

OUR VOTE MATTERS...

"I did not know how much power I had until I went to the voting poll station to cast my vote for candidates that live, breathe, and experience the same life that I do every day."

By Koralise Williams – 5

MEMORIAL TO SPRINGFIELD'S FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN PHILANTHROPIST OPENS

"His name is on a Springfield neighborhood (Mason Square) and on a building (Primus Mason Court), but nowhere until now is his story told in such a very public place."

By Alan T. Popp – 13

FOCUS ON BEING GRATEFUL

"Being thankful is a job that we should try to put first and foremost in our lives not only during the holiday season, but every day of the year."

By Zaida Govan – 14

WHY DEMAND ACCESS FOR ALL TO THE RAYMOND A. JORDAN SENIOR CENTER?

"...it's for seniors like Doris (Jackson) that we are demanding the City of Springfield create a transportation plan to help all Springfield seniors ACCESS this new, beautiful \$12.8 million dollar building because the senior center is still out of reach for many Springfield seniors."

By Mattie Lacewell – 18

ACADEMY AWARD WINNER RUTH E. CARTER TELLS HARITFORD GIRLS ROCK! ...

"Don't worry about someone being better than you... have confidence to be your authentic self. Authenticity finds itself in your research. Research brings out something new within you that you did not even know you had in yourself. Do the work, don't worry about the competition."

By Bobbi Brown (quoting Ruth Carter) – 22

STEVE PEMBERTON ENDS CANDIDACY...

"At the age of 3, I was taken away from my mother never to see her again. Two years later, my father was killed in an act of gun violence. What followed was the lonely journey of a bi-racial foster child lost in the gaps of a strained and burdened foster care system...with my wife Tonya and our three teenage children – Quinn, Vaughn and Kennedy – we have broken the cycle. My children and their children will never have to face what I did. It ends, and it has ended, with me."

By Steve Pemberton – 25

RACISM. A WAY FORWARD

"If religion or politics are conversation killers at a party, watch the reaction when race comes up."

By John Davis and Paul Robbins – 28

GIVE THANKS

"We have become a society, a people, a world that thinks that we are entitled – entitled to have food on our tables and a roof over our heads."

By Rev. Maxine Moore – 26

Giving Thanks

"THANK YOU," NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE

By Patricia Spradley

This month's article is dedicated to my mother and mother-in-law. I had the great pleasure of having these women in my life for decades. And while it was devastating to have lost them both this year—within a three-month span—I am blessed to have many cherished memories.



Rebecca Spradley and Viola McCarter

There were similarities they shared: like cooking, being very direct, working in a hospital, raising five children, and never having obtained a driver's license, that connected them in ways that made their telephone conversations and interactions easy going.

The impact their transition had on my life has been and continues to be, in a word, amazing! I had absolutely no idea how the test of my strength would be challenged. To have both hospitalized on the very same day, I now know, was not coincidental since there are no accidents. Once the first gut punch occurred and He saw how I han-

continues to page 2

HOW FAITH BROUGHT ME THROUGH KIDNEY FAILURE

By Koralise Williams

I've waited for this! I've prayed for this! Cried out to God for this! Many days I wanted to quit, to be over this, asking God to take me away from this, to just let it be over. BUT GOD had another plan!

About a year after graduating high school, I was nineteen years old and my body began going through changes. I believed it was because I was active and always on the go, so I didn't pay it much mind. I thought my feet being swollen and retaining fluid was normal for someone who wasn't getting much sleep, but man was I wrong.

It was a weekend trip with my aunt to go visit my cousin in North Carolina when everything began to come out. One morning I woke to find my face had doubled in size! My aunt demanded that I go to the doctors as soon we got back to Massachusetts. After multiple doctor visits, I was diagnosed with Membranous Nephropathy

continues to page 2



Koralise Williams,
Westfield State
University Student

VOTE

Final Election Tuesday, November 5, 2019

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

FAITH THROUGH KIDNEY FAILURE

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(MN). This is a disease that affects the kidney filters and functions. In terms the doctor would never say, I had a type of cancer of the kidney.

I was young and couldn't believe that this could be happening to me, so at first I wasn't fully compliant with the doctors and the orders I was given. I was in a state of denial. Who could ever believe at the age of nineteen that I would be dealing with a kidney disease. After a while, I became submissive to the doctor, but I still didn't believe it was as bad as it was—that is until I had to do my first round of chemo treatments. For six months I had to take a round of chemo and then a series of hardcore steroids.

I remember one night lying in bed after a chemo treatment praying and asking God, "Why me? I'm only in my twenties. I shouldn't have to go through this. Why me?" God whispered in my ear, "Stop saying why and start saying thank you!" I didn't understand but I started saying thank you! I didn't mean it but I said thank you! After each chemo treatment, I said thank you. After every pain, I said thank you. On the mornings I woke up sick from the treatment and couldn't keep anything down, I said thank you. It was in my obedience that I began to believe that I would be okay. Many do not believe me when I say that during this time of chemo, I did not lose one strand of hair. In fact, my hair doubled in thickness and length during treatment due to of the prayers of my leader, Bishop Elizabeth Williams, and Pastor Debra James.

I would go to doctors' appointments and my kidney levels would be low. Every test they did would come back with a negative result, yet the doctors could not understand how I was still walking around, going to school, being an active member in my church, all while my kidney function was at six percent. They began to call me the Miracle Girl. I was so proud to say that it was because of God I was

able to keep going.

I felt as if everything was fine and I was waiting for God to work a miracle in my favor but in October 2014, I was told that I would have to start dialysis because my kidneys could no longer hold out. I felt as if this was the end. I just knew God had forgotten about me and I fell into a small depression. I was attending Holyoke Community College and I dropped out. I felt there was no need to do anything because my life was over, but it was during my time at dialysis that God began to work in my life. Encouragement came from everywhere, and my depression was lifted.

Through many prayers and the encouragement I received, I signed back up for school and graduated from Springfield Technical Community College, all while being a full time dialysis patient. It was not easy but with God and faith, I was able to make it, and began to attend classes at Westfield State University in the fall of 2018. I even made the Dean's list.

I grew accustomed to my life as it was and stopped wondering when I was going to be healed. I let God do what He was going to do. On June 25, 2019, His next step came to fruition when I got a call from Baystate Medical Center saying they had a kidney for me! I didn't believe it. I almost let fear grab me but I knew I had to believe God! Ten years of dealing with no, no, no from the doctor finally became a YES from God!

