i>Children's Book Corner</i> Terri Schlichenmeyer	<i>Mama's Boyz</i> Jerry Craft
<i>DevelopSpringfield</i> Jay Minkarah	<i>Parents &amp; Community</i> Patricia Spradley
<i>Early Education &amp; Care</i> Nicole Blais	<i>Pen &amp; Ink</i> Brenda's Child
<i>Education &amp; Hope</i> Gianna Allentuck	John V. Tranghese
<i>Features</i> Helen Caulton-Harris	Brenda White
Janet Rodriguez Denney	Juanita Torrence-Thompson
Walter D. Woodgett	<i>Reading to Succeed</i> Sally Fuller
<i>Food for Thought</i> Zaida Govan	<i>Religious Point of View</i> Rev. Dr. Atu White, Editor
<i>Good News</i> Jay Griffin	<i>The Urban Cook</i> Rhonda Jones
<i>Health Matters</i> Doris Harris, Editor	<i>Youth Premier Soccer</i> Kirstyn Kelley
Crystal Senter-Brown	Artistic/Multimedia Director - Marie Zanazanian
Anika C. Thrower, PhD	Distribution Manager - Shawn Merriman
<i>Latin@ Groove</i> Magdalena Gómez	Photographer - Ed Cohen

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# AF-AM NEWS **bits**

By Frederick A. Hurst

## OTHER'S BITS

“Never let your mouth write a check that your rear end can't cash.”

By Howie Carr, *Boston Herald*,  
September 16, 2015

## MICHAEL ALBANO ON THE MOVE

As I predicted and as others must have, Governors Councilor and former Springfield Mayor, Michael Albano, is on the move toward jumping into the race for sheriff of Hampden County. And his political agility continues to reveal itself in his most recent public release to the media of a list of historical facts that highlight his past connections to current and retiring Sheriff Michael Ashe. It is a clever political document clearly intended to convey the perception that he and Sheriff Ashe are close, which may be true but other more recent events show little evidence of it. By injecting himself into the North End residents' dispute over the construction of a replacement facility for the Alcohol Treatment Center on Howard Street on the side of the residents (overtly and covertly), Albano is clearly opposing Sheriff Ashe and setting himself up for a confrontation with Nick Cocchi, the favored candidate of the in-crowd that worked to get Cocchi so far out front early in the race that nobody could catch him. Cocchi now has a problem. But as I recently said, so doesn't Albano if, as rumored, Hampden County Court Clerk Laura Gentile jumps into the race.

## POWERLESS BY CHOICE

“Had Bibi (Benjamin Netanyahu) hugged Obama, he could have made Israel effectively the sixth party in the P-5 side of negotiations with Iran and stiffened every spine. Instead, Netanyahu marginalized Israel. And by calling elections in the middle of it all, and forming a far-right cabinet with extremist Jewish settlers, Netanyahu is playing right into Iran's hands: Iran wants a one-

state solution where Israel never leaves the West Bank and is in permanent conflict with Palestinians and Muslims, so Iran can better delegitimize and isolate Israel.” Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, September 16, 2015.

## SOME THINGS DON'T REQUIRE A LOT OF THOUGHT

Although incumbent City Councilor Clodo Concepcion probably deserved to have the Sixteen Acres Community Center named after him, he is running for re-election and it is patently unfair to his opponent that voters will be casting their votes at the “Clodovaldo Concepcion Sixteen Acres Community Center.” Not only that, it might even be a violation of the election laws. And if not, it should be. Even better, simple logic and basic principles of fundamental fairness should be the guiding principle that makes local election officials change voting for Ward 5 voters to a neutral site.

## ORLANDO RAMOS, WHAT WERE YOU THINKING!

Springfield has bled manufacturing jobs and taxes for decades as businesses left town. We all have been waiting with baited breath for the Chinese company CRRC USA Rail Corp to reverse the trend as it was reaching the final stages of breaking ground on Page Boulevard for its new factory in which it will build rail cars for the Boston MBTA – 150 jobs, 220,000 square feet of newly taxable real estate – and all that is standing in its way is a simple City Council vote to approve a wisely-proposed tax break that would be spread over ten years. During that same ten years, CRRC will be paying the city \$27 million dollars in taxes on property that would otherwise yield nothing. And the company representative, who flew in from China for the vote, ended up embarrassed by a “rule 20” vote by Councilor Orlando Ramos that delayed the vote until a next council meeting.

Ramos' reckless and meaningless, though harmful in its messaging, gesture comes on the heels of comments by MassMutual President Roger Crandall's message to top business leaders in Boston that MassMutual's discontent with the business environment in the state leaves the door open for the company to move its headquarters out of state. What were you thinking Councilor Ramos in making such a useless, impolitic, airhead gesture?

## I DON'T REALLY LIKE “I TOLD YOU SO,” BUT...!

I wrote: “When three Black candidates run for mayor in the same election against a popular White mayor, whose popularity crosses all racial and ethnic lines, the outcome of the election becomes somewhat predictable” (POV, September 2015). Well, I told you so. Our popular mayor got just over 75% of the vote (5,067). His closest competitor, Salvatore Circosta, got 8.55% ((576) just short of one tenth of the mayor's vote. Johnnie Ray McKnight, the first Black person to enter the race and the most vocal, got 488 votes (7.25%). The other two Black candidates, Beverly Savage and Michael Jones, got 187 votes (2.76%) and 178 votes (2.64%) respectively. Had either one joined in the effort to elect McKnight instead of running, Salvatore Circosta would most likely not be Mayor Sarno's final election opponent. Had both joined the McKnight effort, McKnight would be Sarno's opponent. And though McKnight would probably have lost to Sarno, just as Circosta will, it would have made for a much more interesting race in a city that is majority minority.

## JESSE LEDERMAN, TRUST ME. YOU'RE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE!

Attacking the seasoned incumbent Bud Williams is no way for a young (20 years old), non-incumbent to win an at-large seat on the Springfield City Council. Stick with the issues and the handshakes. And even kiss some babies. But don't attack Bud Williams on false issues as a primary strategy. It will only backfire on

you just as your attack on him over the biomass incinerator did and your attack on him over his MassMutual treasurer did. One was based on an easily proven false premise and the other was patently frivolous. And those other issues you may be planning to attack Bud on are probably no better. These things may sound good coming out of the box. But Bud will counter punch ferociously. And eventually the true facts will be revealed. And your youthful naiveté and credibility will become the issue, as is already happening. And I'll tell you one more thing—you're actually increasing Bud's vote. A lot of people, including those who may have legitimate beefs with him, don't appreciate your approach and question why you didn't select other more natural targets. And their message to you will be a vote for Bud from even those who might otherwise not have voted. And they won't vote for you unless you rethink your strategy. If you think you are going to get to the City Council on the back of Bud Williams, you're making a big mistake.

## LOOK AT THOSE REPUBLICANS!

I think Donald Trump has tapped into the very nerve center of the “new” Republican Party. And it's becoming increasingly clear that the “old” Party has been hijacked. Trump talks “Bubba” language and the crowds cheer him on. He's “sugar” for the Tea Party and the “second coming” for Evangelicals. And the zealots and bigots like David Duke come along for the “free” ride. And the Independents are being slowly “sucked” in as are women. It is scary but not new in history. Except, I don't believe for a minute that Donald Trump believes the pabulum he is feeding the Republican masses that now attend his rallies in ever increasing numbers. He's selling his brand and increasing its value at the expense of the confusion of a lot of concerned and ignorant people. But I worry that he might start believing in what the frenzied crowds see in him, in which case America would be in real trouble.

*continues to page 25*

# “Through Her Eyes”

## A Conference Specifically Designed for Girls

By Helen Caulton-Harris, Commissioner Springfield Division of Health & Human Services, Special to Point of View



**2015 Keynote Speaker:**  
**Tonier “Neen” Cain**

“Through Her Eyes” is the title of the Center for Human Development’s (CHD) 11th annual conference this year featuring a dynamic keynote speaker and roster of 12 workshops that reflect the agency’s sensitivity to girls’ issues.

The event, spearheaded by John Roberson, CHD Vice President of Children and Families, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 28 at the MassMutual Center in downtown Springfield.

The conference will feature Tonier “Neen” Cain whose riveting life story Roberson and his committee knew would inspire young girls to be resilient and to reach their best.

Cain’s background? Eighty-three arrests, pregnancy, incarceration. Then with the guidance of a prison program, she embarked on a remarkable “upward spiral” after years of hustling on

the streets of Annapolis, MD where she turned to prostitution to feed a crack addiction.

Today, she works for the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care, dedicating her life to being a voice for those still lost and still silent, spreading the word of hope and renewal.

Subtitled, “Voices and Choices,” this year’s conference theme reflects Roberson’s observation as a clinician that prior services tailored for girls were less than abundant.

“Not that boys don’t experience trauma,” Roberson said. “But we realized that girls tend to show their emotions differently and understanding what that’s all about is important.”

Both Roberson’s work as the former director of the Terri Thomas Program at CHD, as well as being a father of a young daughter, further honed his sensitivity to girls’ issues. The Terri Thomas program, named in honor of the young woman murdered in her Springfield apartment in 1996, provides detention, stabilization and short-term treatment services for court-involved female teens. Roberson, a close friend of Thomas, acknowledged that her work and her passion as a DYS caseworker “ignited me,” he said.

The conference’s bevy of workshops was developed and will be led by CHD clinicians, as well as Springfield College Schools of Professional and Continuing Studies faculty.

“It’s a newer partnership that began last year,” Roberson said. “It’s been a truly outstanding relationship – just working with an institution of higher learning . . . in helping to educate our attendees.”

The conference is open to anyone working with girls – clinicians, therapists, parents and the public.

“We want everyone in the room,” Roberson said. “You can always learn something new.” And because it’s a girls’ conference, “we want girls there – the workshops are designed specifically for girls,” he added.

Two that especially appeal to girls, Roberson said, are “Voices From Inside: The Healing Power of Creative Writing,” led by Gretchen-Krull and “Motherless Daughters,” a facilitated forum that helps such daughters reflect, repair and redefine themselves so they can be better mothers. It is facilitated by Latoya Bosworth of the Springfield Public School’s K.Y.D.S.

Lunchtime speakers include Carmen M. Ortiz, U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts, the first

Hispanic woman **Helen Caulton-Harris** to represent the Commonwealth, and Janine Spinola Taylor, MS of Springfield College who has dedicated her life to improving communities through education and helping everyone to overcome poverty and achieve their full potential.

Please visit [www.chd.org/throughhereyes](http://www.chd.org/throughhereyes) for a full line-up of workshops and to register. You can also sign up by mail at CHD, 332 Birnie Ave., Springfield, MA. 01107, Attn: Through Her Eyes.

Cost is \$125 before Oct. 2, \$150 thereafter or at the door. Lunch is included in the price. CEU’s are available.

Special rates are available for girls and for groups of 8 or more. Contact Brian Sutherland at [bsutherland@chd.org](mailto:bsutherland@chd.org) or call 413.439.2106 for more details. ■

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# EDUCATION

## SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS



## Springfield School Volunteers Receives Mentoring Match Grant

**SPRINGFIELD** – Springfield School Volunteers (SSV) announced it has been awarded a Mentoring Matching Grant of \$26,110 from Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP), a statewide organization fueling the movement to expand empowering youth-adult relationships in Massachusetts. SSV's School-Based Mentoring Program is one of 32 mentoring programs throughout the Commonwealth to receive a Mentoring Matching Grant.

Funding for the grants stems from Governor Baker's FY16 budget, where it was funded at \$500,000, through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is unique in its use of private-sector support, as grantees are required to match, dollar-for-dollar, the total amount awarded with cash or in-kind resources.

"The funds will be used to support 145 existing mentor matches, which includes ongoing match support, supplies, training, match activities and recognition; as well as to develop new mentor matches, which includes, recruitment, screening, and training," Denise N. Cogman, CEO of SSV, said.

Funded programs are awarded through a competitive RFP process and community review administered by MMP, and receive training, technical support, and mentor recruitment assistance from MMP.

"We are proud to invest in Springfield School Volunteers with a Mentoring Matching Grant," MMP President and CEO Marty Martinez said. "This critical funding will allow their School-Based Mentoring Program to support their matches with quality-based, research-driven practices and resources that ensure youth are given every opportunity to de-



*Springfield School Volunteers staff (left to right) Maria DeAngelis, Betsy Hogan, CEO Denise N. Cogman, Jeanne Wroblewski and Judy Kelly.*

velop into productive, successful adults."

Across Massachusetts, Mentoring Matching Grants will create and support 1,525 high-quality matches – 202 more than last year. It will also support existing matches, leading to improved mentee grades, attendance and attitude towards school, which in turn leads to increased graduation rates, and a better-prepared, more skilled sect of entry-level workers.

### **About Springfield School Volunteers**

*Springfield School Volunteers (SSV) is a non-profit organization that has been matching the resources of the community with the needs of the Springfield Public Schools since 1969. Our focus is to provide academic support to Springfield's public school students in line with the school district's priorities. Each year more than 2,000 individuals volunteer in the Springfield Public Schools.*

### **About Mass Mentoring Partnership**

*Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is fueling the movement to expand empowering youth-adult relationships to meet the needs of communities across Massachusetts. MMP serves more than 250 programs statewide supporting over 33,000 youth in quality relationships. We work with mentoring programs and youth development organizations to assess programmatic needs and organizational capacity to provide customized strategies that strengthen youth, families, and communities. [www.massmentors.org](http://www.massmentors.org)*

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# EDUCATION

## READING TO SUCCEED

### READY! for Kindergarten

By Sally Fuller



Sally Fuller heads the Reading Success by 4th Grade (RS4G) initiative for the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, to build community support and align efforts for all Springfield's children to read proficiently on the 3rd grade MCAS. [www.ready4thgrade.com](http://www.ready4thgrade.com)

When we were developing the early literacy plan for Springfield's Reading Success by 4th Grade community-wide initiative, we researched best practices to engage parents in their children's early literacy skill development.

In a book that truly engaged our commitment and our goal, **The 90% Goal**, we discovered a program developed in Kennewick, Washington that we wanted to bring to Springfield. That community committed to ensuring that all their children should read proficiently by the end of third grade. Under the leadership of Lynn Fielding, a member of the local school board, they set a "modest" goal of 90% and set about making it happen.

One of the first actions in developing their community literacy plan was to bring Springfield's Jim Trelease to Kennewick to share the importance of reading aloud to children. They took Jim's sage advice and their main message became – and still is – **"Read aloud to your children for 20 minutes every day."**

As they worked toward their goal, they realized that Kindergarten is too late to begin literacy skill development. They developed a develop-

mentally-appropriate curriculum for parents to use that begins with a child's birth and use it to model interactions with their children from birth through the first five years. That curriculum/program is called **READY! for Kindergarten**.

Because we so believed in that curriculum and the concepts behinds its development, especially the role of parents as their child's first teacher, we brought the program to Springfield. HomeCityFamilies is the organization that facilitates the program, with training and materials from the Kennewick program.

This program, **READY! for Kindergarten** is happening again this fall in several Springfield locations. It's **FREE** for parents and at each class parents are given a set of developmentally appropriate toys to use in play with their children. Childcare and light refreshments are provided, and it's a wonderful opportunity to help prepare children for success, beginning at birth, and ensure that they are Ready for Kindergarten!

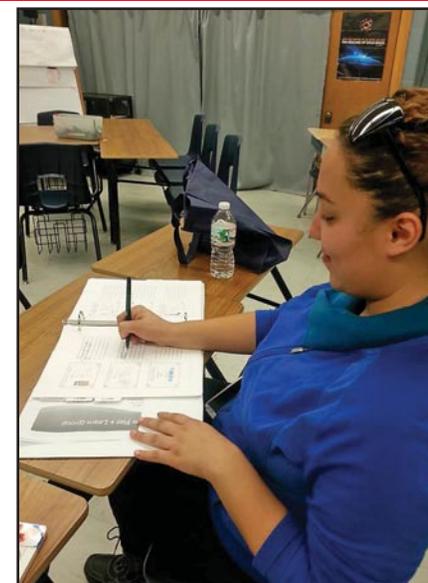
**READY! for Kindergarten** consists of classes that encourage parents to talk, sing, read and play with their child in simple ways that foster essential pre-literacy, pre-math and social-emotional skills.

