

SPRINGFIELD GRADUATES WORTHY OF PRAISE

“Our young men shared stories of the power of brotherhood, the necessity of self-belief and advocacy and the limitless potential all graduate seniors encompass.”

By Supt. Daniel Warwick – 6

A YANKEE FAN IN RED SOX NATION

“As a wonderful person and profound educator, he modeled for and taught me that loyalty, integrity, trust and compassion are the foundations for successfully educating, collaborating with and celebrating others.”

By Gianna Allentuck – 7

COMPLEXITY IS TIED TO DESTINY

“The greater your destiny, the greater the complexities.”

By Patricia Spradley – 7

STEPPING OUT OF THE FAMILIAR

“I have never known hunger, poor health due to inadequate medical attention or homelessness. I have never known poverty or the day-to-day struggles of people who worked with dignity all their lives, but worked for wages too low to preserve their dignity in old age.”

By Deb Peavey – 15

CRIME AND EDUCATION

“I was also concerned about why so many more books about athletes were written as opposed to successful inventors, educators, businessmen and so forth. Kenn Goin, publisher at Bearport, responded to my inquiry. He told me they published what is marketable.”

By Kenneth Harris – 17

THE PROCESS OF “THE GRAYSON GEAR”

“I called my grandparents, Marjorie and Frederick Hurst, for advice. I thought they would be helpful since they run their own newspaper business.”

By Tristin Hurst – 18

OPEN LOVE LETTER TO BETHUNE-COOKMAN 2017 GRADUATES...

“Watching you stand and turn your backs to her makes us elated. Overjoyed. Humbled.”

By “Black Faculty” – 25

A LETTER TO MY BOYS

“I want to first remind you that you have a heritage: a lineage of good works, helping others; a lineage of faith and determination. Use this to spring forward in your existence and allow it to occupy your minds with an attitude of positive outcomes that will not only enrich you, but others as well.”

By Pastor J.P. Morgan – 26

HE’LL BE AROUND FOR AWHILE

By Frederick A. Hurst



Dr. John B. Cook, Springfield Technical Community College’s sixth President

Dr. John B. Cook is the youngest Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) president since the college was founded in 1967 with Edmond Garvey as its first president. Garvey was followed by Robert C. Geitz (1974-1981), Leonard J. Collamore (1981-1983), Andrew M. Scibelli (1983-2004) and Dr. Ira H. Rubenzahl, who served for twelve years from 2004 to 2016 before retiring and opening up the vacancy for Dr. Cook.

The combined services of these distinguished men leaves a substantial legacy for Dr. Cook to maintain and grow but from the early looks of things, Dr. Cook is up to the challenge. From the enthusiasm of staff and faculty, he appears to have moved seamlessly into his new presidency and has quickly merged into the socio-economic fabric of Springfield and its greater metropolitan area.

Dr. Cook stopped by the *Point of View* office earlier in the year and we talked about his planned approach to his new job. He made it clear to me that his approach would not deviate from the collegial pattern he has always followed and which has made him successful over the years. His goal, he said, is to be available and to do a lot of listening by holding office hours and town hall and community meetings and working with businesses like CRRC and MGM to determine how STCC students can best be prepared to meet their needs.

As should be expected of a college president, students are at the center of his concerns and he is particularly

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The Idea of Being Present

Fathers and Father Figures Can Make a Difference in the Lives of Kids

By John Roberson, VP of Children and Family Services for CHD

Perhaps you have seen the illuminated highway signs advising motorists to put down their phones and focus on driving. The clever slogan is “Drive Present” and the concept is simple: focus due attention on the task at hand. Besides safer driving, there’s another example of being present that can impact lives: being a *present father*.

As I reflect on the upcoming celebration of Fathers’ Day, I want to celebrate the many African American fathers who are present in the lives of their children and families. Do I think African American men need to embrace their responsibility as present fathers? Absolutely. I also know that we as a community need to embrace kids who grow up without a present

father. It’s no secret that African American men are the people best suited to embrace these kids.

So what are some simple ways we can help make a difference for kids who, due to no fault of theirs, have no present father in their lives?

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John Roberson

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship Fund Awards \$5,000 in Scholarships

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship Fund (RSMFSF) was established in December 2015. The purpose of the RSMFSF is to increase educational opportunities for students interested in Journalism who are underrepresented in the field.

The Scholarship Committee awarded 5,000 in scholarships this spring. Recipients include: Madison Woodard, senior at Sabis International Charter School who will be attending UMASS Dartmouth in the fall, Juhi A. Dasrath, a junior at UMASS Amherst, majoring in Journalism and Public Policy and Jayare Alvarado, a junior at UMASS Amherst, majoring in communications and journalism.

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship Committee is happy to be able to recognize and financially assist these deserving students, and we wish them tremendous success in their academic pursuits." The committee also wants to thank all those who have supported the scholarship fund with your generous donations and those who participated in the Golf fundraiser last year. A special thank you to the Republican and Masslive.

This year's golf Tournament will be **Saturday, August 26, 2017 at Agawam Municipal Golf Course beginning at 11:30 am.** For more information, call Curt Marcellin at 413-335-1952. ■



Scholarship recipient Madison Woodard (3rd from left) with her grandmother First Lady Ella Williams, her mother Jennifer Brantley and scholarship committee members (at right) Tyeshia Weir and Amira Johnson and Madison's aunt Vanessa Cofer (far right).



Preiajah Jones

Congratulations to **Preiajah Jones**, an honor student at Hampden Charter School of Science, a member of the Student Council, a Student Ambassador, a part of the Mathematics team and community volunteer with Revitalize CDC, who has been nominated to go to the Junior Nationals Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C. June 24-29.

To help her follow her dream, contact her at preana30@gmail.com or 413-629-8497.



Scholarship recipient Jayare Alvarado with committee members Stephon Dawson, Seneca Slaughter and Fred Allen Swan, Jr.



Scholarship recipient Juhi Dasrath (far right) is shown with scholarship committee members Seneca Slaughter, Stephon Dawson and Pastor Tania Barber.

The 2nd Annual
RHONDA SWAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 26TH, 2017
 AGAWAM MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE
 128 Southwick Street
 Feeding Hills, MA 01030
 registration starts at 11:30 pm
 start time 12:30 pm
 individual players \$100.00 each
 Includes:
 18 holes of golf, cart, t-shirt,
 Buffet, raffle & awards
 hole sponsorship \$200.00
 tee sponsorship \$100.00
 For more information please call Freda Malone at 413-218-6399
 or Curt Marcellin at 413-335-1952

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AF-AM NEWS **bits**

By Frederick A. Hurst

A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial (May 13-14, 2017) praising Bethune-Cookman University President Edison Jackson for inviting Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to be this year's commencement speaker and for threatening to "mail" protesting students their degrees is just another example of a point of view. In my view, DeVos deserved the reception she received at the historically Black university and the students were merely exercising their freedom of speech right to protest. They didn't shoot guns; they didn't throw tomatoes; they didn't scream obscenities or racial epithets. They did the minimum of what any red blooded American with half an ounce of courage and knowledge of the Constitution would do and simply booed and turned their backs on her. Good for them! Many of us were beginning to believe that the 1960s, a time when we ran sycophantic Black college presidents out of office, were for naught. It's good to know that Black students have not forgotten that defending dignity is more important than begging for money from an anti-Black and anti-immigrant administration. (See Op Ed on page 25)

KNOW THY ENEMY

It's putting it mildly to describe as humiliating the picture of all those Black college presidents gathering at the White House for a photo op with President Donald Trump who had nothing to say of substance about his commitment to funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) while at the same time signing an executive order moving the initiative to support them from the Department of Education to the White House to make it appear he was elevating the initiative. But, as *Boston Globe's* Renee Graham pointed out, when Trump recently signed the \$1.1 trillion spending bill, it included "...a statement that made HBCU officials very nervous. Trump

inferred that "provisions that allocated benefits on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender" might be unconstitutional and, on that basis, he could challenge the decades-old HBCU Capital Financing Program that helps these schools finance their construction projects." (May 10, 2017) So you see, the students at Bethune-Cookman University had a reason to protest against Betsy DeVos and the Trump administration, and the Black college administrators should be ashamed for allowing Trump to use them as Black History Month props.

REPUTATION AND ROD ROSENSTEIN

Newly appointed Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's reputation has probably set a record for its speed of decline from the time he was approved by the Senate to the time his purloined memo was sent to President Trump and used as an excuse for the firing of FBI Director James Comey. It was less than a week after he had assured both Republican and Democratic Senators that he would be an objective reviewer of allegations involving the Trump relationship to Russia that he plunged a dagger into Comey's back and lost public confidence in his objectivity. The only thing he can do to restore his tarnished reputation is appoint a special prosecutor, which he did.

"THE MYSTERY OF GENIUS"

Amanda Foreman wrote in the "Review" section of *The Wall Street Journal*, "Today we are still no closer to understanding genius. In the 20th century, people thought that IQ tests would identify the gift. But a long-term study of more than 1,500 children with "genius" IQs started in 1921 by the educational psychologist Lewis M. Terman, revealed something surprising: While most participants ended up successful, none of them were hailed as geniuses in their fields. . . . What can be agreed, after so many rival notions of genius

across the ages, is that it always falls outside the norm. As the philosopher Arthur Schopenhman (1788-1860) said: "Talent is like the marksman who hits a target which others cannot reach; genius is like the marksman who hits a target...others cannot even see." (May 6-7, 2017)

WHAT IS THIS AVERSION IN AMERICA TOWARD A BLACK MAN MAKING MONEY?

"When ex-presidents cash in, time to cut pensions." That was the title of a column in the *Boston Herald* (May 6, 2017) written by syndicated conservative columnist Cal Thomas regarding former president Barack Obama's \$400,000 speech fee he is being paid by the Wall Street firm of Cantor Fitzgerald. Even while revealing in his article that Nixon took \$1 million to interview with David Frost, Ronald Reagan took \$2 million for two speeches in Japan, George W. Bush has made 200 speeches at \$100,000 to \$175,000 a pop, and the Clintons have almost broken the bank, he only now suggests that it is "...time to cut pensions" over our first Black president's speech fee of \$400,000! Well, hello! We've been there before. Too often, historically, when we Black folks arrive, the rules are changed. And now Cal Thomas wants another such rule change to take Obama's pension. Is there no end to this racial nonsense?

ELIZABETH WARREN, BACK UP A BIT

Your moral declaration that you are "troubled" by Barack Obama's receipt of \$400,000 to deliver a speech at Cantor Fitzgerald reeks of liberal duplicity. You've made plenty of money in your time and we know if you ever get that presidency you are angling for as America's first woman to do so, when you leave it, you'll be racking in the bucks as much and as fast as they come your way. Hypocrisy is a bad thing.

A CONSERVATIVE'S VIEW

None other than the editors of *The Wall Street Journal* wrote, "Poor

Barack Obama. The fellow governs for eight long years as the most progressive President since LBJ, and now his former left-wing fans are upset that he wants to enjoy the fruits of capitalism as a private citizen. . . . But why begrudge the man his right to make a living? Mr. Obama is a relatively young man with two daughters to put through college, and speech-making is something he knows how to do."

BE PROUD

Yes, I am proud of the Boston Red Sox for their response to reports that at least one Boston fan taunted Baltimore Orioles' Black player Adam Jones while calling him a "nigger." I could have more politely said "by calling him the "n" word but after hearing the mainstream media reports suggesting that Jones offered "no proof" of his claim, I thought a dose of ugly reality was in order. There is nothing unusual about a respected Black sports figure being called "nigger" on the field of play by a soused White sports fan – especially in Boston's Fenway Park where, to their credit, the present owners have worked to reverse the once rampant racial environment that had been both tolerated and encouraged in days past under deceased former owner Tom Yawkey. The burden of proof should properly be on the taunter and not the taunted. For so many in the mainstream media to play it any other way is outrageous, especially when the one doing the taunting is without the courage to come forward. There is another burden of proof waiting to be met. As well-meaning as current Red Sox ownership is, until the Yawkey Way street name is changed, the sincerity of current ownership and management will always remain suspect since the very name of the street serves as an invitation to racist fans to express themselves.

IT GETS REAL CRAZY

The "Ideas" writer of *The Boston Globe* (May 14, 2017), under "Seeing again is believing," wrote of recent studies: "People who thought

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HE'LL BE AROUND FOR AWHILE

continued from page 1

concerned about the “equity piece,” i.e., are minorities successful and are their accomplishments equal. “Socio-Economic diversity” is important to him and is something he can relate to from personal experience.

Dr. Cook was born in Lowville, a small town of about 3,500 in northern New York and raised not too far away in Oneonta with a population of about 14,000. Both parents were first time college graduates with four children, two girls and two boys. Dr. Cook was the second oldest. All four have professional degrees at the Masters level or above. Overall, life for Dr. Cook and his siblings was pretty stable but he recalls when things were not so good and he qualified for the school free lunch program in which his mother was too proud to allow him to participate.

Dr. Cook recalls when his father, who had the misfortune of being lowest in seniority, lost his college health education job after eight years through “retrenchment.” He recovered and became an elementary school principal but the interim period was a bit tough. His mother now works as a nurse practitioner after first obtaining a master’s and doctorate and teaching in a nursing program. His parents’ parents were immigrants, one Irish and the others a mix of Italian, German and English.

Dr. Cook attended Oneonta high school where he participated in various sports following in the footsteps of his father who was a football player. He played soccer and was a winter ski racer and, notably, he claims – as do all of us former avid golfers – to have once been a pretty good golfer with a 12 handicap. He earned his B.S. at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York in psychology and anthropology and went on to earn his M.A. in Community and Social Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Fifteen years later he earned his PhD at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, New Hampshire in educa-



STCC's 6th President, Dr. John B. Cook, speaks at his inauguration on Thursday, April 27

tion with a specialty in curriculum and instruction. It seems fair to say that Dr. Cook was well credentialed for a college president’s job and his experience measures up to his credentials.

When interviewed about his experience, Dr. Cook low keys it. At least he low-keyed it with me and I had no reason to believe it was an act. Rather, it seemed to be a reflection of genuine humility of the type often found in people who are comfortable with themselves. But when I reviewed his resume I understood a key reason he was hired as STCC’s president. It affirmed that he is superbly qualified with levels of experience that a man of his young age would not normally have accumulated.

But I must admit, I had one concern and I pressed him hard on it. In essence, I wanted to know how a fair-haired, middle class White guy, born in a little White northern town of 3,500 and raised in a not much larger one of 14,000, whose work history was in universities in the rolling, green hills of New Hampshire where Black and Hispanics were almost as rare as the Massachusetts mountain lion, could succeed in a majority-minority city in a community college that was also majority-minority and located smack in the inner city.

Admittedly, my probe was par-

tially in jest. I was more interested in how Dr. Cook would respond than I was in the question. Obviously, a person doesn’t have to be from the inner city to contribute to the inner city and at a certain level, color and ethnicity

become irrelevant on all sides. I sensed that he was at that level which is why I asked. Dr. Cook’s response and my subsequent inquiries, including discussions with other people with whom he has interacted, suggest that I was right.

As it turns out, Dr. Cook is not unfamiliar with urban life or multicultural life. He not only attended UMass Lowell but it is where he returned many years later to do the case study for his doctoral dissertation. Lowell is a city of about 110,000. It is located in Middlesex County and is the fourth largest city in Massachusetts, and the second-largest in the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area. During the Cambodian Genocide, the city took in an influx of refugees and is now the home of America’s second-largest Cambodian-American population. Its population includes 49.3% White, 20.2% Asian-American, 17.3% Hispanic, 6.8% African-American and

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Need Summer Classes?

Register

Now:

Online:
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Walk-in:
Registrar’s Office,
Garvey Hall South/Bldg. 15

Phone: (413) 755-4321

5-week Sessions:

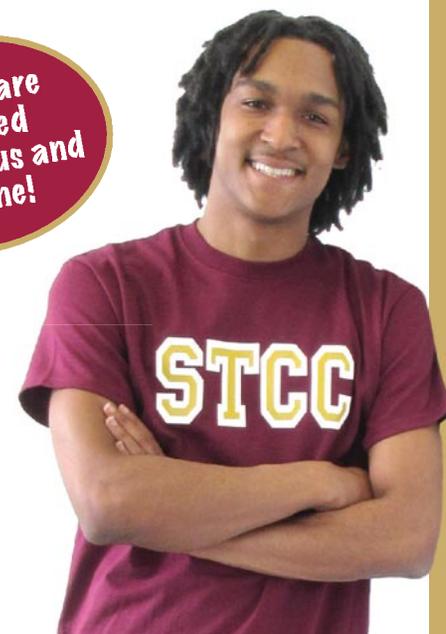
June 5–July 7

July 10–August 10

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Springfield Technical
Community College

EDUCATION

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Springfield Graduates Worthy of Praise

By Superintendent Daniel Warwick



Daniel Warwick,
Superintendent at the
Springfield Public Schools

Israel Robinson, Central High School Class of 2017, had a difficult decision to make. Accepted to such notable colleges as University of Notre Dame, Vassar, Duke and

100 Males to College, we take pride in a program that is helping our district defy a troubling national trend. The Pew Research Center reports that even though college enrollment rates among young people have risen in recent decades, females outpace males in college enrollment, especially among Hispanics and blacks.