I don't know who's reading this that might be going through something, sickness, poverty, divorce, but if you trust God, He will come through for you! *"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19 KJV)*

Now I am grateful for all the days and nights I was in too much pain to do anything. For the early mornings for waking up before dawn to travel to dialysis three days a week

"Thank You," Not Once, But Twice



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continued from page 1

dled it, He obviously thought I was primed for the second punch. And while I was still standing, I quickly realized that it was only because He was holding me up! Thank you, not once, but twice.

Thinking you have strength just because people have labeled you as strong, is arrogant. Asking for strength because you know the kind of strength required can only come from Him, is exercising faith. He heard me when I said, "I Need You Now." Little did I know how much it was going to be needed, as I was informed that they would both be in Hospice. Thank you for each of them having the best Hospice Teams that anyone could have asked for!

When my mother arrived at the nursing home and acted as though she was at a country club (*I guess being greeted by offspring of some of her very good friends didn't hurt*), I knew it was only His grace and mercy... Her spirit and demeanor overwhelmed me! My siblings and I had agreed to let her think that she was only there

for almost five years. For the times I felt like I could no longer make it, that this was the end. For every sickness, tear shed, prayers lifted, for every ache and pain, for every needle stick, I am grateful. I'm grateful that God chose me to be the vessel He used to go through this task, because I can share with people that it will not always be dark, but the sun will begin to shine.

No matter your age, I hope this encourages you that no matter what you are going through, God can and will make it better. He did for me! ■

until she got better, so she never even knew she was in Hospice. All I could do was look up and say, "Thank You" yet again.

As I watched the strength of my mothers during this process, I also experienced the range of emotions — anxiety, unawareness, uncertainty, and peacefulness, that they went through. Because I was pretty much operating on autopilot, I didn't realize that I was traveling through those emotions right along with them. I had been wondering when it was all going to hit me. As is always the case, He had my back!

As I am now on the other side of it, I better understand the "WHY." The transition and timing of these two great mothers afforded me the opportunity to be available to help others through similar experiences. It strengthened me in ways that I am still experiencing. It causes me to smile, when others are left wondering how or why. It encourages me to be my best, because that's what they gave to me. THANK YOU, not once but twice, to Viola McCarter and Rebecca Spradley. ■

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AN AFRICAN AMERICAN *Point of View*

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VOTE

**Final Election
Tuesday, November 5, 2019**

AF-AM NEWS bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

OF ALL PEOPLE, MAYOR SARNO, YOU SHOULD HAVE AND MUST HAVE KNOWN

It is inconceivable that Springfield's Mayor Domenic Sarno did not know that on-duty uniformed firefighters (with their fire truck parked in clear view outside) were violating the law when they attended a political fundraiser for city council candidate Christopher Pohner. The mayor himself attended the event and spoke on behalf of Pohner while taking pictures beside the on-duty malfeasants. Mayor Sarno has been in politics too long to not have known better. The more likely explanation is that he has been in power for so long that he believes he can do what he wants to do. It's called "arrogance of power," something that one might describe as "Trump-like." Unfortunately, it has become not untypical Sarno behavior and more and more people are beginning to think he might need to be replaced...especially when one considers that this Pohner guy, whom the mayor has so vigilantly supported, has openly demonstrated his racist side on social media. Everybody who follows politics in Springfield knew about Pohner's behavior except Mayor Sarno – he would have us believe. While on most other matters, he would also have us believe he is omniscient and omnipotent.

WHAT WERE THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE THINKING?

We are very happy that the Springfield police have body cameras. But did they have to test them out by firing their weapons into the ground in a field so close to residents of Chicopee whose complaints to the media brought an assurance from a spokesman that it wouldn't happen again?! The question that needs to be explored further is, "Why did it happen in the first place?"

SPEAKING OF POLICE AND WARD 4 ELECTIONS

I was awed by the contrast between the police officer assigned to the Frederick Douglas School voting poll location in Ward 7 and the police officer assigned to Rebecca Johnson School in Ward 4 where, it is arguable, the most contentious election contest was taking place. The Frederick Douglas officer conducted himself with certainty and authority in making certain that candidates and their representatives remained within legal boundaries and did not harass voters who chose to circumvent them while the officer at Rebecca Johnson spent most of his time sitting inside the voting area. And when asked by several people to stop some of the misbehavior by one candidate in particular, the officer

claimed not to know the governing laws or the rules. So he did nothing all day. I intended to include his badge number in this bit but the editor appealed to my better senses. It was the officer's assignment but not his fault. It was the city's fault – the mayor, the police commissioner – and the election commissioner, who seems to have been the only city official who tried to stop the debacle. Maybe they will all come together and make certain that the final election is not a repeat of the primary.

"CAN FACIAL-RECOGNITION TOOLS BE TRUSTED IN THE HANDS OF POLICE?"

So went the headlines covering a *Boston Globe* article (October 23, 2019). Of course not, because tests show that the police are not ready to be trusted with such tools because the tools themselves have been proven to be unreliable. One hundred twenty-seven members of Boston sports teams were matched by Amazon's Rekognition software to a database of mug shots of real people who had been arrested and it delivered 27 false positives meaning that 27 Boston athletes were identified as criminals. If that is not enough to conclude that the tools are not ready for use, I cannot imagine what would be. Black and Brown folks have got enough problems with false police encounters without another layer being added. Are you listening to me Springfield?

THE BOSTON RED SOX: AS YOU MAY RECALL

You may recall my prediction that the Boston Red Sox would not prevail in its struggle to get into the finals and, of course, events have proven me right. My reasoning was that the team cohesion had been destroyed before the season even started just after its last World Series victory when Black players refused an offer to visit Donald Trump at the White House and the White players and managers attended. It will always be debatable but you will never convince me that the visit did not destroy team cohesion – bad pitching and erratic batting by some of their best players notwithstanding. The Black players' stand was principled. The White players' stand was, arguably, selfish and inconsiderate and too much in the "Trumpian" spirit. And even if it was not, the damage to team morale that resulted from the racial split was insurmountable. It would not surprise me if the Red Sox were in for a decade-long drought.

IS TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT A LYNCHING?