**READY! for Kindergarten** classes for parents will be taught by trained facilitators from Home City Families beginning on **Saturday, October 17 at St. John's Church**, in a partnership of Xi Xi Omega Chapter



of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Home City Families, St. John's Congregational Church and Reading Success by 4th Grade.

**The first class will be held on Saturday, October 17th from 10 – 12; followed by the winter session (with a different set of toys/materials) on February 27 from 10 – 12; and the third or spring session will be held on Saturday, May 7 from 10 – 12.** Parents participate in the ses-



sions while children participate in supervised child care.

In order to really help prepare their children to be school ready and learn about early learning, parents are encouraged to attend three classes in each of their children's first five years of life. Registration is required.

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# EDUCATION

## PARENTS & COMMUNITY

### Zero Negativity

By Patricia Spradley



Patricia Spradley is Chief Administrator for Parent and Community Engagement, Springfield Public Schools (413) 787-6597

Negativity is defined as unhelpful, unconstructive, or as any transaction that a person experiences as hurtful. The focus I want to talk about is the impact negativity has on our personal being. After all, our own negativity is what we can control. And deciding to intentionally work on eliminating the negativity is a win-win for everyone!

Just to be clear, the zero negativity approach doesn't imply we shouldn't be allowed to express concerns or desires, but it's all about the way it's presented. A hurtful comment out of nowhere is not only unacceptable, but unnecessary. And a negative thought about *yourself* is extremely damaging because "we are what we think about."

**Challenge:** to commit absolutely to refraining from negative talk—put downs, damaging comments, behaviors and thoughts. Not just temporarily, but always. A tall undertaking, but well worth the benefits and rewards!

Some might have to take a vow of silence. For example, in a particularly unhealthy relationship, this might mean that both people have nothing to say to each other for a long period of time. The dynamic between the individuals may have become so toxic that it's violated both members' feelings of trust and safety. If the relationship is valued, it is worth working it through.

But still the most challenging is that of the *self*-negative talk. Our subconscious is like superman! But a mentor of mine has helped me to become much more conscious about catching the negative talk the mo-

ment it leaps from a tall building (my small mind). He says, literally and figuratively say, "STOP IT!"

It's an easy rule to remember, but may be difficult to follow at first. In time, you'll begin to notice the ways you were being unconsciously negative by making jokes at another's expense, speaking negatively about someone to others, or thinking passive-aggressive thoughts. You will also become aware when others are speaking negatively and establish ways to tune them out, bring it to their attention, remove yourself from the environment or take a vow of silence, hoping that they get the message to stop. This awareness can motivate change.

Being intentionally focused on the positive is another effective strategy. It actually acts as a shield toward negativity. Life happens to us all. There will always be situations, circumstances and people we are forced to deal with on a daily basis. It cannot be avoided, nor can it be controlled. That's why focusing on managing *your* zero negativity is the way to go.

Some simple steps to begin the process, include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Wake up each morning *knowing* that you are going to have a great day!
- Smile and speak to everyone you encounter, remembering that it takes more energy to frown.
- Set out to accomplish at least three (3) things daily and assess how you did at the end of the day.
- Create an affirmation (statement) that will help you stay positive, warding off negativity.
- REPEAT the steps above.

I challenge you to give it a try—not a word, not a comment, not a glance in a negative direction: **ZERO NEGATIVITY!** ■

## EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

### October is Head Start Awareness Month

By Nicole Blais



Nicole Blais is Director of Community Engagement HCS Head Start, Inc. blaisn@headstart.org

October is Head Start Awareness Month nationwide and HCS Head Start is making sure the community is well aware of all of the great happenings taking place within our program. Throughout October and the school year, HCS Head Start will be highlighting everything the program has to offer children, families and the community. Nationally, 32 million children nationwide have received a Head Start since 1965 and HCS Head Start has enrolled tens of thousands of children over our 50 year history.

Head Start success stories are all around us; some of the more famous alum includes comedian/actor Chris Rock, NBA super star Shaquille O'Neal and United States Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez of California. The NAACP President Cornell Brooks and Sylvia Burwell, the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, are both Head Start alums.

We have some of our own suc-

cess stories right here at HCS Head Start. Close to 1/3 of the staff employed at HCS Head Start are past or current Head Start parents. Some of our staff are also Head Start graduates. I, myself, am a graduate of the class of 1976. I attended Parkside Early Learning Center in Ludlow and Mrs. Janis Santos, who is now the Executive Director of HCS Head Start, was one of my very first teachers.

A number of past parents keep in touch with HCS Head Start and let us know how their children are doing. Some graduates are successfully completing high school, beginning their college careers and others are successful working professionals right here in the Pioneer Valley. It is such a pleasure to hear how well children are doing once they transition out of Head Start. If you or your child attended HCS Head Start, please reconnect with us; we would love to hear from you.

On October 14, 2015, HCS Head Start will join the Office of Head Start and participate in the national Head Start Block Party that will celebrate Head Start's 50 year history, honor the contributions of local partners, staff, and families and raise awareness of Head Start in every community. Visit our website at [www.hcsheadstart.org](http://www.hcsheadstart.org) or like us on Facebook to learn more about the work of HCS Head Start. ■



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LaTricia Winters and Daryl Winters

# EDUCATION

## EDUCATION & HOPE



Gianna Allentuck is an Adjustment Counselor at Elias Brookings School, Volunteer, Wife and Mother. For questions or comments on uniting in hope, call (703) 930-0243

## The Other Side of the Table...

By Gianna Allentuck

In the past week or so, I have viewed three different videos depicting young men and women, and adults in varied settings. I will make no mention of the race, ethnicity, appearance, or lifestyle of any subjects in these videos. My focus is on one life – seemingly void and empty of love or guidance; another life – seemingly filled with encouragement and support; and another life seemingly overflowed with the gifts of family, friends, mentors, and colleagues. The first life – dry and dehydrated – sipping from an empty cup. The latter two lives – nourished and fortified – swilling from a cup that runneth over...

The first video was posted on Facebook and was a graphic rendering of a vicious beating that a male high school student was delivering upon a female high school student while youth and adult witnesses stood by and watched without offering support – or worse – cheered and videotaped for social media stardom.

As a Counselor in a school filled with beautiful hope-filled children and dedicated, loving educators, I sometimes watch these videos to stay in tune with the harsher realities of the world beyond my home and school so that I don't become complacent in my service or advocacy for those in my

care. And though I knew the instant the video started that the footage would be disturbing, I watched until the end and felt much like the victim – beaten and hopeless. These words – a foreign language to my heart.

The next video I watched was one I had taken during the *City of Springfield Mayor's Citywide Violence Prevention Task Force Community Leadership Luncheon* at the *Springfield Boys and Girls Club*. This video was of a young man – a role model – a shining star – speaking to his future that he has – by his choices – determined to dedicate to helping others. In this video, youth and adults also are standing around clapping and cheering – but this time in joyful harmony in celebrating and recognizing the inspiration birthed from this young man's accomplishments. Appreciating the beauty in his spirit to continue forward in a positive light.

The last video captured Springfield native Michael D. Smith, Director of the *My Brother's Keeper* initiative and Special Assistant to President Obama, as he offered the keynote speech during Springfield Public School's 2015 convocation broadcast to the two thousand-plus educators serving in Springfield. Many of Mr. Smith's words were inspirational and received with great applause, but perhaps his most poignant story is that of his experience visiting a correctional facility for the first time with National and local leaders.

Mr. Smith described in detail his entry into the facility and his seat at a long conference table of which one side was filled with the leaders and professionals and of which the other side was filled with inmates from the facility. Mr. Smith recounted how he was mesmerized by the fact that the men sit-

ting across from him – whose lives were constricted and confined by the walls around them and the choices they had made – looked so much like him – could have been him – had it not been for the attention and support of one person. One Educator. Who made the difference.

Mr. Smith's comments were ripe with inspiration in the form of pride, faith, and hope. With hard work and compassion. Commitment. But the overall message I took away is that in addition to those blessings of family and friends that started him on his journey to success in life and service, Mr. Smith counts the opened heart and the outstretched hands of an Educator as the compass that continues to lead him today.

As Educators – in any form – our



Michael D. Smith

purpose is to not only fill the minds of students with knowledge, but more importantly, to fill their lives and hearts with love; so that when their time in the spotlight arrives they are not beating others down, but instead lifting others up. Our purpose – through our actions – is to change even one life so that there is one less person sitting on the other side of the table... ■

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# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## DEVELOPSPRINGFIELD



Jay Minkarah, is President & CEO of DevelopSpringfield, a nonprofit redevelopment corporation located in Springfield, Massachusetts. He has worked in planning and economic development in New England for more than twenty-five years. [jminkarah@developspringfield.com](mailto:jminkarah@developspringfield.com)



The former River Inn motel at the corner of State and Thompson Streets had long been viewed as one of the more troubled properties in the Mason Square area. The City was pursuing legal action against the building's owners due to code violations, the property was a magnet for crime and was delinquent on taxes and sewer fees. The property was also identified as a priority redevelopment site in the 2008 State Street Redevelopment program. Seeing an opportunity to address these issues, DevelopSpringfield purchased the property at a foreclosure auction in early 2013 and paid off the back taxes and fees. With the assistance of a brownfields grant from MassDevelopment, we were able to remediate the asbestos and demolish the building. In the fall of 2013, DevelopSpringfield purchased two adjacent lots on Thompson Street from the City to make the site large enough – approximately 1.5 acres – to attract developer interest. Our goal in pursuing the project is to identify a viable commercial use that would create jobs, increase tax revenues for the City and help stimulate further reinvestment within the State Street Corridor. Redevelopment of the property, however, has been challenging due to weak market conditions, the cost of new construction, and the need for a zone change to allow the entire site to be used for commercial purposes.

After being on the market for almost a year, DevelopSpringfield received an offer from McDonalds USA, LLC, who was interested in relocating the existing McDonalds in Midtown Plaza to a new larger restaurant with

## Redeveloping the Former River Inn

By Jay Minkarah



*River Inn - 700 State Street, Springfield, MA*



*Demolition of River Inn*

greater visibility and access to a lighted intersection. Though the initial reception from the community was positive, significant opposition to the proposed McDonalds surfaced during the due diligence process and, as a result, the plan did not move forward. Since that time, we have heard a range of differing views on development options for the site. To assist DevelopSpringfield in evaluating alternative uses for the site, we decided to launch an on-line survey to gain additional input from people who live, attend school, visit or work in the Mason Square area and the State Street corridor.

The survey was launched on July 22 of this year, distributed through DevelopSpringfield's newsletter distribution list and posted on Facebook, Twitter and on the DevelopSpringfield website. In addition, links were forwarded to the seven neighborhood councils in the State Street Corridor. A number of groups also distributed the survey to their networks. A total of 471 responses were received by the time the survey concluded on August 7.

Overall, 18% of survey respondents lived in Mason Square, 41% worked on or near State Street and 26% attended school in the area. Some respondents fell in more than one category. 68% reported that they drove

through Mason Square daily or frequently. Approximately 10% travelled by bus either daily or frequently and just under 14% indicated that they were daily or frequent walkers. Again, respondents could fall into one or more categories.

Respondents were asked how frequently they would patronize various potential businesses. Because our goal is to see the property redeveloped for a commercial use, the parcel is relatively small and the cost of new construction is high, the options listed were limited to small or mid-sized chain or franchise establishments. The site is not large enough for a "big box" store like a Home Depot or a supermarket and it is challenging for most smaller, independent businesses to finance development of a new building.

The businesses people indicated they would patronize most frequently included Panera Bread (60%), Dunkin Donuts (60%), Chipotle (57%) and Friendly's (56%). A majority of respondents indicated that they would rarely or never patronize most of the fast-food options listed. 73% of respondents indicated that they would rarely or never patronize a McDonalds or a Pizza Hut while 71% would rarely or never patronize a Taco Bell and 68% would rarely or never patronize a KFC.

The survey also asked respondents to indicate their level of support for each of the businesses listed. The uses with the greatest support included Panera Bread (66%), Dunkin Donuts (54%) and Chipotle Mexican Grille (53%). The uses that were the most opposed were McDonald's (46%), Pizza Hut (38%), and Taco Bell (37%). Participants were also given the opportunity to share their own ideas, however, no specific use for the site stood out.

DevelopSpringfield is grateful to all those who took the time to complete the survey. The property is still available for sale, and the input we received will help us as we consider future opportunities for development of the site. To view the complete results, visit our website at [www.developspringfield.com](http://www.developspringfield.com). ■

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# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## BUSINESS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### It's Boomer Time

By Larry Martin



Larry Martin, Editor, is Director of Employment Services and Engagement at Regional Employment Board of Hampden County Inc. ("REB")  
lmartin@rebhc.org  
www.rebhc.org

*You know you've reached middle age when a doctor, not a policeman, tells you to slow down, all you exercise are your prerogatives and it takes you longer to rest than to get tired. ~Author Unknown.*

I knew my time up at bat was coming when I received a letter in the mail with an ominous red membership card with my name on it. There must be some mistake I told my wife; I am too young to be receiving AARP information; there must be a disturbance in the force or something! She just smiled, saying "No, sweetheart, once you are on the list,

there's no going back." There is no reason I should not have expected that retirement was not this long-term prospect but a reality in plain sight. I had been receiving those pesky green cards from social security since I turned 40 that let you know how much money you can expect to collect when I retire. Denial is a powerful adversary.

According to data compiled by the Social Security Administration:

- A man reaching age 65 today can expect to live, on average, until age 84.3.
- A woman turning age 65 today can expect to live, on average, until age 86.6.

And those are just averages. About one out of every four 65-year-olds today will live past age 90, and one out of 10 will live past age 95.<sup>1</sup> The average retirement age for the

baby boomer generation, which consists of people born between 1946 and 1964, is 65-67 years of age. Many of us will have the opportunity to decide when we retire based on our financial status and present situation. Others, unfortunately, may have to retire earlier than expected due to health reasons. We may think we are going to work to full retirement age, but our bodies will have the final say in that matter. Others may have to extend their retirement age due to financial constraints. The economic recession of 2008 was a cold bucket of ice water that was tossed on us, demonstrating the reality that 401K plans were not as secure as we thought and that the greed of a few could impact the retirement of thousands of hard working people.

Regarding the type of occupation you are presently working in when you are 40 years old, do you see yourself doing the same type of work

when you are 50? 60? I have met many individuals that were truck drivers, construction workers or worked in service industries that now have bad backs, knees and a host of other ailments and were forced to leave their jobs. They are too young to retire, but are not necessarily in the best shape, mentally and physically, to start new careers. Planning for retirement is more than financial planning, you also need to consider the last 10-15 years of your career plan to ensure that you have a viable income that supports your financial objectives.

I will leave you with this: as many of our financial experts who provide articles for the *AA Point of View* will tell you, if you are 45 or older, max out your employer-matched 401K! You will be thankful later.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html>



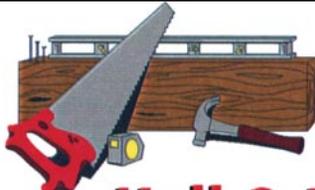
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# HEALTH

## HEALTH MATTERS

### Diagnosed with Breast Cancer at 28: Adneris' story

By Crystal Senter-Brown, Senior Market Manager for Community Engagement, American Cancer Society



Crystal Senter-Brown

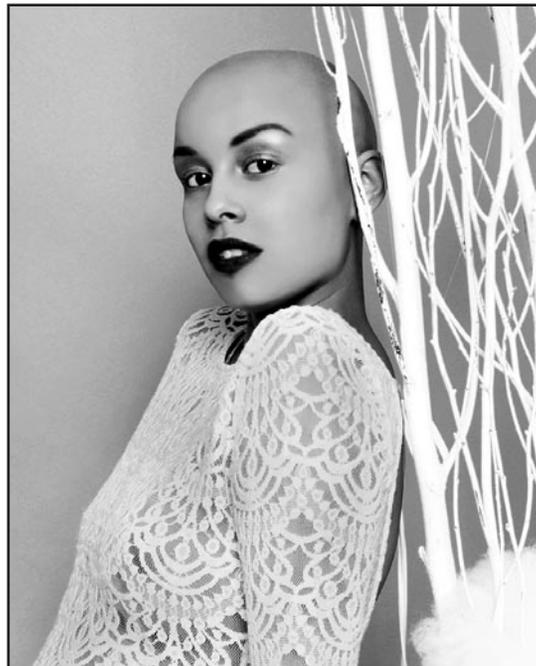


**Doris Harris, Editor**  
Prevention Specialist  
Caring Health  
Center, Inc.  
Doris can be  
contacted at  
dorharris77@hotmail.com

When 28-year-old Adneris discovered a lump in her breast, she didn't worry about it at first. "It can't happen to me, I'm too young. It's going to go away. Besides, I'm too young!" Adneris said.