The Recognition Ceremony held at Center Stage last month in honor of the 100 Males to College who are seniors, flew in the face of that trend.



SPS graduates 2nd class of 100 Males to College

several others, he had to think long and hard before deciding to attend Tufts University as a pre-medical student in the fall. Corey Bryant, also Class of 2017, will study electrical engineering at Morehouse College and already feels a sense of pride when his young cousins say they, too, want to be Morehouse men someday. And Putnam Academy 2017 graduate Trust Okori, who will attend the University of Massachusetts as an information and computer sciences major, is confident he will succeed even though just three years ago he wasn't even sure if college was for him.

As Springfield Public Schools (SPS) graduates its second class of

Our young men shared stories of the power of brotherhood, the necessity of self-belief and advocacy and the limitless potential all graduating seniors encompass. The event was the first in a long line of commencement ceremonies and celebrations and I can think of no better way to mark the onset of the June graduation season, which is one of my favorite times of year (the other is the first day of school). Established two years ago, as a partnership between Springfield Technical Community College, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Westfield State University, the Massachusetts Department of

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READING TO SUCCEED

Summer Learning Programs: Fun AND Learning!

By Sally Fuller



Sally Fuller heads the Reading Success by 4th Grade (RSAG) 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.readby4thgrade.com

Reading Success by 4th Grade has produced a guide to summer learning programs in the city. This Summer Learning Guide provides a listing of 2016 camp programs available throughout the city to your children . . . and to you!



Through fun and engaging activities and programs, children will be learning while they're having fun.

Keeping our children engaged during the long school break helps to avoid summer learning loss that often puts children behind academically when they return to school in the fall.

You can access this guide online by clicking <https://www.readby4thgrade.com/blog/news/summer-program-guide-2017/>

Hard copies of the guide are available at the Springfield City Library and branches, the Springfield Public Schools Parent and Community Engagement Center (91 School Street), and New England Farm Workers Council (1628-1640 Main Street).

Many of Springfield's summer programs are participating in the **Springfield Reads to Build a Better World** city-wide reading program.

The logo you see here means that the program listed in the Summer Program Guide is participating in the Springfield-wide summer reading program, **Springfield Reads to Build a Better World**.

Participating summer learning programs are making sure that every child will read for 20 minutes every day during the program. Programs will record the number of children reading and Reading Success by 4th Grade will track the number of minutes read across the city and share the good news! **Springfield Reads to Build a**

Better World has been designed to connect to the Springfield Library's summer reading program, so children will be able to track their summer reading and be entered to win prizes from the Library!

More about Springfield's summer programs.

Some programs are free or very low cost, some have optional extended hours, and some accept vouchers and have transportation available. Most provide lunch and a snack.

Take time to read through the guide for information about all of the programs and all of the details, including program locations, hours and registration requirements (contact information is included). There are programs for all ages and interests.

Swimming, arts and crafts, sports, reading and healthy activities will ensure that children are having fun while keeping their minds active. There are also academic programs to keep middle and high school youth on track for graduation.

Make the most of the summer break by preparing your children for school while they are having fun, making new friends and increasing their learning skills at the same time!

EDUCATION

EDUCATION & HOPE

A Yankees Fan in Red Sox Nation

By Gianna Allentuck



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

I'm not a historian, scholar, statistician or philosopher. I don't read all sorts of deep and heavy, thoughtful books or quote great minds and activists from long ago. I'm just me. A nice person with a genuine heart. Dedicated to raising up, celebrating and uniting others in a world seemingly growing more and more divided...

Though born and raised in Western Massachusetts, I was reared and continue to be a loyal New York Yankees and New York Giants fan. If you know me, you know that in the spring and summer, I proudly wear my father's Yankees hat and windbreaker; and in the fall and winter, my Giants cap and parka. Much to my mother's dismay because she wanted a "girly girl" to wear frilly dresses and play with dolls, I was a Daddy's girl who loved to play and watch sports – especially together – and dress in our team gear.

What I also loved – and still cherish – was the powerful message and example of that message that my beloved father instilled in me regarding being a fan of the Yankees or Giants – or anything. As a wonderful person and profound educator, he modeled for and taught me that loyalty, integrity, trust and compassion are the foundations for successfully educating, collaborating with and celebrating others.

He also taught me how to be a Yankees fan in Red Sox Nation...

In this, the most famous rivalry in the history of sports, his message was simple: loving the Yankees does

not require pointing to the deficiencies in the Red Sox, but rather stresses focusing on the talents of the Yankees. And though friendly banter and trash talk are the hallmarks of this rivalry, being a true Yankees fan – a true sports fan – means acknowledging the Red Sox as skilled, dedicated competitors and reveling in the game. Appreciating how the Yankees feed off the challenges, learn from errors and move forward with commitment and resilience toward the dreams of play in late October.

And it may seem simplistic or even naïve, but I have raised my children to support a team or cause by raising up that team versus cutting the other team down. In my family, we are not allowed to boo or hiss. Call me a party pooper or fuddy duddy – taking all the fun out of the game – but in the end, the lessons being offered to my children or those in my charge are lessons that resonate beyond the playing field...

They are the lessons of life.

Focus on yourself, your family, your team, your unit, your cause, your purpose. Educate and raise awareness for your ideals. Cheer, clap, hoot and holler. Make noise. Bring attention. Highlight and spotlight the talents, diversity and gifts offered by those in your world. Disagree with those who oppose your views, but don't waste your time and energy with attack. Recognize that negativity is a thief of progress. A vacuum of positive. It just breeds more hate and division and places irony and hypocrisy on your own efforts. Negating that for which you are advocating.

Instead, be a thoughtful, loyal fan to yourself, your team, your cause – and the respect and peace you seek and deserve will follow...

Take it from me – a Yankees fan in Red Sox Nation. ■

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

Complexity is Tied to Destiny

By Patricia Spradley



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

I heard a Pastor say "complexity is tied to the destiny within you." In the context of his talk, it made complete sense. I also remembered how challenged the individual felt that he had such a limited time to make his point. And I, too, was left with wanting more.

I didn't realize, however, when I looked at the sentence, all by itself, how much it would prompt me to reflect at a much deeper level. Personal reflection isn't always easy, but necessary! As we travel through our jour-

ney, we are absolutely going to be faced with difficult times and complicated circumstances—complexities. It's a required component of our journey.

Now I have certainly written before about purpose, but destiny made me look more closely within. And then it hit me. The greater your destiny, the greater the complexities! What a revelation that was for me. Even though I know that "to whom much is given, much is required," I hadn't made the connection to the increased challenges and obstacles that are inevitable, based on what He has purposed for your life.

That gave me a greater appreciation for my personal complexities. But the best part is the more internal reflection it is causing. Those occasions when I am totally frustrated with my

continues to page 33

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EDUCATION

EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

Who is Your Super Man?

By Nicole Blais



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

On Saturday, June 17, 2017 at noon in front of the High School of Commerce on State Street in Springfield, the com-



munity is invited to participate in the 19th Annual Dads Make A Difference Parade. Anyone who is interested in marching up State Street, declaring that dad's do make a difference is welcome to attend. The parade will march from the high school to the Mason Square Branch Library where families can take advantage of everything the library has to offer the community. One of the goals of the Dads Make A Difference committee is to spotlight Springfield area family friendly locations. In past years, the event has taken place at Magazine Park, the Basketball Hall of Fame and the Springfield Quadrangle.

The highlight of the parade is the Super Man/Super Dad Essay Contest. Students from Springfield Public Schools in grades 1-5 are invited to write an essay about the superman or super-dad in their life.

Members of the committee select award winning essays to be highlighted during this long-standing event. This is probably the hardest part of being a committee member because all of the essays are written from the heart. Here's a quote from one of last year's entries: "My dad does not wear a cape, he does not leap from tall buildings, he does not catch villains but he is important to me."

Year after year, children clearly express that the best memories they have with their superman/super dad is when they spend time together. The materialistic items such as clothes, toys, and going to the movies or an amusement park simply do not compare to the times they spend together as father and son or father and daughter. It is a privilege to read these thoughtful essays.

The winners of this year's contest, along with their Superman/Super-dad, will be recognized during the event and will be the honorary Parade Marshalls, and any student who took the time to write about their dad is invited to come and have fun with their family.

The Greater Springfield Dads Make a Difference Parade is a wonderful, free community event taking place on Saturday, June 17, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. beginning in front of the High School of Commerce and ending up at the Mason Square Library. Please join us for a father-friendly day of family fun in Springfield.

From all of us on the committee, **Happy Father's Day!**

HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS

Warnings About Lead in Drinking Water

By Neel Abdul-Hameed

Lead and copper in our water can cause health problems, ranging from stomach distress to brain damage, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

How does lead enter our water?

"Lead in drinking water is primarily associated with service lines and home plumbing that connects a home/building to the main in the street or from plumbing and fixtures inside the home. This most likely occurs when water is not moving, generally overnight, or at other times when water is not used for several hours." (Springfield Water and Sewer Commission Annual Drinking Water Quality Report in 2016 for 2015 Calendar Year)

"You can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap water. Let the water run for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking." (Springfield Water and Sewer Commission fact sheet titled "Lead and Drinking Water")

"Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population...such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy; persons who have had an organ transplant; people with HIV/AIDS; or other immune system disorders; some elderly and infants can be at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers." (Springfield Water and Sewer Commission Annual Report Drinking Water Quality Report 2016)

"If you are concerned about lead in your water...have your water tested." Information on lead in drinking water testing methods and steps to minimize exposure is available from Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Other resources:

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>

<http://www.waterandsewer.org/education-and-community/lead-and-drinking-water>

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HEALTH

YOUR HEALTH

Think Before You Ink: Are Tattoos Safe?

By FDA Consumer Health Information

Tattoos are more popular than ever. According to a 2015 Harris Poll, about 3 in 10 (or 29%) people surveyed have at least one tattoo. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is also seeing reports of people developing infections from contaminated tattoo inks, as well as adverse reactions to the inks themselves.

Over the years, the FDA has received hundreds of adverse event reports involving tattoos: 363 from 2004-2016.

Before you get a tattoo, consider these key questions, answered by Dr. Linda Katz, M.D., M.P.H., director of FDA's Office of Cosmetics and Colors.



This is an example of an allergic reaction to a tattoo.

1. Should I be concerned about unsafe practices, or the tattoo ink itself?

Both. While you can get serious infections from unhygienic practices and equipment that isn't sterile, infections can also result from ink that was contaminated with bacteria or mold. Using non-sterile water to dilute the pigments (ingredients that add color) is a common culprit, although not the only one.

There's no sure-fire way to tell if the ink is safe. An ink can be contaminated even if the container is sealed or the label says the product is sterile.

2. What is in tattoo ink?

Published research has reported that some inks contain pigments used in printer toner or in car paint. FDA has not approved any pigments for injection into the skin for cosmetic purposes.

FDA reviews reports of adverse reactions or infections from consumers and healthcare providers. We may learn about outbreaks from the state authorities who oversee tattoo parlors.

3. What kinds of reactions may happen after getting a tattoo?

You might notice a rash—redness or bumps—in the area of your tattoo, and you could develop a fever.

More aggressive infections may cause high fever, shaking, chills, and sweats. Treating such infections might require a variety of antibiotics—possi-

bly for months—or even hospitalization and/or surgery. A rash may also mean you're having an allergic reaction. And because the inks are permanent, the reaction may persist.

Contact your health care professional if you have any concerns.

4. Can scar tissue build up after getting a tattoo?

Scar tissue may form when you get a tattoo, or you could develop “granulomas,” small knots or bumps that may form around material that the body perceives as foreign. If you tend to get keloids—scars that grow beyond normal boundaries—you may develop the same kind of reaction to the tattoo.

5. What do I need to know about MRIs if I get a tattoo?

Some people may have swelling or burning in the tattoo when they have magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), although this happens rarely and does not last long. Let your health care professional know that you have a tattoo before an MRI is ordered.

6. What about do-it-yourself tattoo inks and kits?

Inks and kits sold as “do-it-yourself” to consumers have been associated with infections and allergic reactions. FDA is also concerned that consumers may not know how to control and avoid all sources of contamination.

7. Could other problems occur later on?

Although research is ongoing at FDA and elsewhere, there are still a lot of questions about the long-term effects of the pigments, other ingredients, and possible contaminants in tattoo inks. FDA has received reports of bad reactions to tattoo inks right after tattooing and even years later. You also might become allergic to other products, such as hair dyes, if your tattoo contains p-phenylenediamine (PPD).

Then there's tattoo removal. We don't know the short- or long-term consequences of how pigments break down after laser treatment. However, we do know some tattoo removal procedures may leave permanent scarring.

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HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS

Let's Talk About Trauma

By Dr. Miguel Nieves-Rivera PhD, Bilingual Behavioral Health Clinician



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

The world is well aware of the destructive power of natural disasters such as storms, hurricanes and earthquakes. Many others also know the misery produced by terrorism, violence, war and crime. Over the past 25 years, more than 150 million people have been directly affected by such disasters and traumatic events annually.

The physical effects of a disaster are obvious. Hundreds or thousands of people lose their lives or are seriously injured. Survivors carry the consequences throughout their lives. Pain and suffering are evenly distributed. The emotional effects—fear, anxiety, stress, anger, resentment or emotional blocking of disasters are all possible. For many victims, these effects are mitigated, and even disappear over time. However, for others, the sequelae are long-term and sometimes

evolve into a chronic condition.

These complex symptoms require a variety of evidenced based and effective interventions. Post-traumatic stress disorder is a multidimensional diagnosis that in recent years is enjoying greater scientific interest and social recognition, especially due to the events that occurred on 11 September 2001 in New York.

Classification of traumatic events

Traumatic events are, in most cases, unexpected and uncontrollable, and they eliminate or challenge in an intense way the feeling of security and self-confidence of the individual, provoking intense reactions of vulnerability and fear towards the environment.

Examples of such situations are:

- Accidents
- Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes or floods
- Unexpected death of relatives

- Assaults, crimes and/or violations
- Physical/sexual abuse during childhood
- Torture, abduction and/or terrorist acts
- Combat experiences
- Emotional and verbal abuse
- Domestic violence

Other forms of severe (but not extreme) stress can seriously affect the individual but are not typically the trigger for a post-traumatic stress disorder, such as job loss, divorce, school failure, etc.

It is important to emphasize, as the recent research indicates, that despite the heterogeneity of traumatic events, individuals who directly or indirectly have experienced these types of situations show a common psychopathological profile, currently labeled under the name of Post-traumatic stress disorder and sometimes other associated disorders such as depression, generalized anxiety disorder, panic attacks, phobic behaviors or substance abuse.

Symptoms of post-traumatic stress:

1. Re-experiencing of the traumatic event

- Flashbacks. Senses and sensations associated with the traumatic situation.
- Nightmares. The event or other images associated with it are recurrent in dreams.

- Disproportionate physical and emotional reactions before events associated with the traumatic situation.

2. Increased activation

- Difficulty sleeping/Hypervigilance.
- Concentration problems.
- Irritability, impulsivity and/or aggressiveness.

3. Avoidance and emotional block

- Intense avoidance, flight, avoidance by the subject of situations, places, thoughts, sensations or conversations associated with the traumatic event.
- Loss of interest.
- Emotional blocking and/or social isolation.

Detection and recognition of stress associated with traumatic situations is the first step for the individual on their way to their full recovery and social integration.

Treatment by professionals with the appropriate qualification and experience is a crucial factor, together with the patient's own attitude and willingness to help the victims face the tragedy and continue their life in a satisfactory way. ■



*Dr. Miguel
Nieves-Rivera, PhD*

YOUR HEALTH

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8. If I get a tattoo and develop an infection or other reaction, what should I do?

First, contact your health care professional.

Second, notify the tattoo artist so he or she can identify the ink and avoid using it again. Ask for the brand, color, and any lot or batch number of the ink or diluent to help determine the source of the problem and how to treat it.

Third, whether you're a consumer, tattoo artist, or health care professional, tell FDA. Provide as much detail as possible about the ink and your reaction and outcome. Reports from consumers are one of our most important sources of safety information.

Removing Tattoos May Be Harder Than You Think

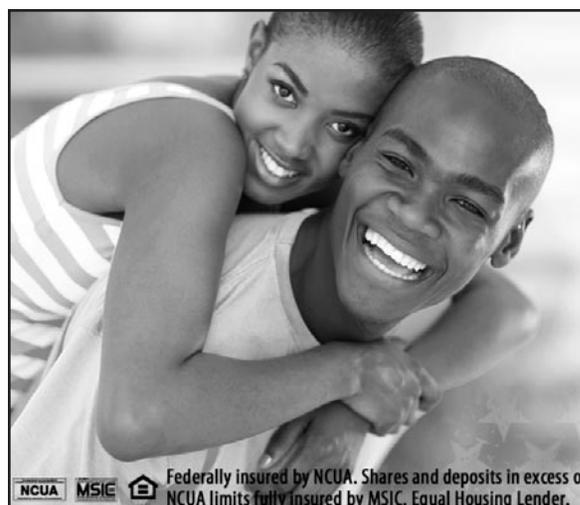
So think before you ink. Consider the risks.

Remember, too, that removing a tattoo is a painstaking process, and complete removal without scarring may be impossible.