Most rational people believe it is not because impeachment follows due process. Trump's

claims to the contrary are really not worthy of much attention but Jeneé Osterheldt's observations in the *Boston Globe* (October 23, 2019) were particularly on point. He wrote: "What happened to (Emmett) Till? That is a lynching. Last Saturday, the Emmett Till Memorial Commission unveiled the fourth marker dedicated to him since 2008, when the original sign was stolen. The signs have been taken, vandalized, and shot at over and over....The latest memorial is bulletproof. Sixty-four years after his murder, racists don't want us to remember Till and the racist violence that eats at the soul of America." Osterheldt went on to write: "Black men were murdered for looking white men in the eye. Black women were raped by white men as punishment. We like to think of these things as America's tragic history....Except black people are still dying. They are still being tortured. They are still being convicted upon sight....lynching was real. It happened. And the effects of lynch culture live on today....Police brutality, the school-to-prison pipeline, segregated schools, excessive sentencing, and the continued racial inequity are all rooted in racism and the supremacist mentality that believed lynching was some sort of national justice." But Osterheldt saved the best for last when he wrote: "Trump was right. We're witnessing a lynching. But it is not his."

WHITE CONTROL OF THE LEGAL MARIJUANA INDUSTRY IS NOT INEVITABLE

We all know that rules promulgated by the Cannabis Control Commission to assure that minorities controlled a share of the market are ineffective mostly because the unavailability of start-up money is a barrier and the competition from those for whom start-up money is readily available – White folks, including those who are already in business – is simply overwhelming. To overcome these barriers, the Cambridge City Council "approved a two-year moratorium during which only "economic empowerment candidates" as designated by the Cannabis Control Commission can operate retail pot shops in the city. The empowerment program was designed to help businesses in communities disproportionately and negatively affected by the prior criminalization of weed." As we all know and as statistics confirm, minority communities were grossly disproportionately affected and so should benefit from the moratorium which represents a genuine effort by the Cambridge City Council to be inclusive. It is one that could be replicated around the state. It is not a perfect solution but, at least, unlike now, minorities will have a chance. Of course, lawyers from an existing Cambridge medical marijuana business, Revolutionary Clinics, is suing to block the measure. (*Boston Herald*, October 19, 2019)

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SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

Our Votes Matter: My Experience Voting in the Preliminary Election

By Koralise Williams, Westfield State University Student & POV Intern



Koralise Williams

Like most in my age range, I felt as if my vote does not matter, my opinion does not matter. While this may feel like the case for the Presidential election, I learned that I do have a voice when it comes to the local election in my city.

I had never participated in a city election, figuring the adults will have that covered; I mean they've been doing a great job at it this far. However, one day I realized that now I am the adult, and I can help control what goes on in my city. Instead of just thinking "Okay the crime rate is up again," I began thinking, "What can I do as a resident of this city to help bring the crime rate down?" never realizing until my internship at *Point of View* that voting could play a major role in this.

Crime has been a major part of

our community for years. Growing up I cannot tell you how bad it was in some neighborhoods, to the point that it did not feel safe to walk to the corner store at certain times of the day. This should not be in a place that we call home. It appears as if every other day, there is an article in the local paper, or story on the news that tells of another person killed due to gun violence. We hear this, we live this, yet, what are we doing to prevent this?

I realized we, as the community, as the new generation of adults, have the power to help be a solution to the problem that has been plaguing our city for years, and not just with crime. There are many issues that are overlooked and bypassed (all of this I recently learned before I went and voted), such as funding for our

schools and small business problems. Picking the right persons as our ward and city representatives can help bring solutions.

Doing the research on the candidates running for office in Springfield gave me an insight into many matters that our community in general has been facing, and what the candidates were planning to do about it. Getting that insight led me to vote for who I believed would be the best candidates for the job.

Although this was just the preliminary election, it helped make a difference for me seeing the results and seeing that my votes mattered. I was also pleasantly surprised to see that some of my candidates made it through the preliminaries to the final election.

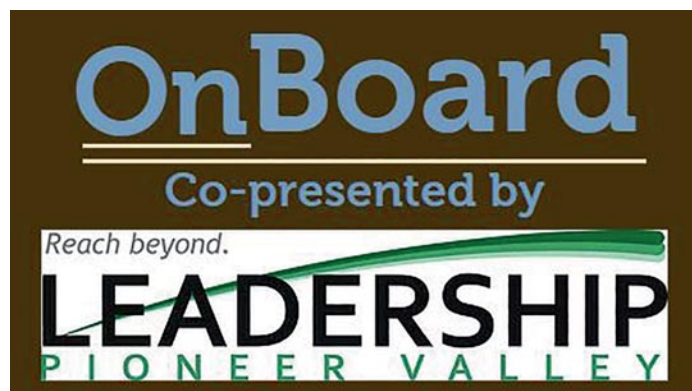
I did not realize how much

power I had until I went to the voting poll station to cast my vote for candidates that live, breathe, and experience the same life that I do every day. Do not take this the wrong way, it is still good to vote for who our commander-in-chief/ president will be, but he/she does not live in Springfield, Massachusetts, where we do. If there are issues going on in our city, who is a better person to take care of and handle them, than someone who lives in this place?

I implore you to get out and vote. Let our votes make a difference and better our community.

**ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH.**

Free 'Get On Board!' Event Connects Non-profit Boards with Potential Volunteers



SPRINGFIELD, MA – For people seeking greater community engagement and for non-profit boards hoping to add fresh talent and diversity to their membership, the sixth biennial *Get On Board!* event happening **Tuesday, December 3 from 5–8 p.m. at the Basketball Hall of Fame** offers a lively opportunity to accomplish both.

Created by OnBoard, a local non-profit whose mission is to connect organizations and people looking to volunteer their time to non-profits, the event blends aspects of a job fair and speed dating to match potential members and organizations. Attendees can meet with representatives from as many as fifty organizations of their choosing. Represen-



"Get OnBoard!" event matches volunteers with non-profit boards.

tatives from each organization will discuss their history, mission and goals, as well as what they are looking for in board members. Attendees can ask questions and explain their interests and skills to make a potential match. **A buzzer helps to keep things moving, limiting meetings to 10 minutes. Participants will also enjoy networking opportunities and free hors d'oeuvres.**

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November 5th Final Election Candidates

Mayor

Domenic J. Sarno
Yolanda Cancel

City Council At Large

Justin J. Hurst
Jesse Lederman
Kateri B. Walsh
Tracye L. Whitfield
LaMar Cook
Sean Curran
Johnnie Ray McKnight
Kelli P Moriarty-Finn
Christopher J. Pohner
Israel Rivera

City Council Ward 4

Malo L. Brown
Jynai S. McDonald

City Council Ward 5

Marcus J. Williams
Edward Green

City Council Ward 6

Victor G. Davila
Timothy Ryan

EDUCATION

EDUCATION & HOPE

Reality Check

By Gianna Allentuck



Gianna Allentuck is a Mother, Educator, and Community Volunteer.

To connect with Gianna regarding Education and Hope topics discussed herein, please contact her at gallentuck@aol.com.