But one month later, a biopsy was done and Adneris was diagnosed with invasive ductal carcinoma (invasive breast cancer). "I cried and told myself it was going to be okay, that it is okay. I couldn't believe what was happening to me." The following week Adneris was told that her cancer was Stage 3 due to the size of the tumor (the tumor measured 5 cm). Adneris began chemotherapy almost immediately.

But Adneris did not have to face her cancer alone. "It was difficult to



Adneris

tell my loved ones about my cancer, but I needed them. I couldn't imagine not having a support system during that difficult time," Adneris said. She also discovered services offered by the American Cancer Society, which she describes as "a second family."

The American Cancer Society offers services such as the Look Good...Feel Better program, which teaches cancer patients make-up and skin care tips to combat treatment-related side effects. The American Cancer Society also offers free rides to cancer treatment and free lodging when a patient is being treated away from home. This year, more than 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women and 60,290 new cases of carcinoma in situ (CIS) will be diagnosed (CIS is non-invasive and is the earliest form of breast cancer).

When breast cancer is found early, it can be easier to treat. How can you reduce your risk of a late-stage breast cancer diagnosis?

- **Report any breast changes to your doctor right away, no matter your age**

- **Get a mammogram and breast exam every year beginning at age 40**
- **Maintain a healthy weight throughout life**
- **Exercise at least 150 minutes each week, and**
- **Limit alcohol intake to less than 1 drink each day for women (2 drinks for men).**

Because of early detection and life-saving treatment, Adneris was declared cancer-free on July 2, 2015!

Adneris invites everyone to join her at the **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 5K Walk, taking place on Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. at Stanley Park in Westfield, MA.** Groups are invited to form a team online at <http://www.makingstrideswalk.org/pioneervalley.ma>. Call Angel at 413-493-2100 or email [angel.davis@cancer.org](mailto:angel.davis@cancer.org) for more information. ■



**Dr. Anika Thrower,**  
MPH, CLC  
WIC Program Manager at  
Cornell Scott Hill Health  
Center Adjunct Facility at  
Springfield College

*Admire the storms...prioritize  
your health and enjoy your  
wealth*

The warmer weather is gone and fall is upon us. It's the time of year when there are remnants of summer, but overall it's time to wrap our minds around ways to stay healthy with the changing season. With the leaves changing and brisk mornings, there is more sneezing and many more sick days. Symptoms of a cold can include an itchy and/or sore throat, congestion, and loss of appetite and can make a person feel miserable.

The colder months are not the

## Winterizing Our Health

By Anika C. Thrower, PhD

only time a person can fall ill. One can catch a cold any time of the year. However, during the winter months the probability is higher because in the colder months, people gravitate to being in close quarters to avoid the elements. This means that a high concentration of bacteria is likely present in most public places. This article embraces preventive holistic health during the fall and winter months.

### Vitamin C

No supplement is needed to get vitamin C in a healthy diet. This cold-fighting nutrient is in many common foods we consume daily. Besides cit-

rus fruits like oranges and grapefruit, consider cooked broccoli, peppers, cantaloupes and sweet potatoes. Studies show vitamin C is most effective when taken before the onset of a cold. We should consult with our physician about proper doses. Commonly, men need approximately 90 milligrams of vitamin C daily, while women require about 75 milligrams.

A note about cooking vitamin C rich foods: Try to cook for the least

amount of time. Cooking foods in large amounts of water and for long lengths of time tends to cook the nutrients out. The best cooking methods include microwaving and steaming while using little water. In this way we not only conserve nutrient value, but

*continues to page 13*

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# HEALTH

## HEALTH MATTERS

Baystate  Health

## The Time to Get Your Flu Shot is - NOW

**SPRINGFIELD** – If you think that you are protected from the flu this year because you were vaccinated last year or in the past, think again. Not only does each year's vaccine differ in the flu strains targeted, but the immunity provided by the vaccine wanes over time.

According to Dr. Sarah Haessler from the Infectious Disease Division at Baystate Medical Center, a new study just released reports that annual flu shots offer up to six months of protection. The findings were based on research of more than 1,700 Americans of all ages who got flu shots and were followed for four flu seasons.

Similar to past years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending that everyone six months of age and older be vaccinated unless their doctor recommends against it because of certain pre-existing conditions.

Vaccination is particularly important for those at high risk for serious flu complications, including young children, the elderly, those with heart disease, and pregnant women. **The most important complication that can affect both high-risk adults and children is pneumonia. The flu can**

**also aggravate and worsen chronic conditions such as heart disease and asthma.**

The time to get your flu shot is right now, noted Dr. Haessler.

"There have already been some documented cases of flu in the area. So, getting your shot early is the best strategy, since it takes around two weeks after vaccination for your body to make antibodies against the influenza virus," said Dr. Haessler, who noted that flu season usually runs from October to May and normally peaks in January or February.

**According to Dr. Michael Klatte of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Division at Baystate Children's Hospital, getting a flu shot for your children is the single most important thing you can do to protect them and others in your family, who may be exposed to the influenza virus if your child becomes infected at school or elsewhere.**

Children between 6 months and 8 years of age may need two doses of flu vaccine – given at least four weeks apart – to be fully protected from flu.

"Because these doses should be given at least four weeks apart, it's a good idea to begin the vaccination process right now, because we never really know if, and when, the flu season might peak early," said Klatte.

Of special note for people 65 years and older, a new high dose vaccine contains four times the amount of antigen as a regular flu shot, and is associated with a stronger immune response and may translate into greater protection against the flu.

According to the CDC, three kinds of flu viruses commonly circulate among people today: influenza A (H1N1) viruses, influenza A



(H3N2) viruses, and influenza B viruses. All of the 2015-2016 influenza vaccines are made to protect against these three viruses.

It's been widely publicized over the years that those who are allergic to eggs should not get the flu vaccine. There are now flu vaccines that do not contain egg proteins, such as Flublok. There are also other flu vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that do not contain egg proteins, and are approved for those 18 years of age and older. Check with your doctor about which vaccine is best for you.

Also, if you are afraid of needles, there is a nasal spray vaccine called FluMist. However, it cannot be used by children younger than 2 years of age and adults over age 49, as well as anyone with asthma, pregnant women, and those with compromised immune systems. For those who have previously experienced arm pain after intramuscular injection of flu vaccine, there is a jet injector with a very short needle that injects vaccine just under the skin. It can be used for individuals who are 18-64 years old.

For more information on Baystate Medical Center, visit [baystatehealth.org/bmc](http://baystatehealth.org/bmc) or for more information about Baystate Children's Hospital, visit [baystatehealth.org/bch](http://baystatehealth.org/bch). ■

## Winterizing Our Health

*continued from page 12*  
cooking sparingly helps to get more bang for your buck.

### An ounce of prevention

As mentioned earlier, this is the time of year when people are more prone to be in closer quarters. Therefore it's important to be more conscious of how germs and bacteria spread. Washing hands with warm soapy water is one way to minimize the spread of germs and one of the simplest ways to stay healthy. Using a mere 20 seconds to sing the birthday song twice is commonly said to be an appropriate length of time to wash hands. Children should be shown good hygiene at a very young age so as to build a lifelong habit.

Another note about prevention:

It's important to think about our health for the long run. Cold weather workers and sports enthusiasts should be sure to dress accordingly and in layers. Gloves, hats, scarves and long underwear are necessary to protect joints against the onset of arthritis.

#### Dear Robust Reader,

Let us think out of the box regarding winterizing our health. At this time of year, what does health mean to you? As we move forward, let preventive, holistic health aid you with your wellness goals.

Next month we will explore another topic. Please forward your thoughts, comments and ideas, as they are important to me, to: [anika.thrower\\_phd@yahoo.com](mailto:anika.thrower_phd@yahoo.com), attention: Anika. ■

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## BLACK LEADERSHIP POWERLESS BY CHOICE

*continued from page 1*

I do think if they want to carry the title of “leader,” they should be more assertive about protecting Black rights and opportunities. They could at least say simple stuff such as “integrate!” and “share!” in a manner that gives us confidence they are aware of our needs.

The same applies to all the Black folks who are sitting on city boards. Give me the rambunctious George Bruce any day over passive Black folks who sit on these boards and operate just above the level of a potted plant when it comes to issues affecting Black folks. Like our Black city councilors, they seem to be too busy “following” agendas and not involved enough in “setting” agendas, which is why we don’t feel their impact much. We need to hear some good, old fashion noise.

And I haven’t even touched on the petty political mayoral aspirants who made us look like idiots. I give Johnnie McKnight credit for his steady stream of lofty literature but not much more. My question for him is, “What experts was he not listening too?” All of them, it seems. To win an election you have to do a lot more than spout homilies and play clever. And the other two Black candidates, who mugged him and cost him even a hopelessly distant second place finish and a place in the final election, offered nothing to the campaign for mayor.

Some say the latter two were shills for Domenic Sarno, deliberately inserted into the race to scuttle McKnight. But that’s a patently overstated theory. Sarno garnered close to ten times the vote of his nearest competitor, who happens to be White. And if the two other Black candidates for mayor had somehow passed their votes to McKnight, Sarno would still have had ten times the votes of his nearest competitor, although that competitor would have been Black. Regardless, Sarno had no need to play political tricks. The sad fact is it prob-

ably never occurred to the three Black candidates that they might have achieved better results by combining their efforts around one.

No wonder the single-digit Black community voter turnout was among the lowest in the city (well below the anemic seven percent citywide average and even much further below the double digit votes in the strongest White precincts). Black folks were offered a choice between a White mayor who is a nice guy (though economic inclusion is clearly not one of his strengths) and three Black rookies who couldn’t garner much more than a half a thousand votes combined.

And when you combine the sorry performance of Black mayoral candidates with the anemic performance of timid Black power-holders, it is easy to arrive at the counter-intuitive conclusion that Black voters are not apathetic. They are likely making a pretty damned intelligent decision to not waste their time voting until somebody starts meeting their specific needs and exciting them a little bit with solid proposals.

Black incumbents and others in power, who seem to so covet their jobs but say so little, could be in for a harsh surprise as their future political aspirations are spoiled by inexorable demographic shifts. They were voted in to upset the status quo, not to maintain it, and Black voters’ intelligent, though wrong, refusal to vote in significant numbers will only speed up their demise.

As I see it, too many Black folks in Springfield strive to be “the” Black leader in an environment that requires multi-dimensional levels of leadership and an uncommon level of openness and cooperation. Unfortunately, openness and cooperation run against the grain of the single Black leader concept, which has always been used to divide us and promote a few at the expense of the many. And, of course, “the few” actively promote the resulting division because it serves their in-

*continues to page 24*

# OnBoard



Connecting our diverse community with local businesses and non-profit organizations

## You're invited to a free event...

- To meet Pioneer Valley non-profit and area government agencies seeking diverse candidates for their boards of directors and committees.
- To match your skills and interests with the challenges and rewards of voluntary service to the community.
- To mark your calendar for this unique event where our “speed-dating format” combines the best of a job fair for volunteers with a premier networking opportunity.

**Date:** Thursday, October 8, 2015

**Time:** 5:00pm-7:00pm

**Place:** Naismith Memorial Basketball  
Hall of Fame Center Court

*Appetizers served and cash bar available*

## Community Sponsors

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- Mason Wright
- Colony Care at Home
- Shatz, Schwartz and Fentin, P.C.
- SHINE Program, Springfield Dept. of Elder Affairs
- Sisters of Providence Health Systems
- Springfield Regional Chamber
- United Way of Pioneer Valley

To register, visit [diversityonboard.org](http://diversityonboard.org)

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# HEALTH

## CBC Health Braintrust Releases 2015 Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America

*Congressional analysis of the state of Black health in the U.S. offers comprehensive legislative and policy solutions to improve health outcomes in communities of color*

WASHINGTON – The Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust today (9/18/15) released *The 2015 Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America*, an official Congressional analysis of the state of African American health in the U.S. that offers a blueprint for reversing negative health trends in communities of color.

The Kelly Report brings together Members of Congress, medical professionals and public health thought leaders to examine the root causes and impact of health disparities in America and provide a comprehensive set of legislative and

policy recommendations to address them. Compiled by CBC Health Braintrust Chair Dr. Robin Kelly, the report is a call-to-action for Congress to make improving health outcomes in diverse communities a top priority. The contributors to the report include Congressional Black Caucus Chair G.K. Butterfield, National Urban League President & CEO Marc H. Morial, former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, and HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health Dr. J. Nadine Gracia.

*continues to page 36*

## Happy 50<sup>th</sup> !

By Janet Rodriguez Denney, Director Springfield  
Department of Elder Affairs



Janet Denney

W e as a country are celebrating the 50 years of Medicare and may we have 50 more!

Medicare is the only commonality that all Americans have in common! When a person turns 65, you are eligible to receive Medicare.

Here in Springfield there are over 13,000 individuals 65 years and older. There are 24,000 individuals 60 years and older. Out of a population of 156,000, our seniors are an important thread in the fabric of our community.

Medicare and Social Security are our safety nets in the City of Homes. The average annual income for households 65 and above is \$13,000. Yes, that is correct! I said \$13,000. The Social Security monthly payment is \$819.

Can you imagine what it would be like if we did not have Social Security and Medicare? Our seniors would be in dire straits. Medicare and Social Security allow seniors to live in dignity.

When Medicare was being enacted, it came at the same time as the Civil Rights bill was being signed and enacted.

The Medicare bill was strengthened by the Civil Rights bill to ensure that all individuals received health care. I for one am looking forward to the next 50 years and how the Accountable Care Act will further strengthen our Medicare benefits and ensure quality care for all, in particular our most important thread in our community—our Elders! ■

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Every dollar counts.

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benefiting local MA & CT organizations dedicated to Breast Cancer research & treatment

*Seniors!*

**Affordable Assisted Living and Memory Care**  
Medicaid and MassHealth based programs are available for those who qualify!

*Mason Wright*

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# COMMUNITY

## LATIN@ GROOVE



*Magdalena Gómez is the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Springfield's first and only Latin@theater, Teatro V!da. Ms. Gómez has been a teaching artist for over 35 years.*

## Education that Endures

*By Magdalena Gómez*

**H**is holiness the Dalai Lama has said, “My religion is kindness.” When I met him in 1993 at the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago, he greeted our mutual friend, the late Dr. Wayne Teasdale, with “Wayne, you lost weight!” They then held hands for the rest of the conversation and giggled away.

I was reminded of this moment when I walked into the Springfield Conservatory of the Arts (SCotA) and saw the school’s motto on the walls: “Be kind. Work Hard. Make Art.” Putting kindness at the top of priorities is in itself a lost art—one from which our students and society at large would greatly benefit. Mutual trust and feeling safe in a welcoming community brings out the best in students and creates learners and thinkers who feel safe to experiment, take creative risks, and explore knowing that falling down is just the opportunity to stand up.

I visited SCotA (a magnet school) where I will be this year’s Theater Artist in Residence to facilitate a professional development workshop. It was a hot and muggy day, construction was going on, boxes were piled high, furniture in need of moving, floors being revamped, supplies being carted everywhere by everyone, including Principal David Brewster who had already worked up a sweat by the time I arrived. The most inspiring thing of all: everyone looked happy and excited to be there. Not a single beleaguered look in the building; I knew I was in for a really good time. This is clearly not a school with a “boss,” or personality driven leadership, but a school of partners and collaborators as excited to learn as they are to



*Photo of some members of SCotA community.*

teach; fertile soil for learning that endures for a lifetime. As Brewster affirms: “Our mission is to help students learn to use their creativity as problem-solving skills for life. Confidence in expressing one’s ideas is an invaluable tool in whatever college or career path an individual pursues.” A 2008 article in the Harvard Business Review points to the growing trend of MFA hires over MBA’s: <https://hbr.org/2008/04/the-mfa-is-the-new-mba>.