If you do decide to get a tattoo, make sure the tattoo parlor and artist comply with state and local laws. The National Conference of State Legislatures has a Web page on state requirements for tattooing. For information on local regulations, contact your county or city health department.

This article appears on the FDA's Consumer Updates page, which features the latest on all FDA-regulated products.

Updated: May 2, 2017



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HEALTH

YOUR HEALTH

Baystate  Medical Center

Skin Cancer Prevention Begins in Childhood

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Skin cancer doesn't discriminate. It knows no age or sex and is now the most common type of cancer in the United States, with more new cases being diagnosed each year than breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer combined.

May was National Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month. And, with sun worshippers now preparing to hit the beach, local parks or backyards to soak up the sun's rays, it's a good time to raise awareness of melanoma and to encourage early detection.

"While skin cancers detected early by your primary care provider or during your own monthly self-exams of your skin from head to toe are almost always curable, your best defense is to cover up when outdoors and to stay away from tanning beds," said Dr. Richard Arenas, chief, Surgical Oncology, Baystate Regional Cancer Program.

Melanoma is most often found in men between the shoulders and hips, and on the head and neck. Women often develop melanoma on the lower legs. Look for changes in moles – those that are larger than normal, variable in color, and have irregular borders – as well as warts and other blemishes on the skin, especially those parts exposed to the sun.

The two most common types of skin cancer – basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas – are highly curable, but often cause disfigurement from surgery. Melanoma, the third most common skin cancer, causes the most deaths. The majority of these cancers are caused by overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) light.

Dr. Arenas and the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention (CDC) recommend the following easy options for protection from UV radiation:

- ☀ Stay in the shade, especially during midday hours.
- ☀ Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- ☀ Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade your face, head, ears and neck.
- ☀ Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block both UVA and UVB rays.
- ☀ Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB (broad spectrum) protection.
- ☀ Avoid indoor tanning.

Skin cancer prevention begins in childhood, noted Dr. Arenas, who reminds parents and caregivers to keep newborns out of the sun and to use sunscreen only on those over the age of six months.

"All it takes is just a few blistering sunburns in our childhood to more than double our chances of developing a potentially-deadly melanoma later in life. In fact, for a while now we have seen many more patients, especially women, in their 20s and 30s, coming into our practice with melanoma and basal cell cancers," said Dr. Arenas.

Surgery is the main treatment for most cases of melanoma and can often cure early-stage cancers before they metastasize and decrease the likelihood of a cure.

For patients with non-melanoma skin cancer, treatment options may include surgery and several ablative – the process to remove tissue from the body – approaches, such as cryotherapy and photodynamic therapy. Chemotherapy and radiation usually are reserved for more advanced cases of skin

cancers, but the recent advances in immunotherapy have the greatest promise to effectively treat advanced stage melanoma and certain other skin cancers, noted Dr. Arenas.

The Baystate oncologist added that new biologic and targeted agents can now enhance the body's immune system providing a method of treatment that is better tolerated even in older patients. There are several ongoing clinical trials involving immunotherapy, some being conducted at Baystate's D'Amour Center for Cancer Care.

"Moving towards the future, tests are becoming available to identify the genetic profile of melanoma. This ability to understand the genetic makeup of a cancer will help to personalize treatments towards this deadly disease," said Dr. Arenas.

For more information on the Baystate Regional Cancer Program, visit baystatehealth.org/brcp or to request an appointment or ask a question, call (413) 794-9338. ■



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/
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COMMUNITY

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - SPRINGFIELD

My Priorities As Springfield City Council President

By Orlando Ramos



Orlando Ramos

On the morning of January 2, 2017, I had the honor of being elected by my colleagues to serve as Springfield City Council President. In my speech, I clearly laid out my priorities as President:

1. Help improve police and community relations
2. Residency requirements for municipal employees
3. Fully staff the code enforcement department

With the support of my colleagues, we have made progress in all three areas within the first 100 days of 2017. On February 28th, the Mayor and I announced the hiring of Attorney James Brown as the fourth full-time associate attorney for the Code Enforcement Division of the city's Law Department to help reduce the backlog of code-enforcement cases. This will, in turn, allow us to add an additional code enforcement officer down the road, with the goal of helping reduce urban blight in the City of Springfield.

We have also made some progress in terms of residency. On

April 10th, the City Council voted to reject a proposed contract with the Fire Department's district chiefs—primarily because it would have essentially pardoned the existing district chiefs who are currently in violation of a law requiring them to live in the city. Although the proposed contract did include a lifetime residency requirement for future hires, it came at a cost of an additional 1.5% raise for the ten district chiefs covered under the collective bargaining agreement—six of whom do not live in the city and earned an average of \$119,000 in 2016. I felt so strongly against the proposed contract that I decided to take the floor and argue against it. My main argument was that the city should not have to bargain over a law that is already on the books (district chiefs are already required to live in the city under previous contract). Thankfully, we were able to get the votes to reject the proposal and send them back to the negotiation table.

Finally, in terms of my top priority, on February 16th I exercised Rule 53(A) under the Rules and Orders of the Springfield City Council—which allows the Council

President to appoint special committees—and appointed a special committee named the “Police and Community Relations Committee”. The 15-member committee is made up of two City Councilors, one resident from each of the 8 wards, and one member each appointed by the Mayor, Police Commissioner, District Attorney, Springfield Police Union and the NAACP. This diverse and talented group is tasked with holding meetings in each of the city's 8 wards, and talking to residents about how the city can strengthen the relationship between the Springfield Police Department (SPD) and the community.

Police and community relations is an important and necessary conversation, not only because of the police-related incidents that have occurred nationally, but also because of some of the stories that have come out locally. We can argue over the validity of the allegations made in each individual case, but what we cannot do is deny that, collectively, those cases have had a negative effect on police community relations. Thankfully, I can say that we are not Ferguson—or even Baltimore. However, I believe it

is in our best interest to take a proactive approach in order to avoid becoming like those communities. It is our responsibility as elected leaders to ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect the men and women of our police department. It is also our duty to ensure that our police department preserves the rights and freedoms of our constituents in their interactions with them, neither of which can be accomplished without trust. That is why I decided to appoint this committee.

Public participation is essential to the mission of the committee. Government works best when the public is given a voice. I am hopeful that residents from every community will take the time to attend the meetings and share their ideas/concerns with the members. At the very least, I encourage all residents to participate in the survey that the committee has put together. Please contact the City Council office at 413-787-6170 for information on the date and place of next Police and Community Relations Committee meeting. I hope to see you there! ■

City Council Committee on Police & Community Relations

Chair

City Councilor Thomas Ashe

Council Appointment

**City Councilor & State Representative
Bud L. Williams**

Council President Appointment

Brian O'Brien

*Business Owner & Hampden County Sheriff's
Department*

Council President Appointment

Yolanda Cancel

*Community Activist, CJ Degree & Law
Enforcement Experience*

Mayoral Appointment

Decided against appointing anyone

Police Commissioner Appointment

Decided against appointing anyone

District Attorney Appointment

Colleen Monroe

Assistant DA

Spfld. Patrolman's Appointment

Shawn Kearney

Springfield Police Department Detective

NAACP Appointment

Bishop Talbert J. Swan II

President of Springfield NAACP & Pastor

Ward 1 Appointment

Horacio Rodriguez

Business Analyst

Ward 2 Appointment

Kelli Moriarty-Finn

*Project Manager & Member of Neighborhood
Council*

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COMMUNITY

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - SPRINGFIELD



Justin Hurst, Esquire
At-Large Springfield
City Councilor
jhurst@springfieldcity-hall.com
413-374-5844

Residency

I am extremely proud of my fellow City Councilors who joined me in voting against the District Fire Chiefs' contract that came before the City Council last month. The collective bargaining agreement that the administration asked us to approve would have allowed six District Chiefs who are currently in violation of the residency ordinance to "have their cake and eat it too." By voting in favor of the contract not only would these 6 District Chiefs who have refused to move into the city succeeded in breaking the law without any recourse, but they also would have been rewarded by the City with a new contract that insulated them from ever having to follow the law already on the books.

The City Council rejected the last contract because residency was not included and this time we were asked to turn a blind eye to the fact that the new collective bargaining agreement, which included residency,

City Council Updates

By Justin Hurst, Esquire

would not be applied retroactively. A major point of contention was that the City Council would not be in this position if the District Chiefs in violation simply complied with the law, or better yet, if the administration had the courage to enforce it. Without either, the City Council was left with no choice but to reject the contract. I am proud of the members of the Council who had the courage to take a stand.

Community Police Hearing Review Board

For those of you who might have missed it, the Community Police Hearing Review Board (CPHRB), that I previously referred to as a "sham," has been stripped by Mayor Sarno of its power to recommend discipline to Police Commissioner Barbieri in cases of police misconduct. What I found even more shocking when I read about this recently in *The Republican* was that it occurred over 14 months ago and no one on the CPHRB felt they had an obligation to convey this information to the general public. While I will give one board member credit for apparently stepping down from the CPHRB after

receiving news of the Mayor's executive order, it is troubling that the others were perfectly fine having their authority compromised. And, for the record, I couldn't disagree with the Mayor more when he stated, "I didn't think it was a huge issue," referring to the change. The CPHRB is supposed to serve as a check and balance to Commissioner Barbieri and if they can no longer recommend discipline, then the board serves little purpose for our citizens, making the argument for a Police Commission with hiring, firing, and disciplinary powers even stronger.

Mobile Food Trucks

Kudos to City Councilor Marcus Williams and the Young Professionals Committee for crossing the finish

line with a new Food Truck Ordinance. The idea of food trucks in downtown Springfield originated a few years ago when I was the Chair of the Young Professionals Committee and it was a pleasure to see Councilor Williams pick up where I left off. After several meetings with various city departments, Councilor Williams was able to collaborate with the Business Improvement District and the Department of Public Works to create an ordinance that will lure many entrepreneurs in the Mobile Food Truck business to the downtown area. Additionally, it will serve to increase foot traffic in the entertainment district and generate unanticipated revenue for many small businesses in the surrounding area. For information on how to apply for a license to operate a Mobile Food Truck in the downtown area, please contact the Business Improvement District at 413-781-1591. ■

City Council Committee on Police & Community Relations

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Ward 3 Appointment

Jynai McDonald

Regional Manager of Non-Profit Helping At-risk Population

Ward 4 Appointment

Ben Swan, Jr.

IT Consultant, Chair of Planning Board

Ward 5 Appointment

Christine Tetreault

Former Assistant District Attorney

Ward 6 Appointment

Matthew Forte

Former Director of Police Academy Training Human Resources Police Department in NJ

Ward 7 Appointment

Warren Barnett, II

Corrections & Probation Officer, Corrections Counselor

Ward 8 Appointment

Zaida Govan

Social Worker & Pres. Indian Orchard Neighborhood Council

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The graduation of our 6th class of Leadership Pioneer Valley has me thinking about graduations and graduation speakers. Northampton was buzzing last month with excitement over the arrival of Oprah for the Smith graduation. How many of us remember our high school or college graduation speaker? And if you do remember them, what was their message?

Here are a few of the highlights from notable recent commencement speeches:

“Ignorance is not a virtue”—
President Obama

“My hope for you is that you can find that gratitude—not just on the good days, like today, but on the hard ones, when you will really need it.”—
Sheryl Sandberg

Connections That Inspire

By Lora Wondolowski

“The ‘uh-oh’ moments are worth cherishing just as much as ‘ah-ha’ moments: Mistakes, failures, embarrassments and disappointments are a necessary component of growing wise. We can learn more from our not-so-good experiences than we can learn from our good ones.”—

Justice Sonia Sotomayor

I do remember one of the speakers at my graduate school graduation. We watched a taped message from Aung San Suu Kyi who was still under house arrest in Burma/Myanmar. She had been under house arrest for more than a decade at that point. Despite her amazing story, I do not remember the advice that she gave but instead the inspiration. Her resilience and strength to continue to work for justice and human rights reminded me that my challenges did not seem as daunting. The story is often the most powerful message.

Later this month, 35 LPV grad-

uates will leave our program with new skills, connections and commitment to civic leadership. Leaders are called upon to inspire others, but who inspires leaders? How will we inspire them?

One of the graduation messages that I do remember was my 8th grade graduation speaker who was a close friend. It wasn't about her profound message but was more about the connection she created to me and my experience through her remarks. Similarly, each year the LPV class chooses their own class speaker. Each one has been heartfelt, honest, oftentimes funny, moving, and humbling. Last year Jose Saavedra spoke to his classmates days after the Orlando shooting. Jose spoke movingly about gun violence in the US, reminding us “I mean, each victim had a name. They had friends, family, and children. They attended our schools. Most of the victims were young and

now memorials take their place in the “home.” Other years they challenged their classmates to “seize the day”. Each LPV speaker has connected with and inspired their classmates because they had a shared experience and believed in one another's ability to reach beyond and do more. It was the connection and storytelling that impacted the class.

I have had the privilege of watching our current class which includes many known and unknown leaders grow and challenge themselves this year. I know that a few inspirational words aren't enough to refill their reservoirs when they are burned out, discouraged, and stressed out. The secret sauce will be the relationships that they have made that can uplift and renew them when they hit those bumps. Despite common perceptions, leaders are not islands. Effective leaders draw upon others and we hope the connections made at Leadership Pioneer Valley will help sustain our leaders through their careers and lives. ■

POSITIVELY LIFE CHANGING



John Roberson is Vice
President of Children
and Family Services for
The Center for Human
Development (CHD),
332 Birnie Avenue,
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Coach. Fundamentally, a coach is a teacher, and as an athletic coach you can teach kids lessons that go far beyond how to pass a ball or take a shot. You can help kids learn to play by the rules, take direction and apply constructive criticism, make a commitment to others as well as to themselves, and learn from the experience of winning or losing. You can get started by assisting a head coach. You'll learn some useful life lessons

The Idea of Being Present

Fathers and Father Figures Can Make a Difference in the Lives of Kids

yourself as you help kids. Could you make that difference?

Volunteer. Can you invest some time with a community-minded organization or with a youth group at your church? With your guidance, kids can identify public needs and then design and carry out service projects. The cleanup of a public space can teach kids about giving back to their community and give them a nicer place to play in the process. A program of organized visits to shut-ins can connect them with elderly or disabled citizens who, in addition to needs, have much to offer youth in terms of life experience. Could you make that difference?

Spread the Word. There's a term used by the leaders of churches and technology companies to describe spreading a message organically by word of mouth: **evangelize**. You can evangelize when it comes to the importance of being a present father or a supportive father figure. Talk to the men you work with, or shoot hoops with, or run into in the community. Talk to them about helping kids by being a strong adult male role model. You can be a role model yourself to the men you encounter and recruit those who are struggling as fathers to see a path forward. Could you make that difference?

CHD has a range of programs

and services that help men make positive changes in the ways they are part of their families. We know that reaching out for help is a sign of strength, and CHD supports men in doing so. We open doors to support and encouragement by helping fathers realize that they are valued and that somebody has their back. To find out more, call 844-CHD-HELP.

To present fathers, father figures, and those aspiring to be, who are working to raise the next generation of young men, I wish you a **Happy Fathers' Day**. ■

COMMUNITY

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I Am Pro-Life

By Zaida Govan



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

I am pro-life. I know that might come as a surprise to you but let me explain. I believe that when a baby is born they should have every opportunity to grow up to be a successful, happy human being. I believe that a woman should have the right to choose life. A woman should have access to safe, affordable healthcare and be able to make the heart-wrenching decision to abort a baby if that is what she has to do. We have to know that a decision like that cannot come lightly.

I am pro-life. I believe that if a woman chooses to have an abortion because she was raped and doesn't want to carry the memory of that assault with her for the rest of her life, she should have the right to a safe, medically supervised abortion. I believe that a 13-year-old girl should have the right to a safe, medically supervised abortion when her creepy uncle (or other creep) rapes her and gets her pregnant.

I am pro-life. I believe that children should have food, water and a safe place to live. I believe Veterans coming home from a war that they fought that they may not have believed in and served our country to protect our freedom should have the right to subsidized, if not free, housing and health care.

I am pro-life. I believe that men and women coming into this country from whatever nation they come from should have the right to be properly vetted and allowed into this country so that they can be safe from harm and help our country.

I am pro-life. I believe this country collects millions and millions of

dollars in taxes that shouldn't go to corporate welfare. I believe my tax dollars should pay for programs that serve women, children and men who are mentally ill or are unable to work because of a disability. I believe that my tax dollars should pay to help the Veterans who served this country and came back with trauma or other problems.

I am pro-life. I believe that when our Veterans come home from Afghanistan addicted to the opium that they found in that country, they should be able to receive services to treat the disease of addiction and should have a safe place to live. I believe no Veteran should be homeless. We are better than that.

The regular pro-lifers believe that life starts at conception but once the babies are born they don't seem to care about them. They also believe that the death penalty should be given and persons executed for whatever crime it is decided merits the death penalty even if there is a doubt about the person's innocence and guilt. That is an oxymoron to me. How can you be pro-life and believe in death? They don't seem to believe that babies should be taken care of; they don't believe that they have rights or feelings once they are born, it seems.