Recently at an NFL game, popular talk-show host and philanthropist Ellen DeGeneres was seen sitting next to former President George W. Bush. In the video and still pictures, they seem to be laughing and smiling and enjoying each other's company. And because of this, members of the public were not happy...

Immediately, tweets, posts, instagrams, emails, phone calls, and memes flooded the internet – demanding that Ellen explain herself about why she was sitting so comfortably and amicably with President Bush, as though he was a villainous monster.

To this backlash, Ellen responded: *Here's the thing: I'm friends with George Bush, in fact I'm friends with a lot of people who don't share the same beliefs that I have. We are all different and I think we've forgotten that that's OK that we're all different....Just because I don't agree with someone on everything does not mean I'm not going to be friends with them. When I say be kind to one another, I don't mean only the people that think the same as you do, I mean be kind to everyone.*

Ok. Makes sense.

But then the Trump conversation started...

People started calling Ellen a hypocrite for writing *I mean be kind to everyone* because she is often unkind to President Trump. Hating on her for liking George Bush was quickly surpassed by hating on her for hating Donald Trump.

I love Ellen. I respect and admire her for her huge compassionate heart. Always recognizing and helping people. I especially appreciate her admiration for educators. But after

reading her quote and then the arguments by the haters, I started to question her actions myself. Doubting her did not feel good.

And then as though a gift from the Internet Gods in answer to my questions, I saw this post of a James Baldwin quote: *We can disagree and still love each other unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist.*

If only Ellen had said this...?

Maybe you are questioning why does any of this matter. And maybe you are correct. Why does this matter? I chose to write this piece to highlight the absurdity of a country bickering over which celebrities are friends or enemies with each other all while crumbling under the burdens of hate, division, tragedies, trials, epidemics, foreign affairs, natural disasters, economic disparities, climate change, achievement gaps, and injustices. This strangulation of our Country's progress should not be a by-line to the triangle of love, friendship, and hate between Ellen, George, and Donald.

It is just not right.

I also chose to write this article to raise awareness of the dangers of propaganda from both sides – from all sides – of our Country's faces. As a country, we have serious problems; and in order to address and resolve those challenges, we require solidarity and unity. Trust. Knowledge. Communication. Purpose.

We need to focus.

So please don't be like me and allow yourself to become distracted and frustrated by the fuelers, feeders, and orchestrators of the drama.

Instead please be conscious that in a world full of real problems that are overshadowed by the nonsense of current and former reality TV stars, we don't need the hype – we need a reality check. ■

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EDUCATION

EARLY EDUCATION & CARE



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

Professional Development in Early Childhood

By Nicole Blais



High quality early childhood education programs are built on a workforce that promotes continuous program improvement. Professional development is one of the cornerstones of quality: staff gaining new knowledge, building capacity, mastering new skills and abilities, along with experience and competencies that relate to one's profession, job responsibilities, or work environment.

HCS has prioritized this work and we have hired a Professional Development Manager, Jeanne Regnier, to assist our staff on their individual professional plans. We are also ecstatic that both Holyoke Community College and Springfield Technical Community College received a Career Pathways grant through the Department of Early Education and Care. This funding opportunity seeks to engage Massachusetts community college partners to promote and expand professional development opportunities and higher education certificate and degree attainment for the early childhood education and out-of-school time workforce. Many of the teachers at Head Start are taking advantage of this and Jeanne is helping guide the way. "It's an exciting time for the field of early childhood education. The state's Career Pathways Grant is providing support for educators to complete coursework that will lead to EEC Teacher and Lead Teacher certifications."

Creating clear paths to the early childhood profession is a great strategy to encourage people to come into the field. Over the last several years, there have been many articles written and advocacy efforts around the early education teacher shortage.



Head Start Graduation Breakfast Celebration

High expectations and low wages have troubled the early education and care arena with some programs expe-

riencing elevated staff turnover. Head Start is working on ways to build the workforce from within by

encouraging parents to become classroom volunteers to get a feel for working with young children, or having parents participate in an on-site CDA (child development credential) program. Close to 1/3 of HCS's employees are past or current Head Start parents. Parents become staff and take advantage of the professional development opportunities offered through the organization.

This past graduation season, HCS celebrated staff who had graduated earning either their CDA, Associate, Bachelors or Master degrees. It was a great event. Members of the administration team organized a brunch and handed out roses to each one of the graduates. This was one of Jeanne's first events that she organized as the new PD Manager. "It's not easy to go back to school as adults. When you are juggling a career and a family, it's hard to find the time to go back to school. So, when staff make that commitment, we need to celebrate their accomplishments." And celebrate we did! Cheering staff on and helping to clear the way is a job Jeanne is happy to do because she knows it directly leads back to the classroom and benefits our children and families. Grow through what you go through and always keep learning. ■



The Urban Education Program helps you move forward and push yourself more. It's made me realize the impact that I want to have on society.

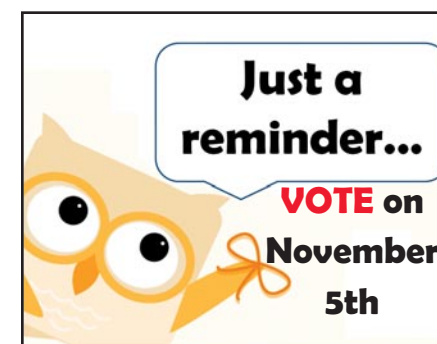
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EDUCATION

LOCAL COLLEGES IN THE NEWS



Adrienne Y. Smith

HOLYOKE, MA – Holyoke Community College is pleased to welcome Adrienne Y. Smith of Fiskdale, Mass., as interim dean of its division of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

HCC Welcomes Adrienne Y. Smith as Interim STEM dean

Smith brings 13 years of community college experience to HCC, most recently as the dean of the School of Engineering, Technologies and Mathematics at Springfield Technical Community College. Prior to that, she served as associate professor and coordinator of Electronics Technology at Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester. Her professional accomplishments span many areas of academic program development and enhancement, enrollment management and retention, diversity responsiveness, and regional and community partnership coordination.

Smith holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and master's

degree in science, engineering and math from Western New England University, where she was the first African American woman to graduate with a degree in engineering, and she earned a doctorate in education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with competencies in community college leadership, educational policies and administration.

"I love being in STEM," she said. "I'm very passionate about STEM, but I'm more passionate about increasing the numbers of women and under-represented minorities in STEM. That was the subject of my dissertation."