When we gathered for the workshop I was graciously introduced by Brewster, who also fully participated throughout the entire workshop, except for the last few minutes when he was called away. The entire administrative team was there: Dr. Patty Bode and Betsy Fleche, the Magnet Resource Teachers; Gladys Franco, Assistant Principal; and Instructional Leadership Specialist, Sarah Alwon. Every person was fully present and participatory. My workshops are very interactive and physical, and everyone embraced the work with full commitment, taking creative risks and debriefing each activity with multiple ideas on how they would apply these creative techniques

across the curriculum as well as for community building and classroom management.

SCotA has just entered their second year, and this school community already feels like a team of old friends working hard together with a common goal of student success. I’ve been facilitating PD’s since the early 90s and finding a group of educators bonded at this level in such a short amount of time is a rarity. Brewster’s positive, can-do attitude is contagious—down to earth, without pretense, and unafraid of being vulnerable—the kind of understated leadership that supports the best to rise in others. He clearly trusts and respects his entire team, and the feelings are clearly mutual to this observer. For Brewster, seeing opportunity over deficit is key. The second year began with the school being divided into two separate campuses after being together the first year. When asked if this was a challenge, Brewster responded: “It’s a great opportunity. Our middle school students have lots of outdoor space, and our high school students have the use of an auditorium with a stage, which will benefit everyone.” He is grateful

for community support: “In this start up phase we have the opportunity to invite into our community terrific artists in residence. Many established arts and education organizations have reached out to us and supported us as we begin the building of our school.”

In one room there were a variety of drums lined up and ready. I knew immediately that Jo Sallins would be coming soon. Sallins has been an enduring and welcome presence in the Springfield Public Schools, bringing his high energy, no nonsense style to music education. As one who has seen his students perform, I can assure you that Sallins builds confidence and presence in his students.

In the 1990s, I had the honor and privilege to work as a Theater Artist in Residence for several years at the Holyoke Magnet Middle School for the Arts (HMMSA). The students went from HMMSA into the high schools with high expectations and a love for learning. Many of those students remain in touch with myself and many of the other artists and teachers, and it is one success story after another. Although the school was inexplicably disbanded, the legacy of the school remains, and the countless students who have flourished, many with children of their own, attribute their personal and career success to their years at HMMSA, where the arts were at the heart of learning and community.

Springfield now has a great opportunity to build an arts integration model of education that endures. As other schools, like the Duggan Academy Magnet School for Social Justice, invite artists into their schools, (and whose successes I documented here earlier this year), I envision a brighter future for our students and our city, as new leaders rise with vision and imagination.

Be kind. Work hard. Make art.

# COMMUNITY

## LEADERSHIP PIONEER VALLEY



**Lora Wondolowski,**  
Director of Leadership  
Pioneer Valley, she is  
passionate about  
strengthening the  
Pioneer Valley.  
Contact her at  
413-737-3876 or  
[www.leadershippv.org](http://www.leadershippv.org)

Earlier this summer, I attended the Association of Leadership Programs' national conference in Huntsville, Alabama. I came back reenergized and brimming with new ideas, inspiration and information.

One of the fascinating keynotes was on "Disruptive Demographics" and what trends are emerging that are affecting our communities. As a demographer, Dr. Johnson from the University of North Carolina was careful to point out to us that talking about immigration is not about politics but data. Like it or not, the United States is in the cross-hairs of several major trends that we are also seeing impact our region:

- The South Rises – Again
- The Browning of America
- The Silver Tsunami is About to Hit

### The South Rises – Again

The largest gains in population in the 2010 census were in the South, while the Northeast was among the areas with net decreases in population. This is a continuing trend that is affecting our region that has implications for political representation, funding and workforce. Each year

tens of thousands of college students move to the area, only to go elsewhere upon graduation. This has workforce implications amounting to a brain drain and many unfilled, skilled positions. We are also losing populations from other age ranges. Population losses also have political implications, as we lost a Congressional seat recently.

### The Browning of America

The Pioneer Valley saw a 38.7% increase in Latino/Hispanic residents from 2000 to 2010 which is in line with national trends. Due to immigration trends and lower average age of Latino populations in the U.S., the trend is expected to continue in the U.S. and our region. Cities in the Northeast need to look at immigrants as a source of future population gains and workers, instead of a cause for alarm. The Latino population's average age is 27 as compared to 41 for Caucasians and 31.3 for African-Americans. This points to future growth coming from non-white households as the Caucasian population ages and their fertility rates decrease. By 2050, it is estimated that the Latino population in the U.S. will double its current percentage. Holyoke already has a majority minority population and Springfield is close. In the coming century, other

## Disruptive Demographics

By Lora Wondolowski

areas in the region will look more like these cities.

### Silver Tsunami

The Silver Tsunami, which refers to the aging of the large baby boom generation, will have huge implications including leadership, health care and structuring our society. There were 79,000 centenarians in the U.S. in 2010 and it is estimated that there will be 601,000 in 2050. Where will they live? What will their health care needs be? Japan has had a profound aging of its society and now sells more adult diapers than baby diapers! Retirement

ments will also leave large gaps in leadership and opportunities for younger generations of workers.

These shifts will have profound impacts on our communities. We have opportunities now to plan for these trends whether it is succession planning, cultural competency training or looking at future health care spending. Fostering inclusive workplaces, markets and communities is a necessity and not just a nice thing to do. LPV looks forward to leading conversations within our program and the wider community that engage our leaders in these issues. ■

## Springfield Citizens

### Police Academy To Begin!

The 40th class of the Springfield Citizen's Police Academy will begin on **Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.** This free, 10 week, one-night-per-week class is for residents of Springfield, 18 and older, interested in policing in Springfield and Community Partnerships. The class is held from **6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** at the East Springfield Neighborhood Building located at **1437 Carew Street** behind Pottenger School. To sign up and for additional information, please call Kathleen Brown at the Police Department at 787-6359 or e-mail [Kbrown@springfieldpolice.net](mailto:Kbrown@springfieldpolice.net) with your name, address, zip, and phone.

The United Way Women's Leadership Council (WLC)  
Invites You to Join Us for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual

**TASTE OF AUTUMN**  
Wine & Beer Tasting  
& Silent Auction

Wednesday, October 7, 2015  
5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
TD Bank Center, 1441 Main Street, Springfield MA  
\$38 in advance / \$40 at door  
**To Register: Click on the link below or call (413) 693-0201**

Join us for a fabulous night of mixing and mingling, sampling beer and wine from local distributors, enjoying sweets and savories, and bidding on an incredible selection of auction items!

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# Around Town & . . .



*Hair stylist Lucille Kennedy, owner of Solid Gold Beauty Palace, was herself honored at “Women Who Are Legends” for her many years as a master hair stylist. Mrs. Kennedy is surrounded by hair stylists and program participants during the event.*



*The city of Springfield held a Unity Luncheon recently at the Springfield Boys and Girl’s Club sponsored by the Violence Prevention Task Force in conjunction with other organizations.*



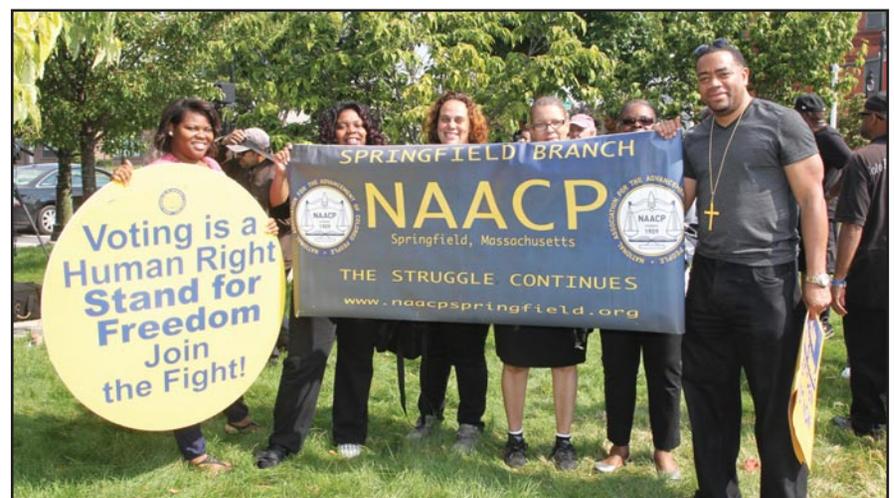
*Musician, composer and teacher Joe Sallins participated with student drummers at the Springfield Public Schools’ Back to School event which took place at Blunt Park.*



*The Springfield Public Forum hosted U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor at an event at the MassMutual Center which drew a crowd estimated at over 4,000 where she answered questions about her life from her memoir “My Beloved Country” and about the Supreme Court.*



*Celebrating at the annual Travis Best Foundation gala are from L to R: Kia Custard, former WNBA player Kara Wolters, Travis Best and Mary Custard.*



*Bishop Talbert Swan II, president of the Springfield Branch of the NAACP, recently held a Freedom Walk with the “Justice or Else” and other organizations, walking from Mason Square to City Hall and ending with a rally on City Hall steps.*

# Springfield November 3rd Final Election Candidates

*Dear Voter,*

On September 8th, *POV's* publisher sent a letter to all of the candidates running in the final election on November 3rd soliciting advertising for this October issue. The last paragraph of the letter invited all of the candidates to submit a photo and a paragraph about themselves whether they advertised or not in order that you, the voter, might learn something about them. The paragraph read as follows:

**“Whether you advertise with us or not, please submit electronically your photograph and a paragraph about yourself of no more than 150 words, stating your age and what you want the voters to know about you.”**

The responses of the candidates who decided to take advantage of this offer are included in this election pull-out, along with the ads of the candidates who decided to advertise with us. The names of all of the candidates running for office are listed on the last page of the pull-out.

## *Promise Kept...*

“Politicians make a lot of promises when they are campaigning. I made one: to prioritize attracting and retaining families invested in our City. I kept my promise.”



*Re-Elect Attorney Justin Hurst to the Springfield City Council*

**Please Remember to Vote on  
Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>**



# Springfield November 3rd



## ***Justin Hurst (Incumbent) is an At-Large candidate for City Council***

Elected to the City Council in 2013, I currently serve as chair of the Young Professionals and the Special Permit Review Committees and I am a member of the Audit and Public Safety Committees. During my first term on the City Council, I have made it a priority to attract and retain families invested in our city by focusing on issues that will make Springfield a safer and more attractive place for our residents. Some of the issues I have tackled include: passing the pawn shop ordinance, securing an additional \$100K for Parks Dept. maintenance, creating a Facebook page for the City Council, and establishing a "Restaurant Week" in downtown Springfield. Investing in our youth is my current focus and I am working to identify funds to keep more school gyms open after school hours for youth activities. My entire family is invested in Springfield. I am happily married to School Committee member Denise M. Hurst and am the proud father of Justin J. Hurst, Jr.



## ***Bud L. Williams (Incumbent) is an At-Large candidate for City Council***

I want to continue to serve as a member of the City Council to ensure the continued progress and gains that have been made in our city, especially during the past eight years, are sustained. During my tenure, I have worked closely with the Massachusetts School Building Association, which has infused over \$300,000,000 into school repairs and new construction. The city has matched this with over \$30,000,000 in energy upgrades and improvements to both schools and municipal buildings. The city has developed a strategy in economic development that has brought a commitment of over \$800,000 to our South End. The old Westinghouse property will once again be a hub for workforce manufacturing jobs. The city will continue to bring in new business with the infrastructure improvements being made and the job training taking place at Putnam High School. With over \$5,000,000 invested in the Boston Road improvement project, we are ready to accept expansion at Eastfield Mall. Downtown Springfield will be reenergized with new shops and restaurants by 2018.



## ***Jesse Lederman is an At-Large candidate for City Council***

I am a lifelong Springfield resident. A graduate of the Springfield Public Schools, I went on to attend The George Washington University to study Social Work and Political Science. Currently, I am completing my degree at The University of Massachusetts. I am a former elected member of the McKnight Neighborhood Council, where I was among the leaders of a coalition which worked to stop the construction of a biomass waste incinerator in Springfield. I serve on the Board of Directors for the Springfield Preservation Trust and the Springfield Armory Alliance. I also serve on the Governing Board of The Springfield Renaissance School, as well as the Springfield Democratic Committee. I am running for City Council At-Large to ensure neighborhood voices from across Springfield are represented, to hold MGM accountable for their promises made, and to fight for the restoration of Community Policing along with Police Commission oversight.



- ★ Award winning Civil Rights activist of national standing
- ★ Respected Democratic Party leader, prominent region-wide
- ★ Valued friend of the Labor Movement
- ★ Champions the cause of working families
- ★ Prioritizing housing for seniors and low income residents
- ★ Leading the fight for more jobs for city residents

Always easy to reach and ready to help, E. Henry Twiggs has put his vast political experience to work for Ward 4 voters. Let's not swap a distinguished record of accomplishments for campaign promises by an untested challenger.

***For the know how we need  
and integrity we can depend  
on, vote E. Henry Twiggs***



# Final Election Candidates



## ***Alexander Sherman is an At-Large candidate for City Council***

I am a longtime resident of Sixteen Acres and a 2004 graduate of Springfield Central High School. I attended college at Springfield Technical Community College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst including two summer programs through UMass at Trinity College at Oxford University. I am running to address issues related to crime and the need for long term job growth in this city, to enforce the city residence ordinance on the books to provide city jobs for city people, and to be a representative for all residents of this city whether they reside in East Forest Park, Mason Square, or any one of the great neighborhoods in this city. While I am at the bottom of the list of At-Large candidates, I hope to be your first choice for At-Large City Council on November 3rd. Thank you for your consideration.



## ***E. Henry Twiggs (Incumbent) is a Ward 4 candidate for City Council***

As a leader in the fight to restore Ward Representation, I helped provide a voice for Ward 4 voters at City Hall. As your City Councilor, I've been easy to reach and ready to help because I believe everyone is important. With a lifetime of experience in politics, I know how to make government work better for our neighborhoods and our city. I've been on the front lines of countless local and national struggles to advance human rights. I'm recognized as a friend of organized labor because I've fought to improve economic conditions for working families. I want to continue my efforts for greater access to jobs, enhanced economic development, and expanding Springfield's tax base to lessen financial strains on individual homeowners. With my sincere gratitude for your previous support, I again ask for your vote because I believe our possibilities are greater than our problems.



## ***Clodo Conception (Incumbent) is a Ward 5 candidate for City Council***

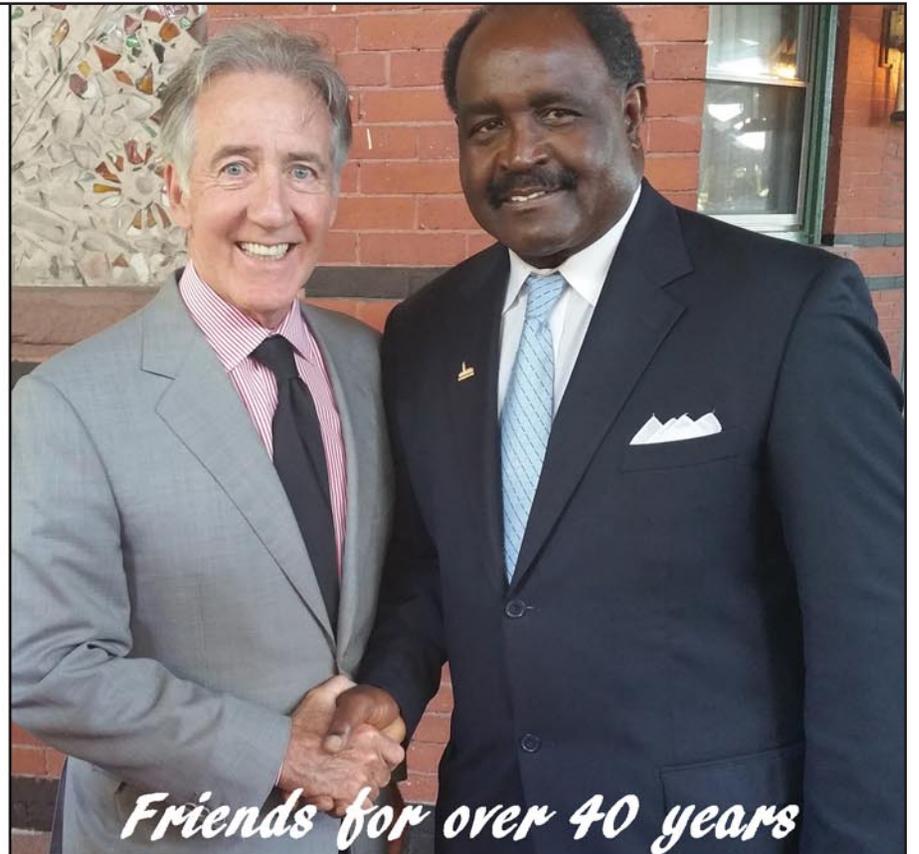
I would like your support. It was a great honor you bestowed on me by electing me to the City Council to represent you. I hope I have fulfilled your expectations, and I ask your help once again. Our Ward 5 issues over the years have included public safety, community resources, traffic, small business opportunities, and quality of life in our neighborhoods. In the past, you have given me the ability to address many of these issues. I have responded by regular crime watch meetings, a new Greenleaf facility, new shopping venues such as Fresh Acres, new traffic patterns, a new Camp Wilder, a new Balliet Park, new paving for Boston Road, and new plans for a Senior Center and the Pine Point Library. But there's more work to be done! Anyone who knows me knows I never give up and I don't take "no" for an answer when it comes to our community. Also, I'm the only City Councilor who voted against a raise for the Council.