If you are pro-life, this is what you should believe in otherwise you're just anti-abortion and pro-death. Oh, and Happy Father's Day to all the great fathers and father figures out there! ■

Ed Cohen Photography



413-244-1344

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COMMUNITY FOCUS

Stepping Out of the Familiar..

By Deb Peavey, LHMC, Director of Life Enrichment,
Mason Wright Senior Living

Just over four months ago, drawn to the mission of a senior community that was less homogeneous, less privileged, and frankly, less white than the place where I had been working, I came to Mason Wright Senior Living, an assisted living community in downtown Springfield, Massachusetts, as the Director of Life Enrichment.

Mason Wright, founded in 1892 by an African American named Primus Mason, serves and employs people of diverse ethnic, racial, educational and socio-economic backgrounds. With my white skin and blonde hair, I am clearly in the minority here. And, while I have experienced my own challenges in life, none have been of the sustained kind that wear a person down and make them less familiar with good times and plenty than with scarcity and struggle. I have never known hunger, poor health due to inadequate medical attention or homelessness. I have never known poverty or the day-to-day struggles of people who worked with dignity all their lives, but worked for wages too low to preserve their dignity in old age.

I always believed that—if I just tried hard enough—I could somehow understand and empathize with the shame and powerlessness others might experience due to the color of their skin, their religion, their class.

And then one day, I *felt* it. It was an ordinary Wednesday morning. A group of residents had gathered for a coffee social and I was effusively encouraging the start of a conversation by asking them where they grew up. People had come from Springfield, Georgia, Chicago and even one from as far away as California. Then the conversation made its way around to one small but formidable woman with very dark, wrinkled skin and flashing eyes. When she spoke, her

voice was quiet but strong.

She began talking about having grown up in a small town near Birmingham, Alabama. Keeping her gaze lowered but looking up now and then to be sure we were all still listening, she spoke of a young man who, after leaving her little town and going to Chicago, had the “audacity” to walk on the sidewalk when he came home instead of the road “where he belonged.” He had also failed to lower his eyes when a white child on the sidewalk approached, further condemning him and causing him to be chased by the police and nearly lynched.

She then spoke of her love for books and reading and the fact that the town library was “whites only” and that if she wanted to take out a book, she had to pay 7 cents (not an easy amount to come by in those days) and ride the bus twelve miles to a town that had a “colored” library. She was proud to report that, as a matter of self-respect, none of the people who borrowed from that library ever returned a book late.

She continued. As I listened, I felt myself welling with tears. They came, in part, from my shame for our past, but also from my shame for the present, where discrimination still manifests in so many ways.

What began as an ordinary morning at work turned into a history lesson; an intensely vivid and personal one that reminded me that stepping out of the familiar—where like-mindedness and familiarity are reassuring and safe, but limiting—is where real growth can happen.

I am fortunate to be part of community that celebrates diversity every day. ■

HE'LL BE AROUND FOR AWHILE

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the rest are from “other” races including 6,000 people of African heritage. UMass Lowell is located in downtown Lowell and is home to about 18,000 students, 73% of whom live within the city. Its student body is composed of 9% Asian-American, 5.5% African-American, 8.9% Hispanic and 54% White, and you might say it is where Dr. Cook earned his racial and ethnic bonafides.

But he was pretty well grounded even before he finished his dissertation. Before entering UMass Lowell for his Master's, and while a student at Lawrence University where he earned his Bachelor of Science, Dr. Cook interned in Africa where he observed the problem of poaching and strategized with local officials on how to protect the animals. After completing his Master's, he worked from 2000 to 2008 as a Research and Evaluation Coordinator for Granite State College where he had oversight for a statewide partnership between the college and the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families. It was an award-winning program called the Education and Training Partnership involving training for foster and adoptive parents and individuals working in the field of public child welfare and juvenile justice.

From 2008 to 2012, as part of the adjunct faculty at Granite State College in Concord, New Hampshire, Dr. Cook taught research and psychology classes and mentored individual students. During most of the same period, he worked as Faculty Coordinator (Department Chair) responsible for two campuses after which he became Assistant Dean of Faculty, a role in which he served for a year before being hired as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Manchester Community College in Manchester, New Hampshire where he served with distinction until he was hired, in 2016, to serve as president of Springfield Technical Community College.



STCC 50th Anniversary Gala at the Springfield Marriott, Friday, April 28 Left to right: STCC Works Scholarship recipients Nicholas Martinez, Emily Velez, President John B. Cook, STCC Works Scholarship recipient Mohamed Gabriel, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement & Foundation Rima Dael

Good things are happening at STCC, some started by his predecessor that Dr. Cook opted to continue and others initiated by Dr. Cook, who has made some faculty and staff adjustments that have pleased folks I knew before his arrival who haven't hesitated to express their pleasure. He has also overseen the process by which STCC recently gained accreditation for its Health, Information and Technology degree program, the awarding of a five-year \$3.4 million grant to boost Hispanic low-income STEM graduates and the building renovations for the Ira H. Rubenzahl Student Learning Center which, when completed, “will, (by 2018), become the center of campus life” combining student administrative services, library and social spaces all under one roof.

Additionally, STCC has been awarded \$499,785 from the state to expand its laser electro-optics technology and mechanical engineering technology programs and some of its graduates are being hired by CRRC and are among the group being sent to China to train. Also, STCC has combined with Holyoke Community College, under the TWO (Training

and Workforce Options) program, to prepare students for jobs at MGM when it opens in 2018.

Dr. Cook is involved in many more collaborations in Springfield and he has made himself available to the community. But what stands out the most about him is that he seems to have always been around. He certainly didn't make a Trump-like splash or even a Clinton-like one for that matter. He seems to have just eased seamlessly into the fabric of Greater Springfield and become a functional part of its promising future.

Dr. Cook, whose new home is in Springfield's Forest Park neighborhood, started at STCC in August of 2016 and was formally inaugurated as its sixth president on April 27, 2017 and presided over STCC's 50th Anniversary reception the next night at the Springfield Marriott. It's comforting to know that he will be around for awhile—as one anniversary guest speaker remarked: “long enough to look like a college president and not be mistaken for a student!” ■

What if you could seize the day?

Taking on the responsibilities of a student-athlete has taught me valuable leadership skills, on and off of the field.

JAMES ENGLISH
CORNERBACK FOR OWLS FOOTBALL
LAMBDA SIGMA NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY SCHOLAR

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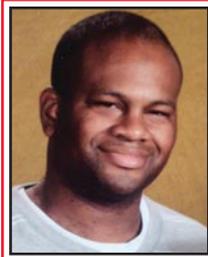
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COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY BEAT

Crime and Education

By Kenneth Harris



Kenneth Harris is a graduate of the High School of Commerce and STCC. He has served as a Special Police Officer, Atlanta Corrections Officer and Courthouse Officer.

The causes of crime are as vast as the elements itself. Roots of evil grow from greed, selfishness, revenge, anger and more. I do believe an investment in education for youth can decrease the likelihood of criminal activities and begin the climb to reaching the peak of potential.

My position had prompted me to examine illiteracy facts that are linked to impoverished crime-ridden neighborhoods across our country. According to national statistics from the Reading is Fundamental Organization at www.rif.org, 65% of 4th graders do not read efficiently at grade level. Eighty per cent of low-income children are most likely to fall behind in school. At this rate, an estimated 8,000 students are dropping out of high school each day. Perhaps this explains why 93 million adults currently read at or below basic reading level. Apparently, this cycle begins at birth. It is generally believed that children born into low income families will have to work twice as hard or more to improve his or her quality of life.

It takes a village to educate a child. I believe parents or legal guardians must take responsibility in this significant challenge. I was also interested in the type of educational supplements available to children in schools. These are not textbooks; they are nonfiction supplements that go along with lessons and themes children learn in school. Some of these books may be of interest to certain grade groups.

What I found was alarming.

After reviewing the titles available by many publishers such as Bearport, ABDO, Amicus, Learners and more, it appeared that there's a lack of books about African Americans who made great contributions in U.S his-

tory. For example, ABDO's "The Wild West" 8 book series contains no book on African Americans. The first name that comes to my mind is Deputy U.S. Marshal Bass Reeves, a black lawman who was courageous in his duties. Reeves served the federal court for 32 years. He arrested 3,000 criminals in the Indian Territory, including his son for murder. There was also Mary Fields, who was so brave to have operated a stagecoach in one of the worst crime infested areas of the west. The list goes on.

I believe all children, most especially those at an educational disadvantage, must read about heroes that look like them in order to build inspiration and confidence. For that reason, I reached out to some of these publishers to find out why there is a lack of black heroes in these supplements that are made available to schools and libraries. I was also concerned about why so many more books about athletes were written as opposed to successful inventors, educators, businessmen and so forth. Kenn Goin, publisher at Bearport, responded to my inquiry. He told me they published what is marketable.

That is a misconception. Schools and libraries are purchasing curriculum-related content books. Not children. There are topics about the black experience, but there is a great disparity in comparison to their white counterparts. There are so many wonderful stories about black heroes; however, the fierce storm of racism has buried their achievements. It takes a village to educate a child. Supplemental non-fiction books are just a fraction of the problem. Stories about unsung heroes can help steer one from a life of crime and foster a positive attitude for all children. ■

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - FROM THE STATE HOUSE



Bud L. Williams

Rep. Bud Williams Sees Local Community Benefits in New House Budget

SPRINGFIELD, MA, May 23, 2017 – Representative Bud L. Williams (D-Springfield) today announced House passage of the new \$40.4 Billion Massachusetts Budget for FY 2018.

According to House Speaker Robert A DeLeo (D-Winthrop), "This budget extends the House's legacy of balancing fiscal responsibility with investments in inventive programs, a strategy that has resulted in Massachusetts becoming a national leader. I am particularly proud of the work we have done on early education and care, and I believe that our efforts will have a lasting impact on the lives of countless families."

The next step in the budget process will be consideration of the budget in the Massachusetts Senate, which will be followed with resolution of any differences and signing of the budget by the Governor.

"I know we're all aware it's not the final budget," said Rep. Williams. "But I am very proud to be able to bring back news to the community that, if things go the way they are directed now, our community will truly be able to benefit.

"Among the many provisions," continued Rep. Williams, "the budget provides for programs to help people in need of housing and health services, and at the same time provides support for economic development and creation of more and better jobs for residents of the Commonwealth."

The assistance programs include \$1 million for new substance abuse beds, funds to open two new recovery centers for family supports, \$1 million that will allow purchase of

15,000 new doses of Narcan, and \$1 million for extended release Naltrexone, a \$5 million increase in the Department of Corrections Alcohol and Substance Abuse Center, and \$1 million to grow the Massachusetts Access to Recovery assistance program.

In the housing field, the State is expected to "Zero out" the caseload of homeless people in hotels and motels, and projections indicate that caseloads for emergency assistance will return to pre-recession levels. At the same time the plan invests \$18 million in new funding for homeless individuals and families including \$100 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program and \$15 million for residential assistance to families in transition.

For education, the new House Budget would make unprecedented investments in local aid for education in addition to numerous programs to support college students and higher education, including community colleges, the several State universities, and the University of Massachusetts.

"The total impact of this budget will be positive," concluded Representative Williams, "but the real challenge will be after the budget is finalized by the Senate and the Governor. At that point it will be important for all of us in the District to work together to see that these resources are brought home to benefit people and families here. I look forward with enthusiasm to work with all citizens to make this happen." ■

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS



The Process of the Grayson Gear

By Tristin Hurst

efficient way of communicating with students and parents. We thought about it and came up with the idea of a school newspaper. That could be where students worked together to create a newspaper for the school.

I called my grandparents, Marjorie and Frederick Hurst, for advice. I thought they would be helpful since they run their own newspaper business. That is when they recruited me as a writer for their newspaper. After learning from them, I went to the school principal and proposed this idea. She said that I had to find a supervising teacher and two other students who were motivated.

The next day I came to our principal with one teacher and half the school. So it was official. Tuesdays every week would be the Grayson Newspaper meeting. Half the school did not end up on the newspaper, but we still had a steady group of nine. Then the time came for the teacher to collect the articles. The problem was only four people followed through with writing and submitting articles.

We almost lost the newspaper club. The teacher refused to make a newspaper with only four articles.

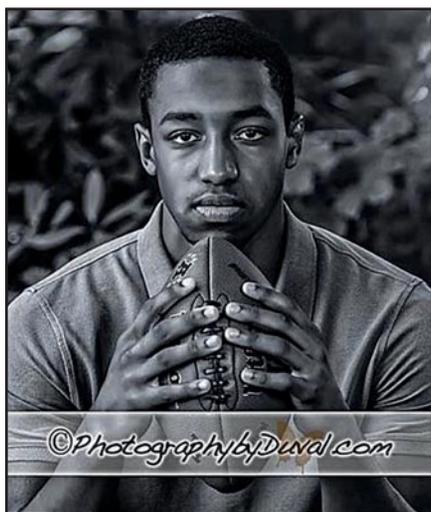
Disappointed, I told my mom what had happened. Happily, my mom offered to help me put together the newspaper on my own. I had to go through some effort to get people to send their old articles in and write new articles. At first, some people could not find their old articles. But eventually, they did. Another problem was, the people whom I convinced to write new articles did not want to do it at first. That was a very big challenge. Then I sent them the formatting for the newspaper we had set up and they did it in a heartbeat.

Once I received the articles I had to arrange them properly so they would all fit. It took a lot of effort but it was worth it. Two of the school's founders thought my newspaper was perfect! They plan to use it in admissions and education fairs. The principal called all the kids together to announce the newspaper. After the announcement, they all applauded. The Grayson Gear was a huge success!

I am Tristin Hurst and I created my school's first newspaper. The idea was brought up when I was driving to school with my neighbor. He was talking about the fact that we needed a more

All in the (Sports) Family

By Azell Cavaan



Benton E. Whitley

From a group of five middle-schoolers who didn't know a hold from a throw to a championship-winning organization with more than 70 athletes, Ed Whitley has grown his love for wrestling into a lifelong career of collaboration and coaching.



Dad, Eddie C. Whitley, Jr. and Son, Benton E. Whitley

"Other towns had wrestling programs and one day I was at a tournament in Ludlow and saw not one kid of color. I thought to myself that it would be nice to do something like that in Springfield – something for our kids," said Ed, who has also coached

youth football in the City for 15 years. "So, I started asking questions, getting ideas and got to work."

It's been 12 years since Whitley began a wrestling program for Springfield youth and he is quick to boast about the talent he has seen in the City's kids. But perhaps Whitley's biggest reward is embodied in his own son, an athlete who began wrestling and playing football in third grade. This fall, Benton Whitley will attend The College of the Holy Cross, where he has earned a four-year, full football scholarship.

Following in his father's athletic footsteps has never been a stress factor, Benton says. He was driven by his own desire to get better with each practice. "I always want to work hard and push myself," said Benton, who will major in biology. And Ed said he learned to separate his role as father from his role as coach because he realized early on that kids take criticism from their dads to heart. "I tried to be more of a sounding board and comforter for Benton," said Ed. "I'd leave

it to the coaches to be the disciplinarians. But I guided and kept a close eye on every move."

Ed's and Benton's eyes have always been fixed on sports.

Athletes in the Whitley family go back generations and Ed himself wrestled and played football for both Technical High School and Western New England College back in his day. In addition to wrestlers and football players, today there are boxers, martial artists, dancers, professional athletes and sport entrepreneurs in the Whitley family.

"For me, sports is family; it's community," said Ed, pointing out colleagues and coaches like David Zulkiewicz, Robert Bradley, William Lowe, Devon Williams, Dan McLaughlin, Sr. and parent coordinator William Lowe. "We all work to



Azell Cavaan

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COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Trip of a Lifetime

By Mary Custard

After more than a year of planning and fundraising, the Amherst Regional High School (ARHS) student organization, People Of Color United (POCU), began a whirlwind trip to DC on April 30th. Chaperoned by POCU Advisors, Mary Custard and Elizabeth Haygood, as well as Amherst A Better Chance Residence Director Sidonio Ferreira, and UMass Springfield Upward Bound Director Tyson Rose, 20 students piled into the two vans. The trip took about 8 hours each way with rest stops. Once the group arrived in DC, they settled into the Capital View Hostel, which was well suited and located for our group of 24 people.

Day 1: Bright and early Monday morning, POCU headed out to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Everyone was excited for the opportunity to view this Smithsonian Museum in particular, as it has been sold out since opening last September. POCU was also excited that the ARHS Prin-

cipal Mark Jackson, and Assistant Principal Miki Gromacki were joining us in this visit to the NMAAHC. Once inside we went immediately to the elevator to descend to begin the tour in the Slavery and Freedom exhibit. We then worked our way up through Segregation and the Civil Rights Movement and the Emmett Till exhibit before taking a lunch break in the delicious Down Home Café. After lunch we headed upstairs to view the Sports and Military exhibits and then went to the Cultural Expressions Gallery. There's so much to read, learn and experience in this museum. Everyone promised to visit again.

After a short break, we headed to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, another emotional experience. Upon entering, we were each given a Jewish ID card and then led to an elevator which was an eerie reminder of a Nazi gas chamber. We watched a short film on Hitler and learned about the world's complicity and resistance to the Holocaust.