A graduate of Springfield Tech-

nical High School, Smith started her professional life as an electrical engineer (and the first female engineer) at the Digital Equipment Corporation in Springfield.

"I am quite confident that Adrienne's depth of experience and knowledge as an engineer, as a full-time faculty member at a community college and her administrative and management skills in the STEM disciplines will make her an asset to the HCC community," said Monica Perez, HCC vice president of Academic Affairs.

She lives in Fiskdale with her husband, Curtis. They have one adult daughter and two grandchildren. ■

HCC, C3RN Launch State's First Cannabis Education Center



HOLYOKE, MA – Holyoke Community College and the Cannabis Community Care and Research Network (C3RN) recently announced the creation of the Cannabis Education Center to provide education and training opportunities and other business resources to individuals in the region who want to work in the state's newly legalized cannabis industry.

"The emerging cannabis industry in Western Massachusetts will spur investment, economic growth

and job creation in the Pioneer Valley," said Jeff Hayden, HCC's vice president of Business and Community Services. "The purpose of the Cannabis Education Center is to create an innovative learning space for those interested in joining the cannabis workforce as an employee or entrepreneur."

Launch of the Cannabis Education Center was announced on Monday, Oct. 21, at the "Emerging Cannabis Industry" forum, panel discussion and networking event HCC

and C3RN hosted at the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development.

The forum included data sharing, networking and a panel discussion featuring key figures in the region's cannabis industry: Mark Zatoryka, chief executive officer of INSA; Meg Sanders, chief executive officer of Canna Provisions; Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, executive director of SPARK EforAll Holyoke; and Dan McCarthy, director of Communication and Content, Cannapreneur Partners. The discussion was moderated by Kate Phillips, director of Education for C3RN.

HCC and C3RN are designated training partners through the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission's Social Equity Vendor Training program. The program was designed to provide priority access, training, and technical assistance to those negatively impacted by the drug war.

The Cannabis Education Center will be managed out of HCC's Kittredge Center and provide the following resources:

- Academic advising and workforce training;
- Public education events that highlight workforce development and entrepreneurship;
- Entrepreneurship events for those interested in joining the cannabis industry as a startup company;
- Social equity training for applicants qualified through the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission's Social Equity Training program.

More information about these programs will be posted soon on the Cannabis Education Center's website: cannabiseducationcenter.org

The Cannabis Education Center will also be running four previously announced certificate programs for specific jobs in the cannabis industry: Cannabis Culinary Assistant, Cannabis Retail/Patient Advocate, Cannabis Cultivation Assistant, Cannabis Extraction Technician Assistant.

The first of those programs, Cannabis Culinary Assistant, will

continues to page 18

EDUCATION

LOCAL COLLEGES IN THE NEWS

STCC, Commerce Form Partnership for Early College Initiative



From left, Matthew Brunell and Colleen Beaudoin, co-executive directors, Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership; John B. Cook, STCC president; Chris Gabrieli, chair, Massachusetts Board of Higher Education; Daniel J. Warwick, Springfield Public Schools superintendent; and Paul Neal, executive principal, High School of Commerce.

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Under a new agreement with Springfield Technical Community College, students at Springfield High School of Commerce will be able to take courses at STCC and earn up to 20 college credits at no cost to them.

The Early College initiative allows high school students to explore high-need career pathways, avoid student loan debt and ultimately complete a college degree more quickly.

In a ceremony recently announcing the partnership, STCC President John B. Cook said the innovative initiative will further empower students to transform their lives.

“Our vision at STCC, and the opportunity from Early College, is to be a dynamic, multicultural learning community where students grow in character, intellect and self-confidence,” Cook said. “Early College Commerce provides a significant contribution to education innovation.”

Commerce is across the street from STCC, which means high school students can easily get to the campus

for college classes.

Cook said Early College is more than a dual enrollment program: It’s an opportunity for Commerce students to see themselves as STCC students. High school students can choose career pathways that mirror labor needs in the region. They include the following programs at STCC:

- Computer and IT security
- Human services/social work
- Health science
- Digital/graphic/multimedia design
- Business administration
- Criminal justice

The early college initiative also includes “non-credit” workforce training options.

“In redesigning Commerce, we heard from the Springfield community – loud and clear – a desire for our high school to ready students for a future of purpose and promise. Aligned with that same vision, STCC will be a tremendous help to our students in realizing that future,” said Matt Brunell,

continues to page 11

Westfield State University’s Social Work Programs Ranked Among Best and Most Affordable By Socialworkdegree.org

WESTFIELD, MA – Westfield State University offers one of Massachusetts’ best bachelor’s and master’s degree programs for social work in 2019, according to SocialWorkDegree.org. The University’s bachelor’s degree in social work was also ranked among the most affordable nationwide for 2019, according to the same resource.

The rankings are based on a combination of manually researched tuition, CSWE accreditation and PayScale salary data. The rankings underscore the University’s commitment to accessibility, affordability and intentional outcomes.

Westfield State is sixth-ranked BSW program in Massachusetts in this year’s rankings, while its MSW program is listed eighth among the state’s institutions.

“Every day, social work alumni from Westfield make an important difference in the lives of people across Massachusetts and beyond,” said Nora Padykula, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Social Work. “The BSW and MSW degrees are versatile degrees giving students a wide array of job opportunities from working in the child welfare system, to schools, hospitals, jails and prisons, and more recently with sports teams to provide mental health services.”

Among the most affordable bachelor’s in social work CSWE-accredited colleges, Westfield State is #1 in New England and

the twelfth most affordable in the U.S., with an annual tuition of \$9,450.

Juline Mills, Ph.D., dean of the University’s College of Education, Health and Human Services, believes that Westfield State’s social work programs provide excellent preparation for future employment. “The University’s BSW and MSW programs provide students with real world experiences prior to graduation,” said Dr. Mills. “Our community collaborations enable students to interact with numerous professionals, gaining critical knowledge and skills.”

Stephanie Sanchez, Ed.D., interim dean of the University’s College of Graduate and Continuing Education, welcomes the recognition for its MSW program. “We are thrilled to be recognized for our high quality and affordable social work degrees,” said Dr. Sanchez. “The University is also deeply committed to providing our MSW program in flexible and accessible pathways including locations in Westfield and Worcester with hybrid courses. Students can choose to complete the program in two to four years.” ■



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EDUCATION

EDUCATION IN THE NEWS



Springfield School Volunteers Celebrates 50 Years

Forward Fifty Gala to Honor 50 Volunteers



*Denise N. Cogman,
President & CEO*

SPRINGFIELD, MA – October 11, 2019 – Springfield School Volunteers (SSV) will host **Forward Fifty**, its

golden anniversary fundraising gala on **Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2019, at MGM Springfield at 5:30 p.m.** The event will honor 50 individuals, businesses and community officials who have helped SSV become the impactful organization it is today.