**WE CAN COUNT ON  
BUD L. WILLIAMS  
HE'S DONE THE JOB AND  
HE'S NOT AFRAID TO ASK  
THE TOUGH QUESTIONS**

*Please join me,  
Congressman Richard E. Neal,  
and vote for*

**BUD L.  
WILLIAMS**

**AT LARGE  
CITY COUNCIL  
TUESDAY  
NOVEMBER 3, 2015**



*Friends for over 40 years*

*"Bud L. Williams is a leader  
we can trust."*

# November 3rd Final Election Candidates



## ***Marcus Williams is a Ward 5 candidate for City Council***

After receiving my Bachelor of Arts from Boston College in 2012, my hometown called me back. I am running as a candidate for Ward 5 because public service has been without question something I have always gravitated to. It was engrained in me from an early age participating in several service projects and has followed me to this day, serving as the Grants and Contracts Coordinator for the YWCA of Western MA. The residents of this great city deserve elected officials who remember that public service to and for our people supersedes any notion of politics as usual. Ward 5, like any other ward in Springfield, has residents who deserve to have a Councilman with fresh ideas and one who listens more than talks. It's time residents from Pine Point to Sixteen Acres know who their Councilman is and feel they can access him whenever the need arises.



## ***Kim Rivera is a Ward 6 candidate for City Council***

I am running for Ward 6 City Councilor. Being a life-long resident of Springfield, I know how truly incredible our neighborhood is, which is why we need an open, inclusive and committed city councilor to help face our community's most pressing needs. From reducing violence to making our streets safe enough to cross, we need a city councilor who is willing to tackle all of our issues by getting involved and working with our entire neighborhood to move Forest Park forward. As a single mother of three, who went from being homeless to a homeowner, I know first-hand how to face tough challenges. I currently work at the Springfield Family Support Program, building bridges between families and the community to help enhance their quality of life. In addition, I'm a Home Health Care Aide where I support individuals with developmental disabilities live independent and fulfilling lives. I am running for City Councilor because I believe that our promise is more powerful than our problems, and with your support we can make that promise a reality.

**VOTE**  
FOR  
**CLODO**  
**CONCEPCION**  
*City Councilor, Ward 5*  
**NOVEMBER 3, 2015**



**VOTE**  
**MARCUS**  
**Williams**  
**CITY COUNCILOR WARD 5**



## FINAL ELECTION CANDIDATES

### **Mayoral Candidates**

Domenic J. Sarno (I)  
Salvatore S. Circosta

### **Ward 1 City Council Candidates**

Zaida Luna (I)  
Adam Gomez

### **Ward 5 City Council Candidates**

Clodo Concepcion (I)  
Marcus Williams

### **At Large City Council Candidates**

Thomas Ashe (I)  
Justin Hurst (I)  
Timothy Rooke (I)  
Kateri Walsh (I)  
Bud L. Williams (I)  
LaMar Cook  
Jeffery P. Donnelly  
Jesse Lederman  
Kenneth Pooler  
Anthony Sherman

### **Ward 2 City Council Candidate**

Michael A. Fenton (I)

### **Ward 3 City Council Candidates**

Melvin Edwards (I)  
Yolanda Cancel

### **Ward 4 City Council Candidates**

E. Henry Twiggs (I)  
Victoria Rowe

### **Ward 6 City Council Candidates**

Kenneth E. Shea (I)  
Kim Rivera

### **Ward 7 City Council Candidates**

Timothy Allen (I)  
Lillian Gray

### **Ward 8 City Council Candidate**

Orlando Ramos (I)

(I) Incumbent

# . . . In The Community



*The CRRC USA Rail Corp recently broke ground on their factory location in Springfield. From L to R: CRRC USA Rail Corp. President Chuanhe Zhou, MBTA General Manager Frank DePaola, New York Chinese Consulate General Commercial Counselor Yi Liu, Governor Charlie Baker, Mayor Domenic Sarno, Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack, Secretary of Housing & Economic Development Jay Ash, CRRC Corporation Limited Beijing, China Vice President Weiping Yu, and Putnam High School students.*



*Women in Recovery recently held a Back to School event for local community children, including free backpacks with school supplies, entertainment and snacks.*



*Ubora and Ahadi Award recipients Henry M. Thomas III and Victor L. Adaji (center) are flanked by Gwendolyn Miller and Anthony Hill who presented them.*



*The Springfield gospel music group, the Northernaires, held an anniversary event at Third Baptist Church to a standing room only audience.*



*Preacherman & the Singing Saints release their new CD "I Found a Friend" Sunday, September 20th, at Daniels New Bethel to a full house and national attention.*

*Denise Stewart, Dom Dee Photography*



*The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts will induct five into the Order of William Pynchon in November. From L to R they are: Ronn and Donna Johnson, Harold Grinspoon, Sue Ellen Panitch and Gary R. Bernice.*

# EDITORIAL

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

MY POINT  
OF VIEW

Frederick A. Hurst



*continued from page 14*

terest even as it retards Black community progress. Which is why it is even more puzzling to watch the generation that is following my own appearing to fall into the same old divisive trap that continues to be instrumental in frustrating efforts to move the Black community toward the realization of its potential before it is too late.

And “too late” is close by. The very idea of a Black community that rises to genuine political prominence is rapidly dissolving. What we have is a lot of petty potentates vying to be “the man.” “The man,” of course, is Ray Jordan, who still wields enough residual power to be a significant presence. Roger Williams created him. Andy Griffin co-opted him. And Henry Thomas all but married him. And, with the aid of White folks, especially the late President Harry J. Courniotis at American International College, who used Ray as a cover to scoop up Mason Square property, and the Irish, Ray became the most powerful Black leader that Springfield has ever had...and ever will have.

But we don't need another Ray, which is why “and ever will have” is the operative phrase. Ray was an anomaly, flawed, as are we all, but the right man who came along at the right time in the right place to capitalize on historical events that will not be repeated. In my opinion, he did a very good job. But he also did a flawed and significantly misleading one, which is why he and I will always have an ideological divide, as will Black folks in similar situations all over the nation who never accepted the concept of the “mighty whitey” that Ray and his close ally, the late Jeanne Bass, purveyed with an intensity that was em-

barrassing but which all too many Black folks bought into, and many White folks were all too willing to embrace.

And, as in the past, our prominent institutional leadership has faltered at another time when it is most needed. The heyday of the Urban League and the NAACP was well before the modern Civil Rights move-

ment. Their impotence and ineptness led to the rise of the far more effective SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), Core (Congress of Racial Equality), SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), the Black Panthers, the Black Muslims and more, along with the very effective concept of Black Power, a concept that ascended from the days of Frederick Douglass, who understood that “power concedes nothing without a demand.”

But, after the passage of the Civil Rights laws, the latter organizations, their mission completed, faded away and the Urban League and NAACP re-emerged, albeit, I'm sorry to say, as weaker than ever. But because of the absence of alternatives, they have been predominant – that is until the recent riots and the recent emergence of the loosely led “Black Lives Matter” movement that the political class has yet to come to grips with.

I'm not going to speak of the national NAACP and Urban League because I am not close enough to feel comfortable as their critic although I have strong opinions. But I can tell

you for certain that the local NAACP and Urban League – to put it as gently as possible – have been purchased. And I don't fault White folks for that. Some of the folks doing the purchasing are well-meaning. But altogether too many are merely following the cheapest, weakest fault line that allows them to pursue their own interests. And Black folks are allowing it.

*“Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”*

—Frederick Douglass

So it is no wonder that Black Springfield has withered politically and lingers on the remote fringes of Springfield's apparent economic revitalization and is in imminent danger of electoral and demographic insignificance while its newly-earned “political clout” goes almost wasted.

And I do believe that was my entrance point to this article. When I see the relatively passive Black councilors and other so-called Black leaders struggling individually to be “the” Black leader of a political domain that no longer exists and should no longer exist, and pussy footing around the important issues that affect Black folks, I take pause and feel pain. They look foolish. And they defame the legacy that got them where they are. And they need to be called out. And election time is a perfect time for it. I'm among those who want to hear some outrage noise from these pretenders to Black leadership. And if possible, I'd like to hear some unified noise. But if that is not possible, simple courageous noise will do.

Courageous noise, by the way, is what the Civil Rights movement was

all about, a time when we overcame our fear of White power and asserted our own. But when emerging from our Civil Rights victories, we made some questionable turns, including electing politicians to beg for us instead of joining us in building our communities. I don't have a problem with Black politicians begging. White politicians do it all the time. But all too often Black politicians have limited their begging to handouts for a big batch of questionable social programs that, in Springfield (and I am sure in other such places as Ferguson, Baltimore and across America), have failed with a completeness that is embarrassing. Too often they ended up being programs that provided impermanent employment but a solid electoral base for Black politicians.

The bottom line is that the Black community in Springfield needs better and far more fearless and unselfish leadership and we need it now. What the Black community doesn't need and has had too much of, is leadership that cringes even at the thought that White folks might disapprove of rightful and necessary dissent. It's not good for anybody of any race. Springfield needs Black folks who demonstrate enough courage to earn the role of “leader.” And, if such folks are not soon forthcoming, a history-making opportunity will be lost forever.

We Black folks don't have a lot of time. The demographic trends are turning against us. At a time when we have a powerful presence on the school committee and city council and on boards and at the state house and when our voting power is still decisive, it is crazy to me that we seem to be confronted across the board by Black leadership that is powerless by choice. ■

## LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER

Dear Rick,

I just wanted to take a moment to say what a great job you did on the article "Where the Blind See." (POV, August 1, 2015)

I have taken many people through our facility and no one has "gotten it" as you have. You captured the essence of BISM.

Guy really liked (and agreed with) your comment about "Fred hires good people like Guy DeRossi!" We do have good people and they have carried out our mission! We don't trust rules. . . We trust people!

I can't thank you enough for the impact you had while visiting with us, then the article! The Springfield community is blessed to have someone with your insight, intelligence, compassion and belief in people!

If we can be of any assistance to you in any way just call!

My best to Marge!

"The Big White Guy"

Frederick Puente, President (8/20/2015)

Blind Industries and Services of Maryland

Letters to the Publisher and other content

MUST be sent electronically to:

[mjhurst@afampov.com](mailto:mjhurst@afampov.com)

(Please reference a subject matter or e-mail is automatically deleted.)

## AF-AM NEWS

## bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

continued from page 4

### BEN CARSON

Many of us made the mistake of supporting Clarence Thomas for Supreme Court Justice under the mistaken notion that once in office he would go back to his roots. We were wrong. And we would be just as wrong to support the presidency of Dr. Ben Carson.

### KATHLEEN PARKER ON DONALD TRUMP

"Genius Trump is a human hand-dler extraordinaire – the jet

set equivalent of the black-hatted fellow who wheeled his cart into tumbleweed towns. He doesn't sell snake oil. He milks the venom from the gathering throng of willing believers, then bottles it up and sells it right back to them. Delicious with raw meat." *Boston Herald*, September 4, 2015

### "...TRUMP DESTROYS"

An editorial in *The Republican* titled "GOP Builds, Trump Destroys," really laid out the Republican Party dilemma. "In 2008, Barack

# Diversity Series

For more event information contact Myra Smith: (413) 755-4414 • [www.stcc.edu/diversity](http://www.stcc.edu/diversity)

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Obama became the first president elected while losing the white vote by double digits. In 2012, Hispanics, the nation's largest minority, were for the first time a double-digit (10 percent) portion of the electorate. White voters were nearly 90 percent of Romney's vote. In 1988, George H.W. Bush won 59 percent of the white vote, which translated into 426 electoral votes. Twenty-four years later, Romney won 59 percent of the white vote and just 206 electoral votes. He lost the nonwhite vote by 63 points, receiving just 17 percent of it. If the Republicans' nominee does not do better than Romney did among nonwhite voters, he will need 65 percent of the white vote, which was last achieved

by Ronald Reagan when carrying 49 states in 1984." *The Republican*, August 26, 2015

### BLACK LIVES MATTER

"Of course, any killing of an innocent person should offend our collective moral sensibilities. All lives, self-evidently, matter. That is not the point. The point is that this country has been silent for decades, as citizens of color have been killed by those sworn to protect and serve. The Black Lives Matter movement is an attempt to shed light on a problem that has existed in the shadows." Ronald S. Sullivan Jr., *The Boston Globe*, September 2, 2015 ■

# RELIGION

## RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW



**Dr. Atu White, Editor,** serves as Pastor of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 368 Bay Street, Springfield, MA and as Second Vice President of the United Baptist Convention of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. [atuwhite@gmail.com](mailto:atuwhite@gmail.com)

Pastors, Ministers, Professors and Theologians, please submit your articles for this page to Rev. Dr. Atu White at: [atuwhite@gmail.com](mailto:atuwhite@gmail.com)

## God, Grit and Grind

By Rev. Dr. Atu White

Thomas Edison famously exclaims, “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” To his point, the average person looking for the massive jackpot often misses opportunity. I define opportunity as an ordinary moment intersecting with a sacred obligation. I contend opportunity is before us on a daily basis. Some moments are more ordinary and frequent than others; therefore, it is easy to gloss over or take for granted ordinary moments. A sacred obligation is something we have to do. A sacred obligation is a pestering, persistent phenomenon. It beckons us in our dreams during the day and night. When an ordinary moment intersects with a sacred obligation, the birth of opportunity occurs. When I run from

not honoring the sacred obligation, my life is off-kilter. My mind and emotions search for clarity.

While people scramble to think of gigantic ideas and strategies to realize a dream, build a business or affect a city, we find the best answers in the simplicity of opportunity. Most inventors solved an immediate problem. God intersects an ordinary moment with our sacred obligation at the right time.

Once God presents us with opportunity, He requires grit and grind. Grit is the inward determination that God will allow you to experience what He promised. Dreams and visions do come true. While we pursue, we are prone to grow discouraged and discontented, especially when time appears to move faster than the maturation of the promise. In those dark seasons, continue to ask God to

synchronize your eyesight with His foresight. Ask Him to give you a glimpse of what is over the horizon or around the corner. Grit is our innate desire to push past the pain and problems because we are pursuing a holy mandate and it is our act of worship. Grit suggests we are mentally prepared for the opportunity and obstacles.

Grind is the willingness to do whatever God deems necessary. While pursuing a sacred obligation, we should hold firmly to the Lord’s power and instructions. In scripture, Joshua fought a plethora of battles, marched around a city wall, lost a battle in one chapter and was encouraged to go back and fight in the next chapter. We can anticipate the full gamut of experiences but we must commit to keeping the fire of the grind lit! The grind is putting in the

Rev. Dr. Atu White  
Join us this month as we discover the fruit of the Spirit.

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Wednesday Adult & Youth Bible Study:  
7:00pm-8:00pm

MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH  
A PLACE OF HEALING, HELP & HOPE

necessary hours to reach said goals without excuses. We should make and value progress each day. Celebrate God for each victory as ordinary as it appears. This appreciation builds discipline and strength to continue.

With God, grit and grind, we can maximize the ordinary moments. ■

## Commodore Conyers: A Life Well Lived

By Marjorie J. Hurst



**Commodore Conyers**  
9/6/1930 - 8/17/2015

When I received the news about the unexpected, sudden loss of my cousin, Commodore Conyers, I was devastated. We weren’t close in age or proximity. He was 15-16 years older than me and he lived in Georgia and I lived in Massachusetts. But after I got to know him as an adult, he became my role model.