Amherst Regional High School (ARHS) student organization, People Of Color United (POCU) visits Washington DC

Day 2: We did a lot of walking, visiting the National Museum of Natural History, the Washington Monument, the World War II Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the National Air and Space Museum, and the National Museum of the American Indian.

Day 3: We headed out for an 8 o'clock appointment at the U.S. Capitol with our Congressman Jim McGovern (who asked to lead our tour). Congressman McGovern spent time ex-

plaining details about the Capitol building and the people who represent us there. Highlights of the tour include seeing the Rosa Parks statue, the Shirley Chisholm portrait, and sitting in the House Chamber while Congressman McGovern answered our questions. What a great way to end our visit to D.C.!

We arrived back in Amherst safely the evening of May 3rd with many lifetime memories. POCU would like to thank everyone who supports them and contributed to helping make this trip possible! ■

All in the (Sports) Family

continued from page 18

help each other and the kids." Ed also pointed to former State Representa-

tive Raymond Jordan who started the 5A athletic organization.

Now Benton brings that sense of



community, family and commitment full circle as he prepares for life as a Division I college football player. Always studious, Benton maintained a high GPA at Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham and earned the respect and admiration of his peers and teachers. As he enters his next stage in life, Benton has some advice for young athletes – important lessons he learned along the way.

"I'd tell the younger kids to push themselves and work hard," said Benton. "Be a leader. Don't follow other guys because they are good athletes or cool, just do your



*Benton, Eddie,
Rae Love and the late Tracy Whitley
(10/16/1966 - 3/23/2017)*

own thing and be yourself."

Wise words from a young man with a stellar past and a bright future.

Around Town & In The Community



Students going on the MLK Jr. Family Services Black College Tour assembled for a group photo before leaving on the bus trip.



Members of the Xi Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. distribute Think HBCU bags packed with supplies for the trip.



Lynnette Johnson recently read her poetry at a one woman presentation, "Supreme," attended by friends and family, and, of course, her mom, Willette Johnson.



The Western Mass Black Nurses recently held their annual Scholarship Luncheon at Chez Josef in Agawam.



The YWCA held an Anti-Domestic Violence program on Arbor Day at their headquarters in Springfield.



The Boys and Girls Club Family Center recently held their 2017 Great Futures Gala. Standing L to R: Cee Jackson, Michael Smith, Youth of the Year Award recipient Inoah Lewis, Exec. Dir. Keshawn Dodds, staff and friends. Seated are Sydney and Tamara Dodds, and Keynote Speaker Monie Love.

Around Town & In The Community



The Springfield Jazz & Roots festival recently held a concert kickoff event at the Community Music School in Springfield.



Art for the Soul Gallery recently held an Exhibit of Children's Book Illustrator Frank Morrison, 5th from left. Gallery Director Rosemary Tracy Woods is 4th from left.



Dr. Willie Hill, Director of UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center (center), and Friends recently performed at STCC and took a group picture with students after the performance.



Springfield "celebs" attend STCC's 50th Anniversary celebration at the Marriott where STCC's new president, Dr. John B. Cook, was feted. (Photo by Lenny Underwood)



Ashes to Ashes

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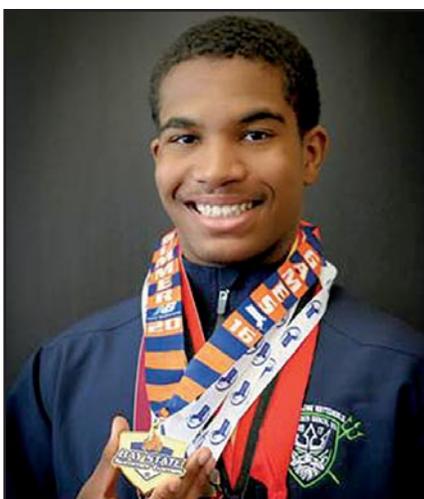
Ashes2ashes4ever.com



Around Town & In The Community



4th Annual High School Say "Yes" to the Prom Dress Event where gowns, jewelry and shoes are collected and given away to any and all Springfield Public School senior girls who have a need. Kudos to the organizers at Putnam Vocational Technical Academy.



Congratulations to these two Putnam wrestling champions who made their grandmothers proud. At left, junior Ahmad Hakeem Sharif, grandson of Mabel Sharif, who won All American. At right, senior Xzander Chapman, grandson of retired police officer Doris Chapman, who won Western MA Division 1 title.



Jay Griffin of Stone Soul, Inc. is surrounded by Amari Williams and Zyair Monroe Love of the Monroe Express Basketball Team sponsored in part by Stone Soul.



Members of Springfield Womens Commission attend Award Luncheon on May 11th.



Sisters in Motion, a tribute to Corrina Houston (7/24/1945 - 4/24/2017), seated far left.

All photos on this page are by Denise Mari Stewart, Dom-Dee Photography

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

LAW NOTES



Dr. Bridgette Baldwin is a Professor of Law at Western New England University School of Law with areas of interest in criminal law and procedure, international criminal law, evidence, critical race theory, cybercrime and welfare law.

Guilty and Innocent at the Same Time: The Abatement Loophole

By Dr. Bridgette Baldwin, Professor of Law, WNEU School of Law

You've been victimized! Your purse was snatched, your car stolen or you have been robbed. You want action. You demand justice. Through miraculous police work, the assailant was caught and arrested. He was brought to trial, proven guilty by a jury of his peers and convicted. Finally, closure; you have been vindicated and the case was over. But wait, the defendant filed an appeal amidst allegations of legal errors at trial. Not to worry, you think, it is just a technicality. But then, the unthinkable happened. The convicted defendant dies before his appeal had been heard. And you are told that the conviction of your assailant will be expunged!

In Massachusetts, a loophole in the criminal justice system called Abatement *ab initio*, which is Latin

for "from the beginning," allows a criminal conviction to be erased if the defendant dies while his appeal is pending. Because abatement *ab initio* dismisses a claim, for reasons that are not related to the merits of the claim, the defendant is essentially presumed innocent. Abatement was precisely the issue being discussed recently when former Patriot's tight end Aaron Hernandez committed suicide while awaiting his appeal.

How can this happen you ask? Justification for the abatement doctrine lies in many areas. First, the interests of justice are best served when the conviction of a defendant who has died is abated because his conviction has not been reviewed to make sure it is valid. Additionally, when the defendant is no longer living, resolution of his appeal seems to be pointless. Also, it seems antithetical to our process of fairness if the defendant does not have the ability to challenge

his conviction through an appeal. Lastly, the purpose for punishing the defendant no longer exists if the defendant is dead.

Where this policy originated from is less clear. Prior to the 19th century, its application and historical significance is scarce. In Massachusetts, the general practice and policy has been developed by Massachusetts's case law such as Commonwealth v. Latour, 397 Mass. 1007 (1986), Commonwealth v. Harris, 379 Mass. 917 (1980) or Commonwealth v. Eisen, 368 Mass. 813, 814 (1975). When the defendant dies before appellate resolution, not only will the criminal proceeding be abated but also any subsequent civil case which might want to make use of the previous criminal proceedings.

The impact of this common law doctrine is enormous. The current appeal will be dismissed, the conviction will be overturned, and the initial in-

dictment dismissed. Massachusetts is not alone in the use of this policy. The federal system, as well as other state systems, will also abate a criminal conviction when the defendant has died pending the appeal.

In addition to the recent Aaron Hernandez story, this policy has played out in a few other high profile cases in Massachusetts. In the winter of 1994, John Salvi walked into two abortion clinics in Brookline and killed two people. He committed suicide in prison two years later while his appeal was still pending and the court expunged his record. Roman Catholic priest John Geoghan was accused of sexually abusing over 100 children. His cellmate murdered him in prison while his appeal was pending. His record was also abated. While rare, the unique abatement policy can render someone guilty and yet innocent at the same time. ■

Trump Alerts!

By Marjorie J. Hurst



Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law Releases Report On Attorney General Jeff Sessions' First 100 Days

Report Sets Forth Evidence of Rollbacks on Civil Rights Enforcement

WASHINGTON, DC, May 19, 2017 — Today, Rights Under Law released a report evaluating Attorney General Jeff Sessions' first 100 days at the helm of the Justice Department. The report is the first in a series

by the Lawyers' Committee entitled "Where Is Justice" evaluating the Department's work—or lack thereof—on key civil rights matters.

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law's President and

Executive Director Kristen Clarke issued the following statement:

"The rapid downward trajectory of civil rights enforcement under United States Attorney General Jeff Sessions in his first 100 days in office cannot be ignored. Attorney General Sessions has shown a disregard for minority communities that rely on the Justice Department to protect their rights and enforce key civil rights laws on issues ranging from voting rights, policing reform and criminal justice. The Lawyers' Committee will continue to press the Attorney General to do his job and enforce our nation's federal civil rights laws and urge Congress and the public to remain vigilant in providing oversight of this important federal agency."

Congressman Cedric Richmond (D-La.), Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, appeared before

the Senate Judiciary Committee in January to speak against the nomination of Attorney General Sessions. Reflecting on the first 100 days, Congressman Richmond said:

"In his first 100 days, the Attorney General has demonstrated an indifference to the unique plight of the black community vis-a-vis our criminal justice system and a hostility to taking action to curb unconstitutional policing where it exists. This report is an important contribution to holding this Department of Justice accountable."

In its report, the Lawyers' Committee notes that Attorney General Sessions "has sought to reverse important progress made in recent years to bring fairness to the criminal justice system and protect the most vulnerable among us."

continues to page 25

EDITORIAL

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

TO DIG A DITCH

By Frederick A. Hurst

MY POINT
OF VIEW

Frederick A. Hurst



*My Grandfather,
Fred King*

I purchased a building that has now become our newspaper's offices. Contractors were rehabbing it and some debris had accumulated in the street at the side of the building. I

took out my broom, shovel and rake and commenced to remove the debris to my pickup truck when an old friend drove up. "Rick," he barked with a note of disbelief. "You're working like a common laborer!" I laughed and told him, **"IT IS NOBLE TO WORK AND ALL WORK IS NOBLE,"** which is what my grandfather used to say to me as he taught me how to dig a ditch.

On another day, the same person visited me in my new offices where I was working at my desk in my shirt and tie. He told me how he wanted a successful business of his own and asked me how he could accomplish it. I smiled and told him that I didn't know, but that I attribute my own suc-

cess to the rules that my grandfather taught me about how to dig a ditch. I satisfied his instant curiosity by relating what follows:

RULE 1: MAKE A LIVING BY FINDING SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN DO THAT THERE IS A MARKET FOR AND LEARN TO DO IT BETTER THAN OTHERS.

When my grandfather left his father's farm in Georgia in 1927 to come north in search of work, he arrived with a fourth grade education and expertise working with his hands. He came to Springfield by way of Detroit, worked on the railroad for a time and eventually landed a job digging ditches for the City of Springfield—which was involved in a

long-term effort to lay sewer pipes and break the reliance of homeowners on cesspools. The homeowners hired licensed plumbers to connect them to the new sewers. It saved the plumbers' time and, therefore, money to subcontract the job of digging and refilling the ditches to my grandfather, whom they considered one of the best ditch diggers around.

RULE 2: PREPARE FOR WORK.

My grandfather taught me that the more time spent in preparation for work, the less time and effort needed to complete it. The bulk of the money earned on a given sewer job went to the plumbers. The way for the ditch digger to make good

continues to page 38

AF-AM NEWS

bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

continued from page 4

they'd seen a news headline before – even if the item was false – also tended to think it was more likely to be true. In fact, familiar fake news was thought to be truer than unfamiliar real news."

AS IF WE DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW

"...researchers found that, after the hiring of a female or minority CEO, white male executives identified less with the company and felt less valued by it, than when a white male CEO was hired – even controlling for how these white male executives felt before the CEO hire, whether they were contenders for the CEO job and other factors. The more negative a white male executive's

sentiment, the less likely he was to mentor subordinates and help fellow executives, especially if they were women or members of a minority race." ("Uncommon Knowledge," *The Boston Globe*, April 30, 2013)

INEQUITIES IN EDUCATION

"Black and Latino students are 50 percent more likely than their white peers to be taught by inexperienced teachers and are three times more likely to have teachers who are not highly qualified in their subjects, a new state education report found. . . . The report states that high-poverty and high-minority schools employ first-year teachers at more than twice the rate of wealthier, white schools. The rate is 11.4 percent and 11.1 percent compared with 5.3 per-

cent and 5.0 percent." (*Boston Herald*, May 15, 2017)

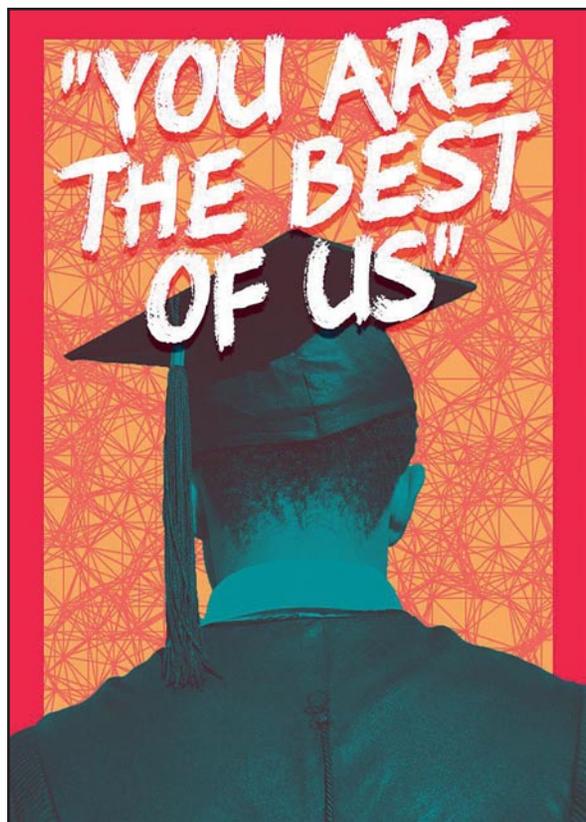
EASTHAMPTON'S SCHOOL DRESS CODE CONTROVERSY

If you are looking for a good analysis of Easthampton School District's controversial decision to ban the wearing of clothes containing the confederate flag, read the editorial in *The Republican* (May 12, 2017) that turns the argument of one school committee member, who was against the ban, upside down. "Easthampton schools do not need to rely on garments and apparel to objectively teach the complexity of the Civil War and America's history of race relations. Expecting reasonable respect of a dress code is not the same as silencing a student who has a right of free speech – with or without the

sweatshirt – and it shouldn't be," wrote the editorial writer, who I have good reason to know was Ron Chimelis, a journalist whom I hold in the highest regard. He is the type of writer who can write an article that you agree with on one day and another that you don't agree with on another day and you still come away feeling he has dealt with both topics fairly. The subject editorial is a must read especially Ron's three "lessons" on how to teach history without the need for students to wear the provocative confederate flag on their clothes. As a teaser, Ron's first lesson is "Each of the 11 Southern states that seceded declared their right for white people to own black people as slaves, a practice that involved beating, sexual abuse and the selling of family members." I couldn't have written it better. ■

OP-ED

Open Love Letter To Bethune-Cookman 2017 Graduates From Black Faculty



Source: iOne Creative, Getty / iOne Creative

More than 200 Black professors penned the beautiful open letter below to the courageous 2017 graduates of Bethune-Cookman College. The students defied the presence and rhetoric of 45's Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, as she attempted to complete her speech. The graduates turned their backs, literally, on DeVos as she offered her remarks to the chagrin of the college's administration gathered on the stage. Their act, their courage, in the face of assumed power is the true definition of Unapologetic. In response to their conviction, Dr. Yaba Blay (Dan Blue

Endowed Chair in Political Science at North Carolina Central University) organized the collective effort, and Drs. Camika Royal (Assistant Professor of Urban Education at Loyola University Maryland) and Treva B. Lindsey (Associate Professor of Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State University) penned this powerful sendoff below.

The CASSIUS team is honored they chose to publish with us exclusively.

Dear Graduates of Bethune-Cookman: First, congratulations! We are so proud of what you have accomplished. You have studied, prepared, planned, learned, and have earned what our parents, grandparents, and ancestors have had to fight, scrape, and die for in this nation. We are proud of you for that!

WATCHING YOU STAND AND TURN YOUR BACKS TO HER MAKES US ELATED. OVERJOYED. HUMBLED. IT WAS A DAY AND A MOMENT THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABOUT CELEBRATING YOU AND WHAT YOU ACHIEVED.

Beyond becoming graduates, we are floating this morning thinking about how you stood up to your university and protested the woefully under-qualified Secretary of Education who attempted to address you at your graduation yesterday (May 10, 2017). Watching you stand and turn your backs to her makes us elated. Overjoyed. Humbled. It was a day and a moment that should have been about celebrating you and what you achieved.

The world watched you protest the speaker you never should have had. We cheered as we saw so many of you refuse to acquiesce in the face of threats and calls for complicity. Your actions fit within a long tradition of Black people fighting back against those who attack our institutions and our very lives with their anti-Black policies and anglo-normative practices. Betsy DeVos' commitment to dismantling public education and her egregious framing of historically Black colleges and universities as "pioneers" in school choice are just two examples of why she should never have been invited to speak at an event celebrating Black excellence.