“Our nonprofit could not have thrived for 50 years without our dedicated volunteers, funders, partners and friends,” said Denise N. Cogman, president and CEO. “In honor of our golden anniversary, we will recognize 50 individuals and businesses with the Springfield School Volunteers Honoree Award. It was difficult to select only 50 caring adults and generous businesses, but those set to be honored truly embody our belief in making a difference.”

Forward Fifty will take place in the Bellagio Ballroom with a celebration of SSV’s rich history through speakers, photos and videos. There

will also be a buffet dinner, cash bar and awards presentation. Proceeds from the gala will help SSV continue its work of improving the lives of Springfield’s students one student at a time.

SSV Board Chair Cheryl Ronzoni explained, “Many people do not realize that SSV is a nonprofit organization that relies on public support like any other nonprofit. At this gala we are looking forward to being able to highlight not only our amazing work, but also the fact that raising funds through fundraisers like this is the only way that SSV will be able to continue to provide valuable services to the staff, students and families of the Springfield Public Schools.”

Before SSV became SSV in 1969, the spirit of volunteerism of one volunteer was already active at one Springfield school. Evelyn Benedetti helped develop and subsequently vol-

unteered in the library at the former Armory Street School in 1958. Ten years later, five women volunteered to organize the Tapley School Library and created an Advisory Council to recruit and train other volunteers to help establish libraries in every elementary school in the city, and within a year the movement took on a life of its own. SSV has remained a strong supporter of the Springfield Public Schools over the years, developing programs in response to the diverse needs of the students and the district. Today SSV runs three distinctive programs — School-Based Mentoring, Academic Support and Read Aloud — that bring in more than 1,000 volunteers each year into the Springfield Public Schools.

Tickets and tables to Forward Fifty are now on sale at ssvgoldengala.eventbrite.com. ■

Square One Launches New Trauma Therapy Center

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Together with the Square One staff and Board of Directors, representatives of the LEGO Community Fund U.S. cut the ribbon on the Square One Cornerstone Therapy Center on Tuesday, October 22, 2019.

The Center is located at the Tommie Johnson Child & Family Center, 255 King Street, Springfield.

With a \$125,000 grant from LEGO, the Center will provide therapy to individuals and small groups, using interventions that are trauma focused, evidence based and best practice.

“Our center was designed to provide therapeutic support in a nurturing, safe environment where our children can receive emotional support needed for them to learn, heal and

grow,” says Square One Clinical Therapist Christa Colly.

“We want to thank LEGO for giving us this opportunity to respond to the growing need for trauma-informed therapy in our community,” says Square One President & CEO Joan Kagan. “Many of our children and families are experiencing hardships and unique challenges that require this level of specialized programming.”

Since 1883, Square One has been providing a wide range of education and support services to families in the greater Springfield region. From early learning and school-age programs for children, to case management, workforce development, and recovery programs for families, Square One is the region’s foremost



L to R: Steve Turco, LEGO Community Fund U.S.; Tom Ashe, City of Springfield; Christa Colly, Square One; Anne Morris, LEGO Community Fund U.S.; Joan Kagan, Square One; Jennifer Dubuisson, LEGO Community Fund, U.S.; Matthew Metzger, LEGO Community Fund, U.S.

provider of services to at-risk children and families. For more information, visit www.startatsquareone.org or call (413) 732-5183. ■

HEALTH

HEALTH MATTERS



Doris Sexton-Harris,
Health Consultant,
Doris can be
contacted at
dorharris77@hotmail.com

"I want to see a better world. I want to be part of the solution. So I am," says Awilda Sanchez, one of six Resident Health Advocates recognized by the City of Springfield for making a difference in their community.

At the **"Guess what I did?" Resident Advocate Role Model Campaign Press Conference** on August 23rd, Live Well Springfield honored Awilda Sanchez, Natanael Velez, Audrey Jenkins, Karon Tyler, Antonio DeLesline, and Jill Douglas for actively working to address issues around healthy school food, complete streets, and public lighting. These six role models have a long-standing history of advocacy and community involvement.

Jill Douglas shared, *"I work for Square One and we are teaching our preschool students to eat healthier, but a lot of kids are not able to do that at home. We try to give them hearty meals for breakfast, lunch, and snacks so that we know at the end of the day when they leave, their tummies are full."* The "Guess what I did?" Resident Advocate Role Model Campaign will highlight these residents throughout the year.

Live Well Springfield is inviting other residents to get involved in community issues by volunteering, advocating at public meetings, and more. The call to action is as simple as visiting local mobile markets and farm stands or as committed as joining a resident engagement program in your neighborhood.

Are you interested in advocacy, civic engagement, and policy change? Residents wanting to get involved are encouraged to become Resident Health Advocates under the Live Well Springfield Resident Advisory Council. The Resident Advisory

Calling All Resident Health Advocates

By Samantha Hamilton, Program Manager for the Live Well Springfield Coalition



Resident Health Advocates recognized for making a difference in the community.

Council was created to build a relationship with community residents experiencing issues the coalition is fighting to address. Live Well Springfield believes systemic change cannot happen without the residents that are most impacted by the problems.

The organization is hoping to engage 15 -20 community residents

across initiatives like Climate Change, Age and Dementia Friendly City, and the Transforming Communities Initiative to share their lived perspective and to advocate for community change. Support for community residents to participate in these initiatives comes from Tufts Health Plan Foundation, Trinity Health of New England, and the Kresge Foundation.

Live Well Springfield, convened by the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, brings together over 25 organizations working together to build and sustain a culture of health in Springfield that includes healthy eating, active living, the built environment, economic opportunity, housing, and education. To learn more, please visit www.livewellspringfield.org or contact me at shamilton@publichealthwm.org. ■



Samantha Hamilton

LOCAL COLLEGES IN THE NEWS

Early College Initiative

continued from page 9

co-executive director of the Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership (SEZP). "We are deeply grateful for President Cook's leadership and the entire STCC team's commitment to turning this possibility of deep partnership into a reality."

Students in the program will begin with career exploration activities in the ninth grade at Commerce to get ready for 10th-grade opportunities on the STCC campus.

Students can earn up to 20 credits, which represents about one-third of the credits needed to earn an associate degree at STCC. Students seeking certificates from STCC will also make certificate progress while in high school.