As the oldest cousin after the death of my mother, he took on the mantle of the patriarch of the family and made sure we held family reunions every other year. He was a natural leader, kind and even tempered, always showing an interest in what was going on in our various lives, but he tolerated no nonsense.

If Commodore said it should be a certain way, that’s the way it was. No one challenged him. Well, there was that one time! That time at one of the family reunions when some of the younger cousins decided to stage a revolt when it came time to elect officers and get rid of the leadership triumvirate—Commodore, his brother Matthew, and my brother Charles—that kept us in check, the three oldest cousins who held the positions of president, vice president and treasurer. Well, I dare say a valuable lesson was learned that day. You had better know Roberts Rules of Order and you had better have your votes lined up well in advance before you try to stage a coup against that group!

I learned so much more about Commodore at his funeral where I estimate well over 1,000 people were in attendance. You see, my cousin wasn’t just a leader of our family, he was a leader of every group with which he was associated. From his church, to his alma mater (both undergraduate and graduate), to his former students (as both a teacher

and a principal), to numerous boards and committees, the accolades that were shared told the story of a man who had made a lasting contribution wherever he went. Some of the stories were funny, others were poignant, all describing a man who was genuinely committed to education, commanded respect, and was loved by his family, friends and colleagues.

Tributes came from a variety of politicians—a representative of the Mayor, several State Representatives, a State Senator, and a Congressional Representative who, the following week, would be reading my cousin’s name and accomplishments in the United States Congressional Record as a permanent reminder of his greatness—former students, the President of Savannah State University who had expected to see him the weekend following his death as he was being inducted into the Savannah State University Foundation Hall of Fame, colleagues and many more too numerous to mention.

My cousin truly represented a life well lived and he will be missed. ■

*(I’d like to thank Tony and Michele Lamont who showed me true Southern hospitality by giving a stranger a ride from the airport.)*

# RELIGIOUS DIRECTORY

*"A Diverse People who are One on Solomon's Porch"*



**Mount Calvary Baptist Church**  
Acts 5:12b

Sunday Worship — 10:45 AM  
Sunday School — 9:00 AM  
Tuesday — Book Club — 7:00PM  
Wednesday — "Noonday Hour of Power"  
With Lunch  
Thursday — Live Bible Study — 7:00PM  
Ordinance of the Lord's Supper  
First Sunday — 4:00PM

17 John Street, Springfield, MA 01104  
(413) 737-9583

Dr. Mark E. Flowers, Senior Pastor  
Mountcalvarybaptistchurchspringfield.org

**New Life Calvary Baptist Church**



**A NEW BEGINNING**

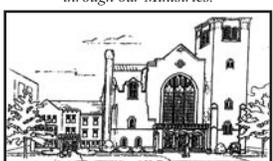
Sunday School 9:00 AM  
Morning Worship Service 10:00 AM  
Prayer/Bible Study Wednesday 6:00 & 7:00 PM

Rev. Jesse E. Williams Sr.,  
Pastor/Teacher

981 Wilbraham Road Springfield, MA 01109  
(413) 796-1600

**Alden Baptist Church**  
649 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01109  
413-788-9910

*"We believe God has called us to be a vital sign of faith at work in the community. This vision is actualized through our Ministries."*



Sunday School 9:00 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship Service 10:00 a.m.  
Prayer Service Mondays 6:00 p.m.

Wednesdays Noon & 6:00 p.m.  
Bible Study Mondays & Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.  
Youth Ministry Fridays 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
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Springfield, MA 01109  
(413) 734-7611



Rev. Angelo S. Dawson,  
Pastor

Rev. Donald A. Thomas,  
Associate Minister

Rev. Amelia Eddy,  
Associate Minister

James D. Bullock,  
Minister of Music

Pastor's Bible Study Sunday 9:00am to 9:50am  
Church School Saturday 11:00am

Sunday Morning Divine Worship 10:00am  
Bible Study/Prayer & Class Meeting Wednesday — 6:00pm

**FAMILY CHURCH**  
Pastor Gail L. Hill, Senior Pastor



Sundays  
Christian Education 9:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Tuesdays  
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

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Springfield, MA 01101-2513  
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familychurchaa@yahoo.com

**PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
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(413) 736-8844

"A Church Determined To Follow Christ"



Rev. Joe C. Long Jr.,  
Pastor

Sunday Worship - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday Bible School - 9:00 a.m.  
Bible Study - Wednesday - 6:30 p.m.

**Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church**  
797 State St., Springfield, MA  
413-734-0103  
clerk@shiloh1.comcastbiz.net



Dr. Walton H. Rose, Pastor

Sabbath School 9:00a.m.  
Sabbath Services: (Saturdays)  
Divine Worship 11:00a.m.  
Adventist Youth Services — 6:00pm  
Adventist Community Service Mondays & Tuesdays 10:00a.m. — 1:00p.m.  
Prayer Meeting Wednesdays 7:00p.m.  
Church School (SSAJA) Monday — Friday

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Dr. Calvin J. McFadden, Sr.  
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**Third Baptist Church**  
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Springfield, MA 01139  
413-734-4143

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Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.  
Prayer Meeting & Bible Study Thursday 6:00 p.m.



Reverend Nathaniel Smith, Sr., Pastor

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Rev. Catharine A. Cummings, Pastor

Sundays  
Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship Service 11:00 a.m.



**Solid Rock Community Baptist Church**  
821 Liberty Street, Springfield, MA 01104  
Telephone (413) 734-5441  
Fax (413) 734-5438  
Transportation (413) 575-4035

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 am  
Weekly Bible Study/Prayer Service Tuesday 7:00 pm



Bishop Curtis L. Shaird, Pastor  
Reverend Harold P. Dixon, Assistant Pastor

**Freedom House Of God Church, Inc.**  
563 Union Street, Springfield, MA 01109  
(413) 736-0427  
E-mail: bishop43@comcast.net



Bishop Elizabeth Williams  
Senior Pastor & Overseer

**Come! Worship with us!**

Sunday School 9:30 am  
Sunday Morning Worship 12:00pm  
Tuesday Night 7:30pm  
Thursday Bible Study 7:30pm



**Overflowing Love Church of the Living God**  
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(413) 739-0164  
Overflowingloveclg@verizon.net



Bishop Naomi Barber

**Weekly Service Schedule**  
Sunday School 10:00 am  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:30 am  
Morning Bible Study  
Wednesday Morning 10:00 am  
Adult & Youth Bible Study  
Wednesday Evening 7:30 pm



**Canaan Baptist Church of Christ**  
1430 Carew Street  
Springfield, MA 01104  
413-739-5053



Rev. Dr. W. C. Watson, Jr., Pastor

Sundays  
Sunday School (all ages) -----9:15a.m.  
Morning Worship Service ----10:45a.m.

Church Life  
Worship, Prayer, Praise & Study

Wednesdays  
Mid-day Prayer & Praise--12:00-1:00p.m.  
Bible Study -----7:00 p.m.

# LIVING

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



*Zaida Govan is a native of Springfield via Puerto Rico with a passion for improving the community she serves. She can be reached at 413.301.2533 or zaida.govan@yahoo.com*

## VOTE: The Time Is Now and The Choice Is Yours

By Zaida Govan

I was telling my husband that an uprising is near and it has been a long time coming. He thinks it will be a civil war. Many people are finally starting to admit that this country's policies are embedded in racism and are ready to do something about it. Since before the Ferguson outrage many groups and organizations had decided that it is time for a change. It is time to analyze the systems of power in this country that give entire departments, i.e. police, permission to murder without consequences.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) reports come as no surprise to me. I have said it before and will say it

again: If the DOJ were to investigate each urban police department across the country, they would find basically the same thing everywhere. Be it in California, Louisiana, Utah, South Carolina, Connecticut or Springfield, Massachusetts, across this country police departments are operating under the same premise that "white is right" and anything else is "wrong" even when those police departments have people of color on their force.

I am proud of President Obama who has finally begun using his community organizing skills to talk about the root causes of the majority of problems in this country. He is talking about racism and the injustice that is rampant as a result of it. He has visited a federal prison to talk about the unjust policies that negatively impact a large population of people. The majority of

people in prison are people of color and some people don't want to believe that it is not because people of color are bad and white people are not.

President Obama is highlighting the fact that people arrested for non-violent crimes are getting more prison time than violent sexual predators. In our own city of Springfield, we have to make sure we keep this in mind in the upcoming election. There are changes that need to be made to policies and practices that affect our children of color negatively in our school system. The School-to-Prison pipeline is real. I read a report that said that by a child's second or third grade, prison officials have identified what children they will be building a prison cell for. They spend \$30,000 building a cell for a third grader instead of investing that money or even half of that money into

that same child's education. This is a shame.

I always want to remind people that these problems will not go away if we don't address them. Just like the problem of addiction, which was basically all but ignored when it was only rampant in urban settings, these problems grow like a virus and they will find you. The time is now and the choice is yours. Let's get busy. Stop being lazy!! **Vote!** If you don't know who to vote for, ask a person you trust and vote how they vote if you don't want to do your own research. **The Springfield League of Women Voters has a voter's guide you can take to the polls with you. There is early voting. There is no excuse. Participate or get lost in the shuffle. ■**

## LIFE'S CHALLENGES



*Dr. Sweets S. Wilson is a Christian life purpose coach, motivational speaker and CEO of Inspire ME, LLC. wilson.sweets@gmail.com or 860-869-8067*

## Affirmations: Reprogramming the Subconscious

By Sweets H. Wilson, PhD

**FROM HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT**

Reprogramming the subconscious is the power of affirmations for healing and positive change. Our minds have been programmed by a lifetime of patterns and reinforcement and this programming has a profound effect on our choices and our attitudes. Individuals use affirmations for a variety purposes. Affirmations can be used to help us create the reality we desire, often in terms of attracting wealth, beauty, happiness and love.

According to Walter E. Jacobson, MD, there are values in affirmations of our subconscious mind. This plays a major role in the actualization of our lives and the manifestation of our desires. What we believe about

ourselves at a subconscious level, can have significant impact on the outcome of events. The mind is very powerful and it needs to be spoken to. We are all aware of the power of being told, for example, that we look well; it often immediately evokes the feeling of being well. We are influenced by what individuals say to us. By the same token, it is extremely powerful for us to direct our bodies and minds to what we desire for ourselves, making it known consciously and putting it out there. It is our responsibility to identify what we desire and need to ask for from the universe. We can consciously and subconsciously work toward achieving that reality.

When we feel good about ourselves and have a positive attitude, our lives tend to run smoothly. According to the laws of attraction, this is referred to as raising our vibrations so that vibrations, such as, financial abundance, renewed health, and love are magnetically drawn to us. On the other hand, when we feel badly about

ourselves and have a negative attitude, we tend to engage in self-defeating behaviors which may cause negative outcomes, like financial mishap, interpersonal drama, and acute or chronic illness. Self-affirmations actually buffer stress and improve problem-solving performance in under-performing and chronically stressed individuals.

Affirmations are statements that are designed to create self-change in the individuals using them. They can serve as inspiration, as well as, in and of themselves, having the potential to promote positive and sustained self-change. Here are some suggestions for reprogramming the subconscious:

- Effective affirmations are written in first person
- Affirmations are written in the positive as opposed to the negative
- Affirmations have an emotional charge
- Affirmations are written in the present state

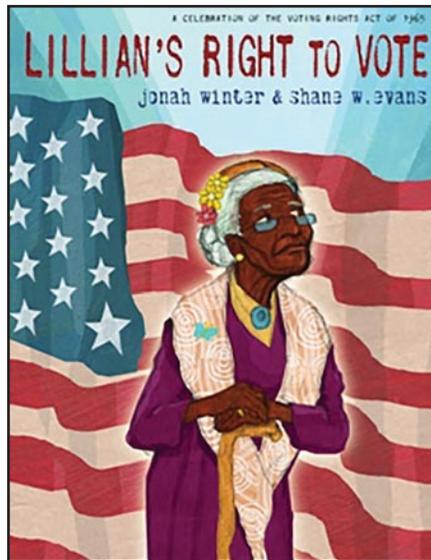
The reprogramming the subconscious process, which I recommend practicing daily, brings about a strong sense of calm, relaxation and contentment. Practicing this technique reprograms the mind and body, allowing them to release unwanted habits and tendencies while supporting positive change. This also enables you to more effectively overcome stress. We have all been following programming of some sort for many years: what's wrong with us, how we should be, how we have made too many mistakes or that we have failed. As we carry this negative baggage around with us in our subconscious, it seeps into all that we do, hampering our ability to make changes and move forward. Similarly, positive affirmations help us to discover contentment in the current moment and the joy of being alive right now. This is one of the most potent agents of change. ■

# THE ARTS

## CHILDREN'S BOOK CORNER



*The Bookworm is Terri Schlichenmeyer. Terri has been reading since she was 3 years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 11,000 books.*



## “Lillian’s Right to Vote”

*By Jonah Winter & Shane W. Evans*

c.2015, Schwartz & Wade Books \$17.99 / \$20.99 Canada 40 pages

*Reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer*

– at least not until after the Civil War.

Lillian can see Great-Grandpa Edmund, post-War, on his way to vote for the very first time. He approaches the polls, looking dignified in his finest clothes; Great-Grandma Ida is there, too, but she can’t vote yet. That, as Lillian knows, is many years away.

Then the hill seems to become higher, and the climb gets harder. Lillian sees her grandpa, Isaac, but he’s not voting because of a poll tax that he has no hope of paying. She hears her Uncle Levi, telling stories about impossible questions that had to be answered before anyone with brown skin could step up to cast a vote. She sees the same angry faces that sur-

rounded her when she was a child, and women finally were allowed to vote.

White women, that is. Not people like Lillian.

Stopping in the middle of the hill, Lillian remembers. Once, she registered to vote and had to take a test that she didn’t pass. People were hurt and killed over votes. She starts walking again, soon reaching the voting place.

And Lillian steps to the door...

Did you ever buy a book for the kids that you ended up keeping for yourself? That’s what could happen once you’ve found “Lillian’s Right to Vote” – and that’s okay. I think you’ll understand it more than your children

will anyhow.

There’s no doubt in my mind that kids will love this book. Sharp-eyed children, those who wonder what the presidential-candidate fuss is about, will get a basic history of the importance of voting. Children in this books’ target age (3-to-6-year-olds) will appreciate the story that authors Jonah Winter & Shane W. Evans tell here. For sure, they’ll all enjoy the illustrations.

The real goodness in this book, however, is that becoming a children’s picture story doesn’t at all diminish its power. Indeed, “Lillian’s Right to Vote” is ten feet tall, and it’s something neither you nor your child will be able to leave. ■

**H**ow many leaves are on the tree outside your window?

That’s a question you may not be able to answer. How could you even count them all? Would you ever get an answer that’s right? It’s a silly question, for sure, and probably not very important. In the new book “Lillian’s Right to Vote” by Jonah Winter & Shane W. Evans, you’ll see why someone would even ask.

Lillian stands at the bottom of a “very steep hill.” It’s Voting Day and she’s going to take advantage of her rights.

As she looks up the hill, she sees things – not just a hill, but a slave auction. There are her great-great-grandparents: Elijah is wearing chains and Sarah is holding a baby. Lillian sees that they’re standing near a courthouse where only white men could vote.

It’s a long way up that hill and, as she climbs, Lillian sees more history: once a baby at that auction, her great-grandfather, Edmund, grew up to pick cotton. He didn’t have any more rights than his own parents did

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



*Renée Flowers is Point of View’s Artist in Residence. You can contact her directly at (413) 209-9882 to arrange a private viewing of her work. (See May 1, 2014 POV Community Focus article on Renée by Emurriel Holloway for more information on the artist @ [www.afampointofview.com](http://www.afampointofview.com).)*

**Every month different paintings created by Renée Flowers are displayed at Point of View, 688 Boston Rd., Springfield, MA**



# THE ARTS

## PEN & INK



**JUANITA TORRENCE-THOMPSON:** Pushcart nominee. Published fiction, children's stories, feature articles, hundreds of her award-winning poems in dozens of U.S. and international journals, 12 anthologies, 7 books including her *Talking With Stanley Kunitz* (2012). Writes print & online newspaper poetry columns; produces poetry salons and reads internationally. Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of acclaimed 30-year-old *Mobius, The Poetry Magazine*. Her poetry is translated into 15 foreign languages. *Talking With Stanley Kunitz and New York and African Tapestries* were best pick by *Small Press Review*. *Mobius, The Poetry Magazine*, best pick 2007 thru 2012 [www.poetrytown.com](http://www.poetrytown.com)

## A Day In The Life Of A Middle Class African American Woman - 1970s & Today

By Juanita Torrence-Thompson

Melanie enters Young World, an exclusive children's shop. As she makes her way around the beautiful store, shop keepers stare and security follows her around as if she will pilfer something. No one offers to assist her.