We shared your outrage when it was announced that DeVos would serve as your commencement speaker and receive an honorary degree. As your administration hid behind the rhetoric of "learning from people with divergent perspectives," current students objected. Alumni petitioned. We watched from a distance wondering how but knowing why this moment was taken from honoring you.

But then, you turned it around, figuratively and literally. We beamed with joy as we watched videos and read tweets of how you took your graduation back to honor yourselves. To honor your founder. To honor our ancestors. To honor us all.

You represent the best of Mother Mary McLeod Bethune who took the little she had and built an institution that remains committed to bringing out the best in us. You are the best of us. We, the undersigned, are Black professors and college administrators—some of us at HBCUs, some of us at PWIs, some of us HBCU alums—and we thank you. We salute you. And we love you.

Hail, Wildcats!

Trump Alerts!

By Marjorie J. Hurst



continued from page 23

In his first 100 days, Attorney General Sessions has:

- Revoked a 2016 directive aimed at phasing out the use of private prisons;
- Called for the review of all existing and pending consent decrees concerning policing reform;
- Issued a directive to prosecutors that threatens to reignite a "War on Drugs";
- Abandoned a long-held position in a voting rights case concerning a discriminatory and restrictive photo ID law in Texas;
- Taken actions that marginalize immigrant communities; and

- Stood silent in the wake of the spike in hate crimes across the country.

Since its creation in 1963 at the urging of President John F. Kennedy, the Lawyers' Committee has been devoted to the recognition and enforcement of civil rights in the United States. Throughout Attorney General Jeff Sessions' tenure, the Lawyers' Committee will continue to ask through its work and news reports: Where Is Justice?

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law's report on

Attorney General Jeff Sessions' first 100 days is available online at <https://lawyerscommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Sessions-100-Days-Report>. And the organization's statement on the Sessions nomination from January 2017 is also available online.

Contact:

Derrick Robinson, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, DRobinson@LawyersCommittee.org (240) 473-3034

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



*Pastor
J.P. Morgan*

“A Letter To My Boys”

By Pastor J.P. Morgan

Dear Boys,

As my father, who died as a result of complications due to a stroke, was never able to sit down with me and, as we see in the movies, say his last words to me, I'm taking this opportunity to share some things with you in writing.

Let me say that I'm so glad that you were born in the first place. Your mother and I went through seven incredibly disappointing years with no children and then the first of you came in the eighth year. When we discovered that we were pregnant again, we were expecting to have a girl. As we looked at the ultrasound with a female name already picked out, we discovered that we were going to have another boy.

Hearing that news, I couldn't express enough the joy I personally felt, having myself been the only boy among three older girls. I revel in the fact that I have been given not one, but two boys. Two boys to secure the preservation of my family name. Two boys after we were told we couldn't even have children. You boys are indeed our miracles.

I want to first remind you that you have a heritage: a lineage of good works, helping others; a lineage of faith and determination. Use this to spring forward in your existence and allow it to occupy your minds with an attitude of positive outcomes that will not only enrich you, but others as well.

This is a cold, cruel and maniacal world in which we live, but we are the bearers of the torch of light, the repairers of the breach, those who will rebuild, renovate, and make the community livable again. I pass this mantra on to you because I want you to succeed in the places where others have failed. Take your hammer of love and nail cooperation, unity, integrity, and trust back into the fabric of our human relationships.

Go for your dreams. Despite the forces, especially in this country that seem intent on our racial genocide, be fearless and true to who you are. Do not be a sellout. There will always be injustice in the world, but you can rise above it if you stay true to who you are and focus on your goals.

Jackie Mutcherson said, “It takes each of us to make a difference for all of us.” It takes fearless men to right the wrongs of society; men who will go against the grain of popular opinion and dare to spread their wings and fly in chaotic winds of conformity. What you do matters. What you say carries weight. If you do your best, God will do the rest.

Love Always,
Daddy

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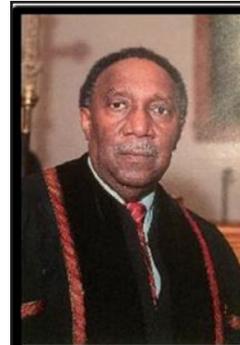
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One on Solomon's Portico"*
Acts 5:12b



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COMMUNITY

City Councilor Tells SHA Youth to Aim High in Life

By Mary Ellen Lowney, Communications and Community Relations Manager, SHA

SPRINGFIELD, MA — May 1, 2017—For City Councilor Justin Hurst, nothing is more important in life than having your own voice, and using it to make your community a better place to live.

Brought up by parents who have long served in the public arena, Hurst, a lifelong city resident and attorney, is of the same ilk, and felt a pull towards activism even as a young child. When he grew up, he did something about it.

“I always knew I had an obligation to give back,” he recently told members of Springfield Housing Authority’s Robinson Gardens Apartments Youth Group.

“The most important thing in this life is to have a voice and to use it, to speak out for what is right, and what is just,” he added.

Hurst proved a compelling speaker to the group of teens who meet daily after school to focus on academics, jobs, and paving the way to a good life. They peppered him with questions about his education – he has a juris doctor degree from Western New England University School of Law – and his professional life, which includes a stint as a high school teacher in the city.

They also asked him about the public life that he has embraced since being elected to the City Council in 2013.

Hurst was glad to oblige them.

“I consider myself an advocate for everybody in the city. I’ve been vocal on a lot of issues. I’m not afraid to speak up when I feel the need to,” he said.

Indeed, he has spoken out on issues including a city residency requirement and oversight of the Police

Department, the MGM Casino opening next year in downtown Springfield, among others.

His advice to the Youth Group was to stay on track with school and to reach for goals to attain as adults, whether that be education or work, or both. He also told them to stick to their own personal values and principles, always.

“Be more of an advocate for

yourself,” he said. “If you feel there are avenues for you to move forward in terms of careers, or anything, follow that. You’ll be much more powerful if you advocate for yourself.”

What can teens do to get their voices heard? “Write letters to your mayor. Tell them you want funds for youth summer jobs. There’s a lot you can do,” he said.

Youth Group members said they were impressed with Hurst’s commitment to helping others, and to his own success story.

“He was really good,” said Jaleiry Reveron, who is 14 and a stu-

dent at Kennedy Middle School. “I liked it when he said that we fail more than we succeed, but we should never stop trying. It makes me want to succeed,” she added.

Karmanie Landron, 14, said, “I thought he was a really good speaker. He showed us that there are so many paths we can

take, we have so many choices.” Her sister, Katherine Landron, agreed. “He’s a great motivational speaker,” said the 17-year-old, who attends the Springfield Conservatory for the Arts. “He showed us that you should never stop trying, you should always reach higher for what you want in your life.”

Kashawn Lenorr, 15, said he liked what Hurst had to say about perseverance. “Never give up on yourself. There’s always something to reach for,” said Lenorr, who attends Kennedy Middle School.

The Youth Group is run by SHA Youth Engagement Coordinator Jim-



Springfield City Councilor Justin Hurst with SHA Youth Engagement Coordinator Jimmie Mitchell.



Springfield City Councilor Justin Hurst met recently with Springfield Housing Authority’s Robinson Gardens Youth Group.

mie Mitchell, who brings in visitors weekly, usually local people who have made successes professionally.

Hurst fit that model perfectly. “My goal was to bring in someone from the city’s political system so the youth can get the experience of someone in a high position in the city, someone who has power and clout to get things done,” said Mitchell, a retired counselor from Putnam High School.

“This was a great experience for everyone,” he said.

Hurst said he knows he will never stop giving back. He said his parents, local attorneys Frederick and Marjorie Hurst, both with long political experience here, have always been role models. Hurst is also married to an elected official, Denise Hurst who serves on the School Committee. They have two young sons.

“I had the benefit of having two parents who always expected greatness of me. That was an expectation, that I needed to do good things,” he said.

“I grew up knowing I had an obligation to give back.” ■

Springfield Housing Authority is Massachusetts’ second largest housing authority, with 2,397 traditional public housing units located at twenty-seven sites throughout the city, 240 Massachusetts Rental Vouchers, and 2,893 Housing Choice Vouchers.

COMMUNITY

SHA Teens Hear About City Schools from the Source

By Mary Ellen Lowney, Communications and Community Relations Manager, SHA

SPRINGFIELD, MA — May 9, 2017—Springfield School Committee member Denise Hurst got a grilling recently from among her most important constituents – a group of students.

And Hurst, in the home stretch of her second, four-year term, landed nicely on her feet with each question from members of the Springfield Housing Authority's Robinson Gardens Youth Group.

She handled questions ranging from school choice – namely, how to get into your high school of preference – to effective teaching, to how to be an effective change agent in your own community, and many more. Like a seasoned politician, she listened attentively, asked follow-up questions, and framed her answers thoughtfully, and thoroughly.

Afterwards, she underscored the importance of her session with the teens she met at the family public housing development in the Pine Point section of the city.

“When you hear it right from the kids, right from the students whose educations are impacted by the choices you are making, well, it doesn't get any better than that,” said Hurst, a lifelong city resident and the mother of two young sons.

“When they're older, hopefully they'll want to have a public voice and help make changes where they live and work,” she added.

Hurst was one of a series of professional speakers who visit the Youth Group each week, courtesy of SHA Youth Engagement Officer Jimmie Mitchell, who wants teens to have local role models they can see succeeding, in real time. Mitchell said Hurst was perfect for that, and more.

“Denise Hurst is just what we've been looking for to get the kids to see how the school system really works,” said Mitchell, himself a retired school counselor from the Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical Academy, now the most popular choice.

“These kids don't often get to talk to the people in power. What we're doing here at Robinson Gardens is exposing them to people in the

by the deadline to improve their chances of getting in to the school they want to attend.

She also urged Youth Group members to be role models for the younger ones in the group.

“Reach back and give good guidance to your friends getting ready



SHA Youth Engagement Coordinator Jimmie Mitchell with Springfield School Committee member Denise Hurst.

Keishla Caldero, said she found Hurst's comments most informative.

“She was really interesting,” said Caldero. “I liked hearing about how the schools pick the students.”

Nisa Harris is a seventh-grader at Springfield Conservatory for the Arts, an arts-focused magnet school serving 337 students in grades 6 through 12. She is hoping to transfer to Central when she hits ninth grade, so she can play volleyball on the team there.

“This was actually really helpful,” Harris said of Hurst's visit. “She gave us some really good information. She understands what we're going through, but she can tell us how things are for the teachers and the people running the schools.”

Before she left, Hurst passed out to each teen lists including all School Committee meetings for the next year, including those with public speak-out sessions and the names of all School Committee members, the wards they represent, and their subcommittee assignments. She advised Youth Group members to get active by reaching out.

“I can pass on your concerns, and I will do that,” she promised. “But it's a lot better if you write that letter, or make that phone call.” ■



Springfield School Committee member Denise Hurst with members of Springfield Housing Authority's Robinson Gardens Apartments Youth Group.

community who are leading the way, so they can see that for themselves,” he said.

Indeed, the teens were impressed with Hurst's ability to tackle a variety of topics, most especially the school choice issues that are currently weighing on many Youth Group members. Eighth graders in the public school system make their choices for high school, but don't always get the top pick.

Hurst acknowledged that the choice system doesn't work perfectly for everyone, while at the same time asking the teens to file their choices

to make their choices. They'll look to you for guidance, and it's good to do that,” Hurst said.

Ninth-grader Christopher Ortiz, who is president of the Youth Group, said he ended up at Central High School, his second choice after Putnam. Hearing straight from a School Committee member about the process was helpful, he said.

“I feel like she answered all of our questions about how school works, what she does, and the things she can help with,” said Ortiz, who is 15.

Another Central ninth grader,

THE ARTS

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW



Moyah Smith is the Community Outreach Officer and Mortgage Loan Officer for United Bank. Also a radio personality for WTCC, her show, Whispers After Dark, is every Wednesday evening from 8-10pm on 90.7fm or www.wtccfm.org.

Strength of a Woman

By Moyah Smith



Mary J. Blige

Mary J. Blige shares her life through her music—baring the good times as well as the bad within her lyrics. It is the opinion of many that MJB makes better music and gives better performances

when she is going through struggles and pain in life. This is not to say people wish her ill-will, or that they don't enjoy her music when she is in love,

when life is good and when things are going well. But MJB is a soul singer. And much like Marvin Gaye, Donny Hathaway, Phyllis Hyman, Anita Baker and many other soul singers, she embraces her pain as well as her joy. She puts it all out in her music and her fans

are the beneficiaries. It's unfortunate and sad to know Mary and her husband are going through a divorce. But we all go through struggles, and when someone makes music that is relatable to the things we all have been through

at some point in our lives, it can be very healing. During such a time, I had a feeling her show at Foxwoods was going to be an emotional, spiritual journey. And I was correct.

Let me start by saying she looked fabulous. Mary is as well known for her style as she is for being a songstress. I have always said I wish I could raid her closet *just* once. She stepped to the stage in thigh high black leather peep-toe boots, a sexy black lace fitted jumper with a crop leather jacket and a perfectly coiffed Blonde feathered short haircut.

The show started with some of her "club bangers," such as *Just Fine*, *Love Without A Limit* and *I Can Love You* for which rap artist Lil Kim came out and performed her part. That was an exciting surprise. It would have been nice to see more of her. With all of the changes she has gone through, she still sounded good. By this time, Mary had thrown on a baseball cap

and was giving us that MJB hip-hop swag that she does so well.

When it was time to get into her cuts such as *Take Me As I Am*, *My Life*, and *Going Down*, that is when things got deep. When I say Mary put everything she had on that stage, I mean she put EVERYTHING on the stage. Her newest songs *U + Me* and *Thick of It* appear to be directly related to her current marital situation, so the emotion was heavy.

Mary made an announcement to the men in the audience that although she loves men with her heart and soul, she was definitely going to be focusing on the women. She made it clear that she is a woman and can only speak honestly about what women want and need from our men. *Strength of a Woman* is the title of this tour. So men, don't take it personally. Just sit back, *listen* and enjoy the music. ■



Beatrice Dewberry, Damien Escobar and Moyah Smith

One of the great things about living in Western Massachusetts is that we are a hop, two skips and one jump from Boston, Rhode Island, New York City and other great surrounding areas. We are actually in the direct hub of entertainment, despite what many would say.

Damien Escobar is Back

By Moyah Smith

So a couple of friends and I decided to hop, skip and jump our way to NYC one Tuesday evening in April.

My girlfriend is possibly contemporary soul violinist Damien Escobar's biggest fan. She had received an invitation to join him in Harlem for an intimate night as he shared excerpts from his new project "Boundless." It was a one night only listening session at club Mist Harlem. And it was free! There was no passing that up, even if Wednesday would then be a long day at work. It was well worth the 2.5 hour drive down, a great night of good music, and the 2.5 hour drive back. We were home by midnight.

During Escobar's performance, he spoke a lot about his life and actually shared a short video documentary openly discussing the trials and tribulations he has experienced in recent

years. You may remember Damien as one half of the hip hop violin duo "Nuttin But Stringz" along with his brother. They were pretty popular for quite a while, landing gigs such as Showtime at the Apollo, The Ellen DeGeneres Show and The Tonight Show. But they really began to blow up once they were on America's Got Talent, which opened the door for endorsements and even bigger shows. But due to creative differences, he and his brother split. Damien discussed how he went from riches to rags pretty quickly. He found himself broke and basically homeless. Escobar was forced to move back in with his mother and the struggle was pretty significant, especially after living the life of the rich and famous for so many years.

After a brief stint of living behind

a desk as a means to support his family, Damien was called back to the music scene. This time he was solo and instead of covering Hip Hop songs, he opted to explore R & B covers. The show at Mist Harlem was proof that he made the right choice. Good move, Damien. Watching and listening to him perform songs such as All of Me (John Legend), Hello (Adele) and an amazing expression of Prince's Purple Rain prompted me to go straight to Amazon and purchase his music. The show in Harlem was his farewell to NYC as he was then to begin his tour. If he is anywhere near the vicinity of the hub of entertainment in which we live, I will be there! ■

Don't forget, June is Black Music Month! There will be a celebration every Friday evening, June 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th, from 5-9pm with some great live music right at Cozy Pavilion, 668 State Street.

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.

“My Daddy Rules the World”

By Hope Anita Smith

c.2017, Henry Holt & Co. Books for Young Readers \$17.99 / \$24.99

Canada 32 pages

Reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer

Your Daddy is the King of the House.

He's the smartest person you know. He can run fast, jump high, and his words make things happen, he's strong, cool, and funny; he's always making you laugh. And in the new book “My Daddy Rules the World,” words and pictures by **Hope Anita Smith**, you'll read all about him.

Your daddy is many things to you. He's friendly as a puppy, he's a porcupine on his face, and he's a tickle octopus. He's tall as a giraffe, wise as an owl, and he gives the best bear hugs!

When he's taking a nap, you try hard not to make a peep. You sneak around and whisper, but there are times when you can't help it: your voice accidentally gets loud, the door

might slam when you go outside, or something might be really funny, and you giggle. *You* try to hush, but when Daddy sleeps, *he's* noisy! It sounds like “horses galloping fast” or a “real horn that blows.”