Early College programs boosts college completion rates for low-income students, minority and first-generation college-goers. These programs serve more than 2,400 students, 55

percent of whom are low-income, according to the Executive Office of Education.

The American Institutes for Research found that early college significantly reduces the opportunity gap between low-income and higher income students and closes the achievement gap between minority students and non-minority students.

Other speakers included Commerce's Executive Principal Paul Neal and Springfield Public Schools Superintendent Daniel J. Warwick.

"I'm excited about this partnership. I'd like to thank Dr. Cook and everyone who did this wonderful work," Neal said. "It gives me an opportunity to say to my students, 'This is what college is about. This is why you need to do the things we're asking you to do at school, and this is where it can lead to. Early College will provide pathways to better opportunities.'" ■

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HEALTH

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Suicide Rates on the Increase: *Greater in Massachusetts*

SPRINGFIELD, MA – Raising awareness of suicide and sharing information on how to recognize and help a suicidal person may be crucial in preventing millions of Americans from ending their personal suffering.

“Far too many individuals in our community have been lost to suicide. Many of the people who die from suicide have serious behavioral health conditions, including depression, which have never been diagnosed or treated. We still have an enormous amount of work to do to improve access to care for individuals suffering from depression, substance use disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other conditions associated with suicide,” said Dr. Barry Sarvet, chair, Behavioral Health, Baystate Medical Center.

Suicide rates in the United States have increased nearly 30 percent since 1999, according to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **In Massachusetts, the suicide rate increased by 35.3 percent between 1999 and 2016, making it one of only 25 states where the suicide rate increased by more than 30 percent.**

“We don’t have clear answers regarding the cause of this increase. It is suspected that the opioid epidemic is a factor, but other possible causes include increasing levels of stress and increased social isolation in contemporary society. Increased prevalence of economic hardship in the context of growing income disparity is also a likely factor,” said Dr. Sarvet.

The statistics continue to tell a tragic story.

In 2016, some 45,000 people lost their lives to suicide. It is the 10th leading cause of death for adults and the second leading cause of death in youth.

While a major cause of suicide is mental illness, not all suicide deaths are the result of mental health conditions, noted Dr. Sarvet.

“There can be many varying factors as to why someone takes his or her own life. It may be a relationship issue or financial problems due to job loss. Bullying is another reason, as well as deteriorating physical health or legal problems,” he said.

Mental health conditions are often seen as the cause of suicide, but suicide is rarely caused by any single factor. In fact, many people who die by sui-

cide are not known to have a diagnosed mental health condition at the time of death. Other problems often contribute to suicide, such as those related to relationships, substance use, physical health, and job, money, legal, or housing stress.

The CDC lists 12 warning signs of suicide as: feeling like a burden, being isolated, increased anxiety, feeling trapped or in unbearable pain, increased substance use, looking for ways to access lethal means, increased anger or rage, extreme mood swings, expressing hopelessness, sleeping too little or too much, talking or posting about wanting to die, making plans for suicide.

Because suicide is also a significant public health problem in the adolescent and young adult population, Dr. Sarvet noted that it is important for parents and caring adults to learn how to recognize depression in teenagers.

“In teenagers, depression is often complicated by disciplinary problems, school underachievement, interpersonal conflict, and drug and alcohol problems. It takes a great deal of understanding and compassion to notice the depressed person in the middle of all of this, who may be at serious risk for suicide,” said Dr. Sarvet.

The National Institute of Mental Health warns that people who threaten, talk or write about death, dying and suicide, or who seek access to a means to hurt or kill themselves, are exhibiting suicidal behaviors and are at risk of suicide.

If you have a loved one exhibiting such behaviors or thoughts, you should ask them what you can do to help. You can point out your observation that they seem sad and can encourage them to get help initially through their primary care doctor, who can assess the situation and prescribe medications or make a referral to a mental health professional.

“People who attempt to take their own lives often are profoundly hopeless and need people around them to notice their suffering and to help them to seek treatment. It’s really important for people to learn about the signs of depression, substance use disorders, and other common behavioral health conditions. It’s time for us to let go of the stigma that has made it so difficult for people to talk about these things,” said Dr. Sarvet.

He noted suicide touches everyone.

The suicide death of a loved one or close friend can have a profound impact on survivors who often feel partly responsible for the tragedy.

“Many times they are left feeling guilty and wondering what they could have done differently and questioning how they could have missed the signs,” said Dr. Sarvet.

Similar to high blood pressure, asthma, and diabetes, mental health conditions need treatment and ongoing follow up in order for them to be well-controlled.

“Talking with your primary care provider is a great first step to getting help,” said Dr. Sarvet.

Those looking for support in coping with a suicide loss can visit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention website at www.afsp for a list of nearby support groups.

If you, or someone you know, is in suicidal crisis or emotional distress, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or the Psychiatric Crisis Team at 413-733-6661 for Springfield residents or to learn where to call outside the Springfield area. You can also talk with your primary care physician for a referral to a mental health professional or visit your local emergency room.

For more information on behavioral health services at Baystate, visit www.BaystateHealth.org/Behavioral-Health.


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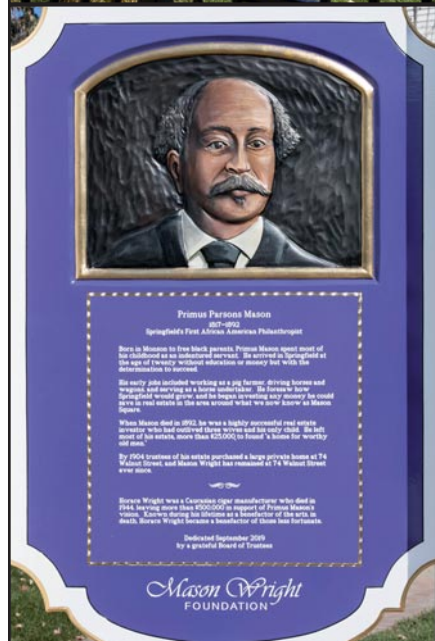
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COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Memorial to Springfield's First African American Philanthropist Opens

By Alan T. Popp, President Mason Wright Foundation



His name is on a Springfield neighborhood (Mason Square) and on a building (Primus Mason Court), but nowhere until now is his story told in such a very public place. That place is the newly constructed Primus Mason Memorial, located at the intersection of Oak & Walnut streets in Springfield.

The memorial, a project of the Mason Wright Foundation, honors its founder, Primus Mason, whose legacy is the Foundation and its affiliates—Mason Wright Senior Living, Colony Care at Home and Bright Futures Early Learning Center.