Next she enters an upscale woman's designer clothing store off of Queens Boulevard near Forest Hills, New York.

Same result — stares and security follows her.

As she leafs through the garments, a petite blonde sales clerk finally goes to her and says, "The non-designer sale items are over there." Melanie smiles and says, "Thank you, but I am interested in designer clothes." When she selects and buys two expensive designer suits, everyone is surprised. After that, whenever she comes into the shop the sales clerks practically knock each other over trying to wait on her and make a hefty commission.

### Today: 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

Melanie shops at her regular super market. While trying to decide what size bottled water to purchase, a plainclothesman keeps ducking around the corner watching her. When she takes her items to the checkout counter, he dashes up to the counter and looks to see what she has bought. When she turns around and gives him the 'what the heck do you want' look, he rushes away.

While buying vitamins at the health food store where she has shopped for 10 years, a new clerk corners her and says, "You cannot keep vitamins in your shopping cart if you have more items to buy. The clerk will hold them for you until you are finished shopping. Melanie was surprised at the new rule.

At the Podiatrist's they discuss the presidential election and other news like Hurricane Sandy, travel experiences, etc.

When Melanie says, "I was robbed on the subway in Rome," he says very surprised, "YOU were in ROME?"

At another doctor's office, her friend who is part Spanish was waiting impatiently for the doctor. As he enters the room, he looks at her name on the chart and speaks to her in Spanish. She responds to him in perfect English, "I don't speak Spanish."

"Oh," he says, "I'll bet you do when you swear in Spanish!"

"I don't swear," she says.

She never returned there again.

THE END



**BRENDA'S CHILD** has made it her life's mission to inspire people through poetry and stories and through leading by example with courage, confidence, and integrity. In April 2007, she self-published her first book of poetry, "*A Piece of My Mind...Poetic Confessions of a Self-Proclaimed Diva*." Since then she has published four more titles. For more information, email: [brendaschild@brendaschild.com](mailto:brendaschild@brendaschild.com)

## The Message

By Brenda's Child

Mass genocides and famine in Africa  
 Slavery and Jim Crow in America  
 History hid, distorted, and denied  
 Blood Diamonds, Apartheid,  
 Public Lynchings advertised,  
 MLK, Malcolm X,  
 the Black Panther Party "neutralized"  
 Ebola and AIDS,  
 The Syphilis Experiment  
 Henrietta Lacks  
 Emmett Till,  
 Prisons disproportionately filled,  
 Raped and bred  
 Grandfather clause, literacy test,  
 Voting poll death threats,  
 Dred Scott,  
 four little girls,  
 BRING BACK OUR GIRLS  
 Scottsboro boys,  
 Shot down for wearing a hoodie boys,  
 Or playing music too loud boys,  
 racial profiling,  
 cops committing homicide  
 in broad daylight,  
 I AM A MAN  
 HANDS UP,  
 I CAN'T BREATHE  
 BLACK LIVES MATTER....to who?

## Charlotte Golar Richie to be Honored

**BOSTON** — Former State Representative for Massachusetts' 5<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District and the first African-American woman to run for Mayor of the City of Boston, Charlotte Golar Richie will be honored by Massachusetts Advocates for Children for her career as an advocate for youth development, public education, and creating safe and affordable neighborhoods. Richie currently serves as Commissioner for the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and oversees responsibilities for administration, adjudication and education concerning civil rights matters for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Gala event, "Celebrating Voices," will be held on **Friday, October 16th, 2015, 5:30-9:00 pm in Harvard Law School's Wasserstein Hall**. For tickets and information, visit: [massadvocates.org/events/2015](http://massadvocates.org/events/2015)



# THE ARTS

## PEN & INK

### Malden Street Ain't Bad

By Brenda White

Oh, my God! This turn of events  
Two gang related shootings.  
Blood spilt on my neighborhood street;

Blood at the door step of the Wesleyan church.

This ain't some formal WRITING  
This ain't fashion  
This ain't ghetto romancing.  
This is pointless.

My daughter said, "You should have taken that apartment in Wilbraham." Maybe...but here I can watch the sun rise and sun set, here I watched a sparrow couple make their nest in the hallow tree branch and here I can listen to their songs mixed with Rap, African/Latino/Cuban music, all familiar in tone and rhythm.

My neighbor said, "It's gang related and it ain't even hot yet."  
Why predict.

A girl at a neighborhood store blurted, "What's the point of trying to act normal, my friend just died."

"You have to keep your faith," the cashier replied in response.  
And faith equals loss of control.

#### Anonymous Quote:

*"Masquerading as a normal person, day after day is exhausting."  
I'm so tired, aren't you?"*

### I Love The Island Ladies

By John V. Tranghese

I love the island ladies  
where tropic breezes wail,  
Their umber hair pulled tightly  
then softly in a tail,

That's where I go when I am low  
and need some tender lovin,  
For they are always "hot to trot"  
and warmer than an oven,

I love the island ladies  
more sultry and more spicy  
Than northern chicks so slow to mix  
who can be cold and icy,

For island ladies are "hot as hades"  
and have a lot more sizzle,  
Than counterparts where weather charts  
regularly fizzle,

I love those torrid beauties  
more than our local cuties,  
And gladly cede our frosty breed  
to less romantic duties,

I love the island ladies  
as sweet as native rum,  
And take a trip when I need a sip  
there to get me some!

copyright 9/3/09

# FOOD TALK

## THE URBAN COOK

### Retire Like You Mean It

By Rhonda Jones



*Rhonda Jones is a  
Personal Caterer and  
a Food Consultant  
rjcooks@aol.com*

Once a month I receive this magazine in the mail called *Where to Retire*. I have never subscribed to this magazine but fortunately I'm receiving it anyway. The first few issues I received I didn't even look through because I figured this doesn't pertain to me. But one

day I decided to look through the magazine and to my surprise it was the best thing. Not only did it have places to retire, it had helpful tips on retirement. They have these resorts for fifty-five and over that offer beautiful living quarters, luscious green lawns with pools and all the top rated amenities you can imagine. I was so amazed that they call them resorts but they are actually retirement living communities. They even have places that have restaurants in them so when you don't feel like cooking, you can go down to the restaurant and enjoy a delicious meal. I don't know about

you but I'm going to start saving my pennies for one of these state-of-the-art retirement resorts.

I come across a lot of retired people and they always say to me how they are tired of cooking or they don't know what they're going to cook for dinner. My mother-in-law always talks about how she's tired of cooking and would love to go out to eat more but my father-in-law is so used to her cooking, he'd rather have her cook instead of going out. If it were up to my mother-in-law, she would be eating at Red Lobster at least twice a week. Now if that was me, I'd go on strike and not cook or we would go out to eat.

Isn't that one of the best things about retirement, doing whatever you

want to do when you want to do it? I know a lot of retirees are on a fixed income but now there are so many restaurants that offer "two for one" or senior citizen discounts. When I think of this it worries me because I'm not close to retirement but I feel the same way sometimes.

Yes, I love to cook and create but sometimes you need a break from the kitchen and need to let someone else do the cooking. This article will not be followed with a delicious recipe because I don't need to cook this month. Let's treat ourselves to a meal at a restaurant or have our sons, daughters and some husbands cook for us. We deserve it! ■



### Emergency Preparedness: Individual Family Survival

- ◆ Develop a family survival plan
- ◆ Create a family survival kit
- ◆ Establish communicate options
- ◆ Stock food
- ◆ Establish safe areas

“Preparation through education is less costly than learning through tragedy.”

For more information or to schedule a training contact:

Springfield Department of Health/  
Human Services  
(413) 787-6761/787-6458(fax)  
Email: [bafrederic@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:bafrederic@springfieldcityhall.com)

Helen R. Caulton-Harris  
Director

# Come Be Inspired!

## Springfield Unity Festival

We Raise Our Voices

**November 14, 2015**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**Springfield Symphony Hall**



- 300 community singers performing gospel and inspirational songs
- Special appearance by the fabulous Sci-Tech Band!



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Concert Tickets: \$10

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By phone: (413) 788-7033 • Tickets before concert at the door  
[www.springfieldunityfestival.com](http://www.springfieldunityfestival.com)

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## CHD Cancer House of Hope Looking for Jewelry Donations

WEST SPRINGFIELD — 733-1858 or just drop by from 10am – 4pm M-F.  
Cancer House of Hope Vintage and Costume Jewelry Sale is coming back! The Cancer House of Hope will be hosting the sale on Saturday, March 19, 2016 from 9:00am-3:00pm at the CHD location at 246 Park Street, West Springfield, MA.

At this time, we are requesting donations of vintage and costume jewelry in any amount so we can prepare them for the sale. Donations such as hat boxes, vintage hats, fashion scarves, ladies gloves, retro handbags, old jewelry boxes, men's cuff links and tie tacks are all accepted and appreciated. For any donation drop off information, please call the Cancer House of Hope at 413-

*About CHH: The CHD Cancer House of Hope is a nonprofit organization located at 1999 Westfield ST (Route 20) in West Springfield, MA 01089. The House provides compassion, support, knowledge, and free programs and services to those with cancer, those who have had cancer and their families and friends. All services are free-of-charge and no referrals are necessary. Cancer House of Hope is funded through events such as this one plus the generosity of foundations and individual donors. Your support helps bring comfort and dignity to those in need. Thank you for making a difference!*

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Medical/Dental/WIC/Pharmacy

**1038-1050 Main St.**  
Pediatrics

**532 Sumner Ave.**  
Family Medical/Dental/WIC

**860 Boston Rd.**  
Family Medical/WIC

**CARING HEALTH CENTER**  
1040 Main St. • 1049 Main St. • 532 Sumner Ave. • 860 Boston Rd.  
Phone: (413) 739-1100  
Web: [www.caringhealth.org](http://www.caringhealth.org)

**We are accepting medical, dental, WIC  
& pediatric patients at all 4 CHC locations**

# COMMUNITY

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION

### Caring Health Center announced as Community Partner for 2015-2016 by the Massachusetts Health Connector Navigator Grant Program.

**BOSTON** — The Massachusetts Health Connector announced Caring Health Center (CHC) as a community group that will work as a Navigator to provide enrollment and renewal support to residents throughout Greater Springfield during Open Enrollment. **The Health Connector awarded CHC a grant of \$187,320 for the 2015-16 program, which runs from Aug. 1, 2015 through July 31, 2016.**

Caring Health Center is returning for a third year as a Navigator, and will target graduating students from the Springfield area and continue its outreach efforts to those in the Greater Springfield area who are transitioning to Affordable Care Act

(ACA) coverage this fall. They have a uniquely focused outreach plan that consists of tabling throughout the community with laptops and portable printers to enable applications to be done on the spot. Language capacity includes Spanish.

As Caring Health Center prepares for 2016 Open Enrollment, which starts on Nov. 1 and runs through Jan. 31, 2016, CHC's Navigators will work to ensure outreach is penetrating communities with higher rates of uninsured residents and those without insurance are encouraged to apply for coverage. CHC's Navigators can also assist current members who have questions about coverage renewing Jan. 1, 2016. ■

### RMV Introduces Free In-Branch WiFi at Agency's Eight Busiest Branches

**BOSTON** – The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles today (9/2/15) announced the availability of free in-branch WiFi service for customers performing transactions at eight branch locations across the Commonwealth. The RMV is offering this amenity as part of its effort to enhance customer service and modernize branch operations.

The WiFi service has been available in the Boston Haymarket Branch since the facility opened last September. The RMV recently opened the network to customers earlier this month for seven more branches. Since that time, approximately 5,000 people have used the service. The RMV intends to monitor usage prior to bringing the service to additional branch locations.

The information below outlines the total number of connections to WiFi per branch since the service's inception at the beginning of last month.

RMV Branch Location	Average Number of Customer Connections to WiFi
Braintree	2,158
Brockton	672
Haymarket	4,374
Revere	1,258
Springfield	1,169
Watertown	2,831
Wilmington	2,587
Worcester	1,845

WiFi gives customers the ability to connect to the internet and other sources through various portable technologies including mobile phones, tablets, and laptops. Customers logging on are directed to [www.MassRMV.com](http://www.MassRMV.com) and from there are able to access the internet. For service reliability and bandwidth reasons, video

streaming sites such as Netflix and YouTube are not available. In addition, adult content sites have also been blocked. Customers are encouraged to Tweet us about the service @MassRMV #InBranchWiFi. ■

### Western New England University School of Law Offers Five-Week Mini-Law School to Community

**SPRINGFIELD**—Western New England University School of Law will again open its doors to the community with a five-week program focused on demystifying the law. The Mini-Law School will be held from **October 20–November 17, 2015 on Tuesday evenings from 6-8:00 p.m. at the Blake Law Center, 1215 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA.**

The goal of this program is to provide practical knowledge to help average citizens better understand areas of the law that are relevant to their lives. Each class will be taught by law school faculty and moderated by the Honorable Kenneth Neiman, Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts.

**Oct. 20:** *Welcome to Mini-Law School: An Inside View of Law School and the Courts* – Honorable Kenneth Neiman, and Dean Eric Gouvin.

**Oct. 27:** *The Law of Federal Income Taxes: Does It Have to Be So Complicated?* – Bill Metzger, Professor of Law, and Judge Kenneth Neiman.

**Nov. 3:** *Criminal Law: Search and Seizure Law* – Bridgette Baldwin, Professor of Law, and Judge Kenneth Neiman.

**Nov. 10:** *Challenging Inequality in the Workplace: An Overview of Employment Discrimination Protections* – Erin Buzuvis, Professor of Law, and Judge Kenneth Neiman.

**Nov. 17:** *National Security and Civil Liberties: Surveillance and Democracy* – Sudha Setty, Professor of Law, and Judge Kenneth Neiman.

**Tuition is \$35 for the entire program. The program is free of charge for any high school, college, or graduate student with a valid student ID. Registration will continue through October 19 or until classes are filled.** For more information, please call Pat Newcombe at 413-782-1616 or visit [www1.law.wne.edu/academics/index.cfm?selection=doc.11185](http://www1.law.wne.edu/academics/index.cfm?selection=doc.11185) ■

### Baker-Polito Administration Receives \$2.9 million Federal Grant to Grow Apprenticeship Programs in Massachusetts

**BOSTON** — The Baker-Polito Administration announced today (9/9/15) that the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development was awarded a \$2.9 million federal grant to expand apprenticeship opportunities in high-growth industries in Massachusetts.

The American Apprenticeship Grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor, will enable the state to help 300 residents gain apprentice-

ship training in industries with a growing demand for new employees, such as healthcare, technology and advanced manufacturing.

The funds will support the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Initiative (MAI) to increase the number of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities in those industries. There are more than 7,500 registered apprentices in the state in 2015. ■



Jay Griffin,  
Stone Soul Festival  
Program Chairman  
hayjay252@msn.com  
Tel: 413-636-3881  
or  
413-739-2947

# GOOD NEWS

## Good News for October 2015

We think the photos below tell the story of the success of the Stone Soul Festival weekend. There was outstanding corporate and community support for the first-ever Stone Soul Hall of Fame Award presented to State Representative Benjamin Swan on September 3rd in collaboration with the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Thank you for the

outstanding job by the committee: Karon Tyler, Hamilton Wray, Rosemary Tracy Woods, Marci Vilpic, Denise Jordan, Chris Scott, Alice Buckner and the Job Corps.