When he spends extra time with you, just you and Daddy, it's special. He makes a great breakfast, and he makes time to talk about what's important. And if you can't talk with him at home (because sometimes, Daddies go “far away” for awhile), you can write a letter and tell him everything. Add a poem or a prayer; he'll like that very much.

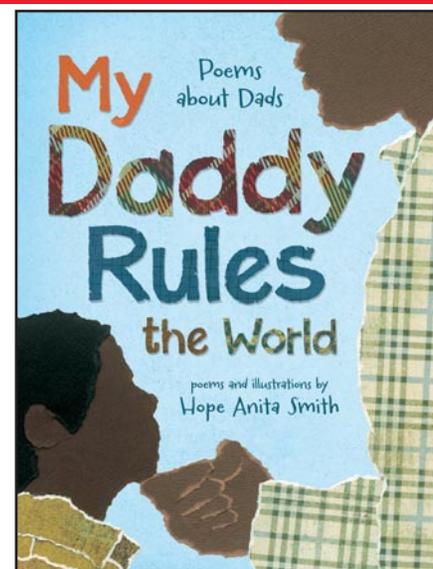
Your Daddy might give you a haircut outside, with a “backwards cape” wrapped around your neck. He might scoop you up, or balance you on his shoes so you can dance together to an old-school song. He plays with you and teaches you how to do things that

are fun to do; he knows when to let go when you're learning to ride a bike, he shows you the value of a great book, and he helps you to remember to be good.

Your Daddy is the King of the House. And that's the way you like it.

Here's a certainty you can count on: every Daddy's Little Girl and Daddy's Boy will find something to love inside “My Daddy Rules the World.”

They're going to enjoy the poems; that's how author Hope Anita Smith presents each chapter and sentiment of a father's love for his child, and vice versa. Those rhymes are simple and sweet, and they celebrate the everyday. It's also nice to find poems that are specific to children whose fathers are temporarily absent, and one that speaks subtly of fathers who work late hours. Both boys and girls are



equally represented here, which is likewise a very nice touch.

Children will also appreciate Smith's artwork: each picture is created with torn paper, an art form that's interesting to look at, as well as to try at home.

This is a great book for kids to read to Dad, for Dad to read aloud, or for sharing with Grandpa, too. No matter how you enjoy it, “My Daddy Rules the World” is fit for any Papa's prince or princess. ■

PEN & INK

An Open Letter to “Those” White Women

Brenda's Child



***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*

Conspiring to create narratives that portray me negatively, trying to mold other people's opinions to match your false assumptions. But you don't know me. Fact is you don't want to, because that would mean admitting you are in fact...racist. Sure, it's not blatant, but I'm intelligent and intuitive so I know I wasn't trippin' when I heard that microaggression slip from your lips.

This ain't the first time you made that type of comment, not just about Black people, but Black WOMEN.

If a smile is not painted on my face, then I must be angry,
When I walk with authority and confidence, then I have an attitude,
My vivacious spirit and passion are misunderstood & unappreciated
because no matter how I speak up, it's threatening, I'm too animated.
How dare I move my hands?
That's intimidating, hostile... ghetto...street.

But you're not racist, in fact you don't see color, right?
You march for women's rights, right?
I'd laugh if your thinking wasn't so scary, if historically
snap judgments from your white feminine ancestors
weren't the reasons for so many lynchings of our men.

Save your tall tales about your token Black friends,
I'd rather you acknowledge your white privilege,
Question your assumptions, check your judgments, think before you speak,
Challenge your beliefs about people with melanin and hips,
acknowledge that you don't have to understand the
Black woman's struggle in order for you to recognize it exists.

THE ARTS

PEN & INK



Berdia M. Brown

I Have Never Stopped Loving You My Black Man

By Berdia M. Brown

What can I say to make you understand? I have never stopped loving you my black man.

You are the descendants of the greatest of greats: Kings, Great Warriors, Educators, and pure genius of strength, nobility, leadership, and, yes, the man I've always loved.

You are strong, even when you have been wronged.

Your mahogany skin of many colors, black, brown, deep coffee, as well as caramel tan. I love you my black man.

There are many of your ebony Queens who have been mistreated by the man she has always stood by. Many have been verbally and physically abused, yet I ask why?

You disrespect, call your Queens degrading names. My black man, do you feel any shame?

You are sons of black Queens, with roots so deeply embedded deep within your inner soul. They are entwined, and so strong, their strength can never be destroyed. They will continue to flourish throughout many generations.

Give your Queen the respect she deserves. Let her be your dedication.

Your Queen is strong, yet a gentle woman who was misused against her will.

Through her tears and pleas, her love for her black man remained still.

Some died giving birth to a slave owner's child. Through all the trauma that she endured, afraid of being beaten, afraid for her life.

She was a black man's mother, sister, grandmother, cousin, aunt, and wife.

After your black Queens couldn't bear any more children because she was too old, they had no pity on them, many were quickly sold.

The thought of freedom was only a dream or shadow that seemed impossible.

I ask you my black man, do you not respect the Queens who died giving birth?

The beautiful Queens who are the color of the earth.

Through it all my black man, I hope you'll understand.

I have never stopped loving you my black man.

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JUANITA TORRENCE-THOMPSON: Pushcart nominee. Playwright. Published fiction, children's stories, feature articles, hundreds of her award-winning poems in dozens of U.S. and international journals, nearly 30 anthologies, 9 books including "When Morning Comes" (2016). Writes print & online newspaper poetry columns; produces poetry salons and reads internationally. Former Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of award winning *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

The Coolest Kid in Town

By Juanita Torrence-Thompson

I was about 10 when we got our first TV set.

— A 12" black and white Admiral.

We were the first on our street, first of my friends,

First in school or church – black, white, green or purple.

We watched: The Ed Sullivan Show, Lights Out! Sid Caesar, Edward R. Murrow, Hallmark Hall of Fame and more.

When our television arrived in our Norman Rockwellian town, I was so excited, I told my friends Sue and Elaine.

"You don't have a TV," they said.

"Yes, we do. See our roof antenna. Come in, I'll show you."

They oohed and ahed for the longest time.

As word spread, I was soon the coolest kid in school.

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.

Every month different paintings created by Renée Flowers are displayed at Point of View



LIVING

LIFE'S CHALLENGES

What Is A Double Bind?

By Sweets H. Wilson, PhD



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

FROM HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The principle of a double bind is to offer a person a choice or put them in a position where they are required to choose, but where the outcome of the choice leads either to the same result or to results that are equally desirable. In other words, a double bind is a situation where a person has a choice typically between two options, but whichever way they choose, they lose out, often with the same result.

Usually in the double bind there is no alternative since the person is forced to choose and does not have the luxury of not choosing. This situation may occur by chance, but when in a persuasive situation, it is often carefully engineered by the persuader, and any alternative choices are either removed or hidden so only the double bind option appears valid.

Individuals get stuck in patterns of behaving where they often unconsciously put themselves into a double bind, and typically getting out of one bind only gets them into the other. For example:

- A person whose car is broken down has the choice between having it towed or fixing it. Either option costs about the same.
- A child purchases a gift for his/her parent and then asks for something. If the parent refuses, they know the child will claim the moral high ground and give them a guilt trip, so they comply with the request.
- An unemployed person on state benefits is offered a job that pays

the same amount as the benefit. In either case, they remain poor.

- An individual who feels that they have the choice of staying in an abusive relationship or leaving and becoming homeless.

The purpose of the secondary bind in the example of becoming homeless, is to keep the person in the primary bind of the abusive relationship. While some double binds or no win situations are perfectly real, a great many are psychological constructs. That is, individuals can think they are caught in a double bind when they are not. Double binds can tie emotional problems in place and the individual becomes stuck. Here are some examples:

- A man who is bored and stagnant in his job may be too afraid to make a change. If he stays, he suffers; if he leaves, he believes he will suffer so he feels stuck.
- A woman wants to end her guilty affair but fears she will remain unfulfilled in her marriage if she does.
- A person truly wishes to be slimmer but at the same time craves fattening comfort foods.
- A man wants to have sex but fears he will be unable to perform and so avoids all sexual contact.

Such apparent double binds are at the heart of so many emotional and psychological problems. Escaping or helping the individual's escape a double bind requires:

- Flexible thinking
- A capacity to see beyond the obvious
- A willingness to forgo either limitation
- A search for the payoff
- Compromise
- Changing one part of the pattern

We cannot always choose what happens to us, but we can choose, or at least alter, to some degree, how we respond to the variations in life. ■



WTCC is your source for music - from jazz to R&R oldies, gospel to salsa, R&B to blues, Motown and more, as well as Caribbean, Portuguese, Latino, Polish, Greek, Native American and Italian programming - plus talk shows with local hosts discussing local issues.

*Your all-volunteer community radio station
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www.wtccfm.org

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

Complexity is Tied to Destiny

continued from page 7

seeming inability to change a behavior, now has me looking for better ways to silence myself, so that I can hear the only relevant voice—from the one who controls my destiny. I've been getting in His way. What nerve, thinking that I was in control!

I never thought about how much that slows down the process and consequently increases the number of complexities that may actually be used as attention-getters. Instead, I was beating myself up. I better understand that this is not productive. I realize now that on the path to destiny, the complexities are necessary to strengthen us. This revelation reminded me, not only how much I am NOT in control, but most importantly, exactly WHO is.

Following His instructions on how to deal with the everyday difficulties is preparation for the complexities leading to my destiny. He needs us to,

as quickly as possible, realize this so that He can use us to do the greater work that He has for us!

I have a new appreciation for complexities, large and small. In the past, I often viewed difficulties and challenges negatively. I rushed to respond with my own answers and solutions. I am now going to be listening intently for that guiding voice to direct me. I am looking forward to growing daily in my newfound perspective. Knowing that there is a direct correlation between complexities and destiny, gives me great cause to be peaceful and patient when complicated situations arise.

We'll always have complexities in our lives. Understanding the connection that they have to our destiny should give us a reason for celebration. How will you handle inevitable complexities in your life?

HAPPY FATHERS DAY!

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Power Gospel Pentecostal Ministries

By Denise Mari Stewart

Easter Sunday 2017, will be forever remembered as proof that following the leading of the Lord definitely has its rewards. The opening of Power Gospel Pentecostal Ministries, 450 Memorial Drive, Chicopee on Sunday, April 16, 2017, welcomed a mixture of family, friends and 75 potential members to bear witness to the power of God through Springfield's newest Pastor, Elder Jesse Burgess.

Pastor Burgess is a lifelong resident of Springfield and a product of the Church of God in Christ. He and his wife, Stephanie, have been married for 19 years and have two teenage children, Jesselle, 15, a sophomore, and Dominique, 18, a senior in high school.

In 2016, Alden Baptist Church asked then Elder Burgess to take a temporary assignment during their search for a new Pastor. Over the years, Pastor Burgess had formed a great relationship with Alden, filling in from time-to-time for their former Pastor, J. Willard Cofield, Jr. It was during his assignment that he got the clarion call to start Power Gospel Pentecostal Ministries, and after giving sincere thought and prayer, the church opened on Easter Sunday.

Pastor Burgess had been a member of Daniels New Bethel Church for 43 years where his Grandfather, Pastor Andrew Daniels, nurtured him in the Gospel. As a teenager, Elder Burgess was part of two well known Gospel recording groups, The Motivators and New Creation. While in the latter group, they received great acclaim, appearing on Bobby Jones Gospel Hour and winning the McDonalds Gospelfest Contest.

Pastor Burgess received the Holy Ghost on June 30, 1999, and retired from active touring and singing to focus on his calling. He was ordained



Pastor Jesse Burgess

in 2009, and began serving in a series of positions in the church: Sunday School Superintendent, Youth Pastor and then Junior Pastor. As a result of these ministerial positions, he developed the skills and the passion for working with youth. As Youth Pastor he organized games, activities, trips and services of encouragement for young people.

In 2001, he joined WTCC Radio where he has served the community for 16 years, ministering the Gospel to them through song and word. There he is known as "preacherman." He is a gifted singer/songwriter who three years ago resumed his national recording career as "Preacherman & the Singing Saints."

Pastor Burgess is a family man who takes great delight in spending time with family. He is a visionary who uses his powerful preaching and singing to create fellowship opportunities within the church and community. He is the originator of February Fellowship Meeting, Champions of Character Community Awards, and he especially supports and encourages youth ministry.

Pastor Burgess recounts that he never desired to leave his previous church home, and when God began

continues to page 39

Film with Local Ties to be Screened at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston



Crystal Senter-Brown

Local author Crystal Senter-Brown's first novel *The Rhythm in Blue* has been turned into a feature film and will be shown as part of the Roxbury Film Festival in

Boston, MA at the Museum of Fine Arts on June 28th at 7:30 p.m. For tickets, visit roxburyinternational-filmfestival.com. The film was written by Crystal Senter-Brown and directed by Toni Parker of 15L Productions. The film also features music from local artists AJ Baymon, Heshima and Lynnette Johnson.

About the movie: Fed up with wedding planning, a groom-to-be decides to escape from his fiancé for a couple days. He travels back to his hometown, Blue Virginia, to hang out with his best friend. The next day he gets the news that his fiancé was involved in a head on collision while driving to a cake tasting appointment. Wracked with guilt, he must learn to forgive himself in order to find happiness again.

The Rhythm in Blue stars Jaiden Kaine as "Mason" (*Luke Cage, Hidden Figures*), Shemeka Wright as



"Keisha" (*Luke Cage*), Steven Strickland as "Pastor Jacob" and Jasmine Thomas as "Jasmine". The film also stars Chantal Maurice as "Frankie" (*Blue Bloods, Mr. Robot*)

For interview requests, call Crystal Senter-Brown at 413-883-9827 or email gabbygirlmedia@gmail.com. ■

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Springfield Graduates Worthy of Praise

continued from page 6

Higher Education and SPS, the program provides supports and opportunities to prepare 100 male juniors and seniors for college.

I would like to offer my most sincere congratulations to all the young men and women graduating this year. I must also recognize their families and extended support sys-

tems. I am confident that graduating students like Israel, Corey, Trust and hundreds more SPS young men and women will achieve success in their next chapter of life – whether going on to college, the Armed Forces or career. We wish each of them well and want them to know we expect great things from them. ■

GOOD NEWS

June 2017

The Stone Soul, Inc. Civil War Living History Re-Enactors Group, "The Peter Brace Brigade"



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

We want to acknowledge the contributions of African Americans during times of strife in America by emphasizing the military contributions of people of color who have fought and died for this country even before it was an independent nation. Since before the

Revolutionary War, we were there. Bunker Hill to Iraq/Afghanistan, we were there. Stone Soul, Inc. will honor the Stone Soul Soldiers via the "living history" re-enactment of the camp life, social activities, games, music, and food of a given era.

We have started our first "Living History" re-enactment encampment with the Civil War. The Civil War was a multifaceted historical event, which, likened to a great earthquake, has reverberations and aftershocks right up to this day. Stone Soul, Inc. chose the Civil War because many Stone Soul Soldiers came from New England. We

want to recognize the brave soldiers of color who fought the enemy and the enemy within. Their struggle within a struggle continues.

We have formed a Civil War Living History Re-Enactors Group. We are known as the "Peter Brace Brigade." The Brace Brigade is in honor of Peter Brace who was a Black soldier in Company E Mass. 54th Colored Troop. Peter Brace is the great grandson of Jeffery Brace who settled in Vermont and told his story to Benjamin Prentiss, Esq., which resulted in the book "The Blind African Slave," the Memoirs of Boyrebeau Brinch (nicknamed Jeffery Brace). The Brace family has a large contingent of direct descendants of Jeffery Brace here in Springfield, MA and in St. Albans, VT. We honor the Brace family and all others who made contributions to this country.

Our goal is to draw attention to the contributions our soldiers of color made to this nation. Our hope is to get

youth involved through a Stone Soul Soldier Cadet Drill Team, which will give them the opportunity for education, self-discipline, teamwork, creativity, self-expression and positive experiences with other youth and adults.

The whole concept is based on a holistic approach to a healthy community, including the individuals, families, neighborhoods, and community institutions as a testament to cultural appreciation as seen through the eyes of the various cultures in the region.

We are inviting readers of the *POV* to share their families' historical contribution to this area. Stone Soul has a mission to highlight the contributions of people, programs, and organizations. Please feel free to write/document your information via this Good News column of *POV*. **You can contact us at 413-636-3881 or 413-739-2947 or email us at: hayjay252@msn.com. ■**

COMMUNITY

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER



Brandi Bass who received a bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Business Administration from UMass Dartmouth. She also had the honor of being chosen as a student speaker at Commencement. Brandi has been accepted into AETNA Incorporated's General Management Development Program where she will have three, 18-month experiences throughout Aetna's core businesses in three different states. Brandi is the daughter of Cheryl Ray-Bass and Gary Bass.



Kiana Estime (right) who was awarded a prestigious national transfer scholarship from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, worth up to \$40,000 a year, to complete her bachelor's degree. Estime, a 20-year-old liberal arts major from Great Barrington, Mass., with a GPA of 4.0, was one of 55 students in the United States to be awarded the Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship this year. The scholarships are awarded to out-

standing community college students transferring to top-tier universities and colleges across the United States. She has been accepted to both Smith College in Northampton and Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley and plans to pursue her bachelor's degree in anthropology.



Joseph Seal

These awards were presented to 29 graduates throughout the state who excel in community service and academic excellence. Each recipient is from a community college, state university, or University of Massachusetts campus and is nominated by faculty or a staff member. Seal graduated with a major in Communication and a minor in Art. He created a successful event on campus, "Black Excellence," an open mic night featuring music, talent, art, and poetry. He has also served as an artistic director for the Multicultural Student Association and as an ambassador and community service leader for the Urban Education Program as well as a volunteer for the 100 Males of College Initiative.



Kelly Smith

Kelly Smith who graduated from Georgetown University School of Medicine with honors. Kelly is a product of Springfield public schools and attended the first Baystate Medical program for students thinking about a career in a medicine field. Kelly graduated from

Williams College in 2009 with a degree in chemistry and a concentration in pre-med with honors. After working in New York for two years at the Naomi Berri diabetes center, as a research assistant, Kelly was accepted into the GEMS program, a post-baccalaureate experimental medical studies program. On March 16th, Kelly was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. Twenty-seven students out of the class of two-hundred were inducted this year and Kelly was the only African-American to be inducted. Kelly's specialty will be pediatrics and she will be doing her three-year residency at ICAHN SOM Mt. Sinai in New York, her first choice. Kelly is the daughter of Myra and Darren Smith. ■

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JUNE 2017 EVENTS

For more events, go to: www.afampov.com

ON-GOING

THRU—JUNE 15, 2017

Art for the Soul Gallery presents Children's Books: The Illustrations of Frank Morrison

When: 11am—5pm Tues.-Fri;
Saturday by appointment

Where: Art for the Soul Gallery,
Tower Square,
1500 Main Street, 2nd Floor,
Springfield, MA

Info: 413.301.6314

THRU—JUNE 29, 2017

Vibrant Paintings by Dr. Gloria Caballer-Arce featured at Central Library

Where: 220 State Street,
Springfield, MA

Info: 413.262.6828 x 422

THRU—SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

Springfield Science Museum Houses Make Believe Worlds for Children 3 - 10

Where: Springfield Museums,
21 Edwards St., Springfield, MA

Info: 413.263.6800, x459

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Every 1st Wednesday, Old Hill Neighborhood Council Board Meeting,

When: 6pm

Where: 99 Eastern Ave., Spfld., MA

Info: oldhillcouncil@gmail.com;
413.736.4575

Every 2nd Wednesday, Indian Orchard Citizens Council meeting,

When: 7pm

Where: 117 Main St., Indian Orchard

Info: zaidagoven@yahoo.com

Saturday—3/Rain Date: Saturday—10
Taste of Duggan and More

When: 10am—3pm

Where: John J. Duggan Academy,
1015 Wilbraham Road,
Springfield, MA

Info: Fun, Food, Games, Pony Rides,
Vendors; Eleanor
413.787.7410 or
Lakisha 413.787.7410

WGBY Asparagus Festival

When: 10am—6pm

Where: Hadley Town Common,
Hadley, MA

Info: wgby.org/asparagus

SUNDAY—4

Lung Force Walk Hartford

When: 9am

Where: Great River Park, East River Dr.,

East Hartford, CT

Info: FREE and Open to the Public;
<http://Action.Lung.org/HartfordWalk>

MONDAYS—5 THRU AUGUST 28

Zumba!

When: 9—10am

Where: Holyoke Public Library,
Community Room,
250 Chestnut St., Holyoke, MA

Info: Pre-register at 413.420.8101 or
lkurowski@hol yokelibrary.org

THURSDAY—8

Way Finders to Host "Find Your Way Home —Meet the Lenders" Community Event

When: 5—8pm

Where: Hilton Garden Inn,
800 Hall of Fame Ave.,
Springfield, MA

Info: Open to the Public
for Interested Homebuyers;
RSVP:[<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/find-your-way-home-meet-the-lenders-tickets-34113297792>];
www.wayfindersma.org

SATURDAY—10

Keep Springfield Beautiful
E-Cycling/Disposal Event

When: 9am—noon

Where: John J. Duggan Academy,
1015 Wilbraham Road,
Springfield, MA

Info: Small items & 2 larger items
(TV/air conditioner)
FREE for Springfield residents;
Each additional item \$5;
413.348.8036

FRIDAY—16

The Experts in Mystery Entertainment
perform Interactive Murder Mystery
Dinner Show

When: 7pm

Where: Chez Josef, 176 Shoemaker Ln.,
Agawam, MA

Info: \$; 888-643-2583

SATURDAY—17

Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club to
host Benefit Ride for Square One

When: 8:30am Check in; 10am Start

Where: Square One, 1095 Main Street,
Springfield, MA

Info: \$20/rider Donation;
\$5/passenger; Register at
www.startatsquareone.org;
After ride party \$12/person



SUNDAY—18

Happy Father's Day

SATURDAY—24

5th Annual Dragon Boat Festival

When: 8am—4pm

Where: North Riverfront Park,
121 West St., Springfield, MA

Info: FREE and Open to the Public

Alden Baptist Church Prayer Breakfast
in Conjunction with Urban League,
Dept. Health & Human Services, Pas-
tor's Council, Richard Allen Lodge #30
and Sumner Lodge #5

When: 8:30am—1pm

Where: Alden Baptist Church,
649 Street Springfield, MA

Info: FREE and Open to the Public;
413.736.5997

ALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH
In Conjunction with
The Urban League of Springfield, Inc.
The Pastor's Council
The Department of Health and Human Services
Richard Allen #30 - Sumner Lodge #5

Present
"A MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST"
Saturday, June 24, 2017
8:30 AM - 1:00 PM

FEATURING
Rev. Dr. Calvin McFadden, Sr.
Rev. Jessie Burgess
Prayer Warriors
Prostate Survivor
FREE BREAKFAST

ALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH
8:30am - 1:00pm
649 State Street - Springfield, MA
(413) 736-5997

Admission: Free to the Public

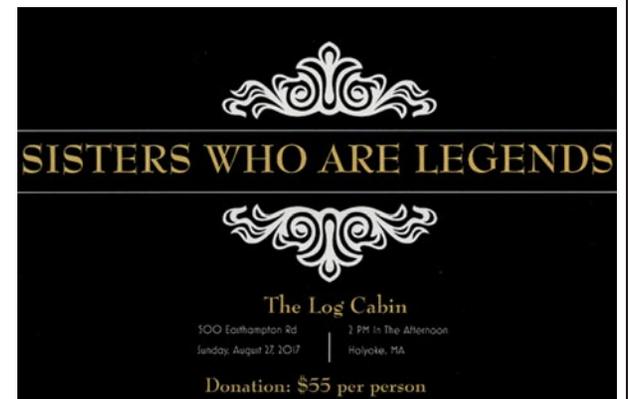
Sisters Who Are Legends

By Tresa Jones

Sisters Who Are Legends is an afternoon of inspiration, celebration and motivation. Women hold an array of positions in society. We are mothers, sisters, grandmothers, foster parents, doctors, lawyers and too often play the role of fathers. Although our contributions are limitless, we rarely get the recognition deserved.

Sisters Who Are Legends is an event that encourages women to bring forth the beauty and strength within themselves. It gives women the opportunity to adorn themselves in their finest attire, luxuriate and celebrate just being a sister. Come out and celebrate the legend in you!

This event will take place overlooking the mountains at the **Log Cabin, 500 Easthampton Road in Holyoke, MA on Sunday, August 27, 2017 at 2PM.** The afternoon will provide women with fine dining, a hair show, fashion and an opportunity to socialize. So pull out that outfit you've been saving for just the right occasion. Share the red carpet with your sisters and celebrate the legend in you!



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

TO DIG A DITCH

“IT IS NOBLE TO WORK AND ALL WORK IS NOBLE”

continued from page 24

money was to dig many ditches for many different plumbers. Efficiency was key. The day before starting each job, my grandfather drove to each excavation site and made measurements and observations. He measured the distance between the house and the street, determined the type of soil and whether or not the home had a salvageable lawn, whether or not there were any obvious obstacles between the home and the street and whether or not he needed additional help. When we returned to do the work, my grandfather was always prepared with all the necessary manpower, tools and a plan of attack.

RULE 3: TIME IS MONEY.

Start early; work hard; work late. My grandfather understood that time was money and always had us on the road to the work site at six in the morning. Except for a short lunch break, we worked hard until sundown, if necessary, to complete a job. The quicker we completed one job, the sooner we could start the next one. I know a business owner who works eight hours a day and no more. He complained to me about not being able to make ends meet, and I very candidly told him that if he was committed to work only eight hours a day, he should work for someone other than himself.

RULE 4: TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR WORK.

My grandfather was a proud man who started every ditch-digging job with a standard of excellence in mind that required, not only that the job be completed, but also that it be completed to the customer's satisfaction. So it should come as no surprise that the first tool he used for every job was a special spade for cutting the grass into neat sections. We would carefully remove each section with a flathead shovel and set it aside in its original order and keep it carefully nourished throughout the duration of the job for later careful replacement after the ditch was refilled. He applied the same standard to every aspect of the job with the test of success being that, upon completion, the landscape should be as it was or, in some cases, better than it was before we started.

RULE 5: LEARN THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF YOUR WORK.

Homeowners marveled as they watched my grandfather and me dig hour after hour. They often wondered out loud about how we found the endurance. They believed that our endurance came from brute strength. My grandfather, however, was a technical genius whose techniques made digging a ditch much easier than it appeared to be. When I learned his techniques, I became his valuable assistant.

RULE 6: AVOID ECONOMIC LOSSES.

My grandfather understood the concept of “economic loss.” Nothing offended him more than when I came up with a half a shovel of dirt. If you go through the motions of digging only to come up with half a shovel full of dirt, you lose as much in the way of actual accomplishment as you gain. You're leaving a half a load behind that you could have brought up in the same motion.

RULE 7: WORK EFFICIENTLY.

My grandfather also understood motion studies. He taught me to limit my motions to what was necessary to do the work. He was especially critical of my habit of standing up straight with each and every shovel full of dirt. It

was inefficient and burned unnecessary energy. By holding the shovel properly, I learned that I could swing a shovel full of dirt without standing all the way up.

RULE 8: DO NOT MAKE EXTRA WORK FOR YOURSELF.

As far as my grandfather was concerned, anything coming out of a hole should be moved twice—once coming out of the hole and the second time going back in. This very important rule came to mind recently as I watched my wife clean every room in the house, in preparation for a reception we were having for our newly wedded daughter. As she cleaned a room, she would shift objects that did not belong out of that room into the next room. She moved most of those same objects again when she started cleaning the next room. This went on and on until all of the rooms were cleaned, but many objects were moved many times more than was necessary. My grandfather was always careful to toss dirt from a hole as far back from the ditch as necessary and no further than necessary, which avoided the dirt falling back into the ditch while making refilling the ditch easiest. Of course I didn't tell my wife this rule, since she likes to clean house her way and any suggestions from me would be considered harassment.

RULE 9: AVOID UNNECESSARY WORK.

My grandfather loved tunnels. If the distance between a house and the sewer in the street was 30 feet, he would more than likely dig three six foot long ditches and two six foot long tunnels connecting them. Unnecessary work was a no-no.

RULE 10: ALWAYS COMPLETE THE WORK IN FRONT OF YOU.

Nothing causes more extra work in ditch digging than when you don't complete the work in front of you. I've watched so many people digging a ditch straight down without cleaning the sides of the ditch until they've narrowed themselves into an almost unworkable space. They end up having to widen the ditch by scraping dirt from the sides down into the lower part of the ditch. Not only is it dirt in the way of your work, but it is also dirt that could have been removed with less effort and energy at the beginning. The object of the work is to move the dirt and carve the ditch as you go.

RULE 11: PACE YOURSELF.

My grandfather was a physical fitness expert. He understood that if you maintained a steady pace that suited your strength and ability—your optimum pace—and you were in reasonably good condition, you could dig all day with a short lunch break without tiring out. My younger brother occasionally helped us dig ditches. My grandfather and I used to laugh watching him tire himself out. In spite of my grandfather's instructions to the contrary, my brother would start out rushing his work and invariably give out after the first couple of hours.

RULE 12: ALL OBSTACLES CAN BE OVERCOME.

Anyone who has dug in the earth on a regular basis knows you're liable to find anything hidden underneath. You don't know frustration until you have dug all day and begun tunneling only to run into a boulder that can only be removed by opening the tunnel into a ditch or of preparing for those last few shovels full to complete the ditch only to have excrement gush out of a cracked septic tank or to encounter sand so fine that none of the technical rules of ditch digging apply or of having ground water fill your hole. Like no other line of work, digging ditches is the one in which unexpected obstacles are the rule. In spite of my youthful angst, my grandfather taught me that in the end all obstacles had to be and could be overcome.

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FOOD TALK

THE URBAN COOK



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

A Change

By Rhonda Jones

so I'll make a small batch just for my liking. Since I'm such a kind person, I even offer some to my folks who always reply, "No, thank you."

Here is my recipe for the tastiest Brussels sprouts. If you're one of those folk like my family, don't knock them until you try them. You'll be surprised. Let's turn some of you haters into lovers.

For some reason my mind is always on making desserts or something starchy. This month I'm going to change it up and share a vegetable recipe. I honestly must say I'm not big on vegetables—only greens, from collards to mustard and turnip greens, all mixed up together. Once in a while I'll have a craving for some fried cabbage and in the summer time I like a mixture of summer squash sautéed with bacon. If I'm in a rush, broccoli and green beans hits the spot but that's rare in my household. My husband claims he's allergic to vegetables and, of course, my kids followed suit so that pretty much sums it up.

When I was a youngster my mom would on occasion make Brussels sprouts. To me they were very yummy but in this household my family would look at me crazy. No matter how I tell them I would make them taste, it's a "no" in my house. Every now and then I have a taste for Brussels sprouts, once a year mainly;

Brussels Sprouts with Bacon

½ pound of maple bacon or apple wood bacon
1½ pound Brussels sprouts
Salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons honey

Cut the bacon into ¼ wide strips. Heat a frying pan over medium heat and cook bacon until crisp. Wash the Brussels sprouts and cut the sprouts in half. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil, add the sprouts and cook for 10 minutes. Drain the sprouts and add them to the bacon drippings and sauté for about 5 minutes. Season with the honey and salt and pepper to taste.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Power Gospel Pentecostal Ministries



Former New Creation of God Gospel Group from L to R: Jesse Burgess, Benny White, Jr., Tim Henderson, Gary Bass, James Milner and Corey Milner (David Bass is missing).

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opening doors and moving him toward pastorship, he was only assured of four members...his family. Although that first Sunday was well attended, at the end of the day, the official members of the church remained at four. Since then, however, membership has grown at a steady pace.

Pastor Burgess shares his philosophy for church growth. "There are many people who have never belonged to a church but are yearning for the word of God. They are in pain, living lives that keep them from obtaining the promises of God." And while he welcomes everyone to his church,

he is clear: "I am not looking to fish in anyone else's pond." He explains to visitors that he will not accept other church's members unless they come with a letter or blessing of their former Pastor.

Power Gospel Pentecostal Ministries is a church that, while traditional in most aspects, is a place where people can come to serve, can come and become family, and who should come expecting a place where "the Word" is preached with power! Sunday School is at 10:30 a.m. and Sunday Worship Service is at 11:30 a.m. Bible study is held on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. All are welcome. ■

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

TO DIG A DITCH

"IT IS NOBLE TO WORK AND ALL

WORK IS NOBLE"

continued from page 38

RULE 13: FINISH THE JOB RIGHT.

When the ditch was dug and the sewer pipe laid, we filled the ditch. But, at certain intervals, my grandfather would stop tossing dirt and run water into the ditch. The water served to pack the sand in so that by the end, all the dirt that came out of

the hole fit back in. He knew that if we didn't properly pack it in, the dirt would sink over time leaving an unsightly depression. I don't recall ever having the unprofitable task of hauling away excess dirt. Then he would gently replace the grass that he had so carefully stored to the side and fill in the unavoidable cracks between the pieces with rich loam, sprinkle a little

fresh seed and rake the area so clean that it almost appeared as though no hole had ever been dug. It was done in such a manner that within a few weeks nature would do its part and you would not be able to see a difference in the lawn as it appeared before and after.

CONCLUSION:

That's how I learned to work. That old man was my surrogate father, mentor and dearest friend. I have applied his rules to every line of work that I have done, both nonprofessional and professional, and they have served me well. I have passed

on his wise rules to my three children and they have served them well. You might try them and see if they help to make your dreams come true.

Attorney Hurst:

Thanks for printing the Tribute to your Grandfather and his rules for succeeding at work. I read the piece to my sons, ages 9 and 14, and added it to my collection of motivation materials. The valuable lessons you wrote about are well worth re-reading, every now and again.

Attorney John L. Roberts

A Time Of Celebration



*Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
Oratory Contest Contestants*

*Bay Path University
1st Annual Graduate
Psi Chi Induction Ceremony*

*Boys and Girls Club Family
Center Gala*



*Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Scholarship Recipients*

*Exchange Club Scholarship &
Community Award Recipients*

*MLK Jr. Family Services
Clemente Course Graduates*

*MLK Jr. Family Services Social
Justice Award Recipients*

*Springfield Chapter Girl Friends
Scholarship Recipients*