We'd also like to thank the following: Eliza Crescentini, Executive Director of the Children's Study Home, and Della Blake of the Hampden County Sheriff Dept. for their support of Friday's Kids Night; An-

drew Cade for the entertainment lineup; Kenneth Barnett and crew for the parade on Saturday; Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center, Mable Sharif and the 39 medical and social service agencies who participated in the health fair; Pastor Zachary Reynolds and Patricia

Reynolds for their great job with Sunday's Praise in the Park; Skip Miller and Baystate Sportsmen Club for another outstanding fish fry and BBQ; and Evenus Thompson and Will Naylor did an outstanding job with the Gospel and Community Service Awards. God bless us all! ■



## Stone Soul Festival September 3-6, 2015



# SPRINGFIELD SPORTS

## YOUTH PREMIER SOCCER



*David Kelley is the co-founder and Vice President of SFC. He serves as current Head Coach of BU15 Premier team and BU14 District Select Team. He can be contacted at: [Dkelley@springfieldfc.net](mailto:Dkelley@springfieldfc.net)*



**H**i, my name is Kirstyn Kelley. I am currently a freshman college student at Cedarville University as a biology major. Athletically, Cedarville is a division two college. This year I am playing on the JV women's soccer team. Although I am very happy with the team and I am really enjoying getting to know the girls better, my ultimate goal is to play for their varsity squad. This is motivating me to work harder than ever on and off the field. I've been playing soccer since I was five years old. Because of this, I have a lot of experience and knowledge of the game. I played on a number of different teams until I turned twelve, then I followed one coach until I graduated.

I graduated club soccer with Springfield Football Club (SFC). I have been playing with SFC, specifically, since the club was established. The encouraging, positive and intense work ethic made me into a player who appreciates the game and works

## Springfield Football Club Taught Me Invaluable Lessons

*By Kirstyn Kelley*

not for myself alone but for the good of the team. A few things that my coach drilled into us was that practice did not make perfect, practice made permanent. That changed the way I looked at practicing—not only soccer—but in all things that I do. If I am going to get good at something, whether it be a sport, school or something else, whether I am alone or if someone is watching me, I have to perform the way I want to perform in the real life situation.

My coach encouraged every single one of my teammates to keep their grades up in school and he held us accountable for doing it. If we were not reaching a certain standard, our playing time would be less and less no matter how skilled and critical the player was to the team. SFC was and is my second family. When I was with my team, I felt comfortable and was able to be myself without holding anything back. All of my teammates had extremely different personalities. This made it all the more exciting when we were able to all come together on the field and be on the total same page. The team taught me a lot about working with different types of people and how to respect them and work with everyone to come to a single agreement.

Soccer has taught me many things. It has taught me how to be a team player, how to be patient, what

hard work looks and feels like, and, most importantly, in my opinion, it has taught me time management. I'm not saying that SFC is perfect or that it is without its kinks but that it taught me all the more to work hard; it taught me to not give up at the first few signs of adversity. If the program was flawless and everything ran smoothly all of the time then I would not have acquired the grit that I have today. I would not have learned some of life's most important lessons. I thank SFC for helping shape my character and truly bettering my soccer abilities, preparing me for college soccer. I sincerely enjoyed my time with you.



*Kirstyn Kelley*

If interested in joining Springfield FC, please contact Juan Hernandez at [proplaya413@gmail.com](mailto:proplaya413@gmail.com).

Tryouts for U15 boys will be held October 10<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Coach Dave at [dkelley@springfieldfc.net](mailto:dkelley@springfieldfc.net) for further details.

Be sure to register your team for our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Soccerween Tournament. For details contact Kenrick Whitely at [academy@springfieldfc.net](mailto:academy@springfieldfc.net).



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## CBC Health Braintrust Releases 2015 Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America

continued from page 15

The Kelly Report outlines the grim state of Black Health in America, with African Americans facing higher rates of mortality than any other racial or ethnic group for eight of the top 10 causes of death. Other startling statistics:

- African American cancer rates are 10% higher than white Americans
- Blacks are nearly twice as likely to have diabetes than whites
- African Americans are six times more likely than whites to be victims of homicide
- While Blacks account for just 13% of the total U.S. population, they account for nearly half of all new HIV infections
- African Americans make up more than one-third of all U.S. patients receiving dialysis for kidney failure.

(Additional Kelly Report statistics can be viewed at <https://cbcbraintrust-kelly.house.gov/media-center/kelly-report>)

“Inequities in health and health-care in communities of color remain deep and persistent, spanning from cradle to the grave, as evidenced by the higher rates of chronic disease and premature death. Many of the health disparities that exist are shaped by generations of cultural bias, injustice and inequality,” Kelly said. “Despite the gains of the Affordable Care Act, we have much ground to cover in closing the health equity gap.”

To improve Black health outcomes, the Kelly Report proposes a five-point plan to reduce health disparities that focuses on Access, Workforce Diversity, Innovation & Research, Community Engagement and Federal Action on

Healthcare. The five-point plan can be viewed at <https://cbcbraintrust-kelly.house.gov/media-center/kelly-report>

The full Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America can be viewed at <http://robinkelly.house.gov/sites/robinkelly.house.gov/files/2015%20Kelly%20Report.pdf>.

“The whole can only ever be as healthy as its parts. For America to achieve true health equity, lawmakers, community leaders and public health stakeholders must come together to promote better health outcomes for diverse communities. Your ethnicity, zip code or bank balance should never determine your health,” Kelly said. “Though there are a number of challenges in addressing health disparities, there are also many opportunities to advance and achieve health equity. We all have a role to play in creating a healthier America and the Kelly Report is a contribution toward this critical effort.”

*The Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust is the authority on African American and minority health disparities on Capitol Hill. The Braintrust is tasked with creating legislative and policy solutions to reduce health disparities and promote good health outcomes in multicultural communities.*

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# OCTOBER 2015 EVENTS

For more events, go to: [www.afampov.com](http://www.afampov.com)

## ONGOING THRU OCTOBER 18

**"Arte & Soul: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month" Exhibition** featuring the works of Raymond Escribano, Victor Guzman, Awilda Oxios, Stephanie Perez and Destiny Santiago and curated by Ashley Pereira

**When:** Gallery Hours: Tues.-Fri. 11am—5pm; Sat. by appt.

**Where:** Art for the Soul Gallery, Tower Square, 2nd Fl., 1500 Main St., Springfield, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** [ashleyzurcpereira@gmail.com](mailto:ashleyzurcpereira@gmail.com)

## THURSDAY—1 thru SUNDAY—4

**Amherst Poetry Festival and Emily Dickinson Poetry Marathon**

**When:** Go to [www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org/AmherstPoetryFestival](http://www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org/AmherstPoetryFestival)

**Where:** The Emily Dickinson Museum, Jones Library, Pacific Lodge, and The Homestead at the Emily Dickinson Museum, 280 Main Street, Amherst, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** 413.542.8161; visit website

## FRIDAY—2

STCC Diversity Council presents Steve Pemberton, Fortune 50 Executive, Author of "A Chance in the World," Voice of Change for Youth

**When:** 11am

**Where:** STCC, One Armory Square, Scibelli Hall/Gym, Springfield, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** [See ad on page 25](#)

## SATURDAY—3

2015-2016 Youth Cultural Education Organization Information Session

**When:** 10am—1pm

**Where:** AIC, Karen Sprague Cultural Arts Bldg./Griswold Theater, 1000 State St., Springfield, MA

**Info:** 413.262.7729; [BlackcollegetourYCEO@yahoo.com](mailto:BlackcollegetourYCEO@yahoo.com)

## SATURDAY—3 & SUNDAY—4

**Ahimsa Yoga & Music Festival** featuring two days of yoga and music in the beautiful Catskills

**Where:** Windham Mountain Resort, 19 Resort Drive, Windham, NY

**Info:** \$; <http://tickets.brightstarevents.com/event/AhimsaFestival>; <http://shyamdasfoundation.com>; [Omplanetmusic@gmail.com](mailto:Omplanetmusic@gmail.com)

## TUESDAY—6

Baystate Health to Offer Conference on "The Patient Experience: Explore, Engage, Excel" with Keynote Speaker Brian Boyle

**When:** 8:30am—4:30pm

**Where:** Log Cabin Banquet & Meeting House, 500 Easthampton Rd., Holyoke, MA

**Info:** \$130 online registration at [learn.bhs.org](http://learn.bhs.org); course credits avail. [Joanna.Donahue@baystatehealth.org](mailto:Joanna.Donahue@baystatehealth.org); 413.322.4242

The Performance Project/First Generation Performance featuring selections from *Ripple Effect*, *fo n' ale (we must go)*, and *a preview of new work*

**When:** 7pm

**Where:** Augusta Savage Gallery, 103 New Africa House, UMass, 180 Infirmary Way, Amherst, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** 413.545.5177

## WEDNESDAY—7

The United Way Women's Leadership Council holds 2nd Annual Taste of Autumn Wine & Beer Tasting & Silent Auction

**When:** 5:30—8pm

**Where:** TD Bank Center, 1441 Main St., Springfield, MA

**Info:** \$38 in advance/\$40 at door; To register call 413.693.0201; Proceeds benefit women & girls programs; [See ad on page 17](#)

## THURSDAY—8

Meet Pioneer Valley Non-Profits and Area Government Agencies seeking Diverse Candidates for their Boards and Committees at OnBoard

**When:** 5—pm

**Where:** Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame Center Court, 1000 Hall of Fame Ave., Springfield, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** [See ad on page 14](#)

## SATURDAY—10

Empire State Capital Volkssporters Lenox Walk, 5km or 10 km (3.1 or 6.2 mile)

**When:** 9—11am Registration; Finish by 2 pm

**Where:** Begins at the Tina Packer Playhouse Shakespeare and Co. 70 Kemble St., Lenox, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the public;** Participants must register and



sign insurance waiver; children under 12 must be accompanied by adult; 518.399.0159; [susanbg2@yahoo.com](mailto:susanbg2@yahoo.com); [www.walkescv.org](http://www.walkescv.org)

## SATURDAY—10

20th Anniversary of the Million Man March

**When:** Muhammad Mosque #13, 727 State St., Springfield, MA

**Where:** Washington, DC

**Info:** 413.827.7691; [NOI.ORG](http://NOI.ORG); [MillionsForJustice.ORG](http://MillionsForJustice.ORG)

## WEDNESDAY—14

Hispanic Heritage Month Film & Discussion—Resistencia: The fight for the Aguan Valley with Director Jesse Freeston

**When:** 6—8:30pm

**Where:** New Haven Free Public Library, 133 Elm St., New Haven, CT

**Info:** 203.946.8130

## THURSDAY—15

New Haven's Board of Alders Black & Hispanic Caucus hosts 4th Annual Fall Recognition Gala

**When:** 6—10pm

**Where:** Anthony's Ocean View, 450 Lighthouse Rd., New Haven, CT

**Info:** Tickets are \$75 in advance and \$85 at door; 203.946.6483; Funds used to assist youth and seniors

## SUNDAY—18

American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Pioneer Valley Walk

**When:** 10am Registration; 11am Start

**Where:** Stanley Park, Westfield, MA

**Info:** 413.493.2126; [www.MakingStridesWalk.org/PioneerValleyMA](http://www.MakingStridesWalk.org/PioneerValleyMA); [PioneerValleyMAStrides@cancer.org](mailto:PioneerValleyMAStrides@cancer.org)

## THURSDAY—22

STCC Black Professionals Group presents Scholarship Wine & Food Tasting Experience in honor of the Myra D. Smith Scholarship Fund and Celebrating 10 years of Diversity at STCC

**When:** 5—8pm

**Where:** STCC, One Armory Sq., Bldg. 2 Scibelli Hall, Springfield, MA

**Info:** \$25 in advance; \$30 at event; Purchase tickets online at [www.stcc.edu/diversity/events.asp](http://www.stcc.edu/diversity/events.asp)

The Springfield Food Policy Council hosts a Food Day Event to inspire Americans to change their diets and our food policies

**When:** 5:30—7:30pm

**Where:** St. Michaels Cathedral, 260 State St., Bishop Marshall Center, Elliot St. Entrance, Springfield, MA

**Info:** **FREE and Open to the Public;** RSVP to 413.263.6500x6539 or [johnnettab@springfieldpartnersinc.com](mailto:johnnettab@springfieldpartnersinc.com)

## FRIDAY—23

100 Men of Color Awards Gala

**When:** 7pm VIP Cocktail Hour; 8pm Awards Ceremony

**Where:** The Bushnell, 166 Capital Ave., Hartford CT

**Info:** \$100, \$68.50, \$53.50; 860.987.5900; [See ad on page 2](#)

## SATURDAY—24

St. Peter's Church sponsors Annual Lake George Luncheon Cruise Bus Trip

**When:** 8am bus leaves Springfield; 5pm bus leaves Lake George, NY

**Where:** St. Peter's Church, 45 Buckingham St., Springfield, MA

**Info:** \$86 per person; Contact 413.726.9006

## SUNDAY—25

22nd Annual Rays of Hope — A Walk Toward the Cure of Breast Cancer and 6th Annual Run Toward the Cure 8k

**When:** 7:30am Regist. for the Run; 9am Registration for the Walk

**Where:** Temple Beth El, Dickinson St., Springfield, MA

**Info:** Register online at [www.baystatehealth.org/raysofhope](http://www.baystatehealth.org/raysofhope); 413.794.8001; Held rain or shine

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# From South Africa to Western Massachusetts by Way of Jonathan Butler

*Taken from Mack Avenue Records and Submitted by Walter D. Woodgett*



*Walter Woodgett*



The youngest of 13 children, Jonathan Butler grew up in Cape Town, South Africa, ruled by Apartheid and segregation. “I was born poor, but richly blessed with talent and the gift to make music,” he says. “I can’t dismiss where I’ve been or where I come from. I’m a proud South African and I came from nothing.”

Butler began his singing career at the age of seven, releasing his first album in 1973 and winning the Best New ARTIST Grammy in South Africa the following year at the age of 12. He made history by being the first black artist played on the white South African radio while earning three gold records (‘Please Stay’ went double gold and ‘I Love How You Love Me’ went gold in 1975 as he became a teenager.

More than a decade later, Butler moved to London, England after signing with Jive Records and released his first album internationally. The self-titled set went gold in 1987 in the United Kingdom and the USA. He received a Grammy nomination for the Best R&B song for his R&B vocal hit ‘Lies’ and for the best Jazz song for the instrumental ‘Going Home.’ His genre-busting material earned songwriter’s award and received abundant airplay in multiple radio formats: pop, urban contemporary jazz, adult contemporary and gospel. Butler’s 2004 album, ‘Surrender,’ went gold in South Africa where he remains a superstar. “I don’t think I’ve ever really celebrated these moments in my life. I’ve spent my whole life taking care of people ever since I was seven. I’m grateful but this is the “season of me.”

Butler is still taking care of people back home. Last fall he launched the Jonathan Butler Foundation in his native country to fund music education programs that give children the purpose to overcome a life of drugs and poverty just as he did. The music and the arts program serving South African children ages 4-17 operates with the mission statement: “Purpose kills addiction.”

In concert, Butler remains a captivating and

powerful performer, pouring his heart into selections from his immense catalogue. In addition to a popular draw at headline dates, festivals shows and music cruises, Butler thrives on interacting with his

a difficult year emotionally and personally, but I did a lot reflecting over the past two years and I’m in a good place,” summarizes Butler.



*Jonathan Butler and Nelson Mandela*

fans. For the past four years, he has led a group of 35 guests on the Jonathan Butler Safari, during which he shares his South Africa by visiting important landmarks in his life, as well as historic locales such the prison on Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was jailed.

“I’ve come to a really good place in my life even if finding my way there was tough. I’m living my dream and it’s amazing what God is doing – seeing all these things through tears and pain. Seeing God placed me in these extraordinary places and opportunities... If I could not see it, I’d really be blind and faithless. I need to hold onto the love surrounding me. I had never really dropped my shoulders to embrace it. It took shedding my skin, realigning and readjusting myself as a person, honestly looking at how I can become a better person, which affects my family. We stood together though difficult periods and it’s taught me not to make too many allowances in my life of which I had been making too many. It was trying times and

During an extraordinary musical life that has unfolded in the public eye, Butler has seen and endured a lot. If not for a spiritual intervention, his light would have been extinguished long ago on the mercilessly dark path of abuse and self destruction. His music has purpose, providing comfort and inspiration. When he sings, he testifies to the glory according and the healing power of love. When he plays guitar, his fast fingers innately find notes of passion and divinity. Jonathan Butler’s career has carried him far, far beyond his wildest dreams. He is living his dream and that is a blessing for us all. ■

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- *Dora Robinson* • *Crystal Senter-Brown* • *Myra Smith* • *Cynthia Tucker*



## Cindi's Breast Cancer Treatment Plan

# BREAST SURGERY RADIATION THERAPY KEEPING UP WITH HER DANCE STUDENTS

*Cindi M. from Springfield shares her cancer journey at [baystatecancerexperts.org](http://baystatecancerexperts.org)*

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