Where once there were two long-vacant lots, the memorial is a 13,000 square foot park-like setting, featuring a beautiful carved sign that reads, in part,

**Primus Parsons Mason
1817 – 1892
Springfield's First African
American Philanthropist**

Born in Monson, Primus Mason spent most of his childhood as an indentured servant. He arrived in Springfield at the age of twenty without education or money but with the determination to succeed.

His early jobs included working as a pig farmer, driving horses and wagons, and serving as a horse

undertaker. He foresaw how Springfield would grow, and he began investing any money he could save in real estate in the area around what we now know as Mason Square.

When Mason died in 1892, he was a highly successful real estate investor who had outlived three wives and his only child. He left most of his estate, more than \$25,000, to found "a home for worthy old men."

By 1904 trustees of his estate purchased a large private home at 74 Walnut Street, and Mason Wright has remained at 74 Walnut Street ever since.

The sign also pays homage to the Foundation's other major benefactor, with these words:

Horace Wright was a Caucasian cigar manufacturer who

died in 1944, leaving more than \$500,000 in support of Primus Mason's vision. Known during his lifetime as a benefactor of the arts, in death, Horace Wright became a benefactor of those less fortunate.

According to John Morse, chair of the Foundation's board of trustees, within a dozen years after Mason's death, the trustees had formed a corporation, held an annual meeting and purchased a ten-bedroom home on 74 Walnut Street in Springfield, where the Mason Wright campus remains to this day. Mason's legacy has grown from serving ten "worthy old men" to serving more than 600 seniors and children each week through assisted living, in-home care and early childhood education.

The Primus Mason Memorial is open to the public seasonally, seven days a week from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

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COMMUNITY

POLITICAL HAPPENINGS - SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL

The Brave Act



(Photo at Left) City Councilor Kateri Walsh (center) sponsors an Order for local acceptance of "The Brave Act" and is joined by colleagues City Councilors Timothy Ryan and Adam Gomez and City Council President Justin Hurst along with US Army Veteran Juan Barrera and President of Local 648 International Association of Fire Fighters Chad Jacobs. (Photo at Right) City Councilors are joined by members of Local 648 who support the Order.

SPRINGFIELD, MA – City Councilor Kateri B. Walsh sponsored an Order on the October 21, 2019 City Council agenda to support local acceptance of Mass. General Law, Title 5, Chapter 33, Section 59, known as the Brave Act. If adopted, this meas-

ure would provide financial security for all employees of the city whose public employment is interrupted being called to active duty in the military.

City Council President Justin Hurst, Councilors Adam Gomez and Timothy Ryan along with Chad Ja-

cobs, President of Local 648 International Association of Fire Fighters, members of Local 648 and US Army Veteran Juan Barrera have voiced their support.

Councilor Walsh stated that we should do all we can to support the families of our servicemen while they

are deployed.

Council President Hurst is a member of a Gold Star family and knows first hand the sacrifices that impact families and Councilors Gomez and Ryan spoke to relieving stresses associated with deployments.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



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

Focus on Being Grateful

By Zaida Govan

Gratefulness is a state of being. In Narcotics Anonymous, they say "a grateful addict won't get high." You can translate that to anything in life. If you have gratitude in your heart and your mind, you won't be depressed or anxious unless, of course, you have a chemical imbalance in your brain that prevents you from being grateful.

When you have gratitude for your spouse or your significant other, you won't be angry at them all the time and feel that you have to leave.

In therapy they tell you to make a gratitude list when you're feeling down or out of it. Write 10 things that you are grateful for. I try not to write down material things that I have been blessed with. I write down things that I can't easily replace: My God, children, husband, grandchildren, peace that surpasses all understanding, the ability to fight for justice, health, the right to vote, friends, parents, siblings and cousins and many others. It's not easy to do but when you focus on trying to think of things to be grateful for, you won't have time to be depressed or think of using drugs or alcohol if you have a substance use problem.

There are 8 Dimensions of Well-

ness (Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, 2006) that we can focus on in our gratitude list. If you have gratitude in at least most of the dimensions, you will have a good start to your list. I challenge you to create this list and keep adding to it daily. The 8 dimensions are Emotional, Financial, Social, Spiritual, Occupational, Physical, Intellectual and Environmental. If you can find at least one thing to be grateful for in each of these dimensions, you may feel a lot better about your life.

The holiday season is coming up and this is a time when many people remember loved ones lost and are melancholy. This can be a difficult

time as the sun sets sooner and rises later so we don't have as much Vitamin D coming from the sun. There are things you can do to help yourself at this time. It is important to surround yourself with people who really care about you. This could be at work, at church, or maybe at your local 12-step meeting. Find one person that you can talk to about what is going on and be honest with them and yourself.

If you suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder like millions of Americans do, there are light boxes that can help. Being thankful is a job that we should try to put first and foremost in our lives not only during the holiday season, but every day of the year.

Be grateful and exercise your right to vote on November 5, 2019.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES



*Bishop
Talbert W. Swan, II
is Pastor of The Spring
Of Hope Church Of
God In Christ*

The Go To Black Sycophant: People Conservative Bigots Absolutely Love

By Bishop W. Talbert Swan II

During a September House Oversight Joint Subcommittee hearing, conservative commentator Candace Owens testified that white supremacy would not make her list of the top 100 issues facing Black America.

“Based on the hierarchy of what’s impacting minority Americans, if I had to make a list of 100 things, white nationalism would not make the list,” Owens said. “White supremacy and white nationalism is not a problem that is harming Black America,” she continued.

Candace Owens is a college dropout who has never voted a day in her life. She is a sycophantic puppet and white supremacy apologist for racist conservatives pushing the narrative that racism in America is dead and gone. She is an expert at nothing other than foot shuffling and buck dancing and providing cover for white supremacy. Why the hell is she testifying before Congress? Where was she educated? What does she have a degree in? What, in her 30 years, has she mastered, researched, become proficient at or pioneered?

Let’s be clear, Republicans have become masters at developing Black bootlickers to do their bidding — people who parrot their racist narrative, ostensibly to give credibility to their fictive reality of an America where Black people should no longer have a grievance, as racism has been eradicated and they have received their due recompense for 400 years of

slavery, oppression, degradation, murder, lynching, segregation and brutalization.

Sadly, Candace is at the top of the list of the well-compensated, go to, backslapping adulators called upon to do massa’s bidding by erasing the history of anti-Black bigotry and oppression, and placing the plight of the Black community squarely on the shoulders of Black people themselves for having fatherless homes, engaging in so-called “Black on Black crime” and aborting their children. According to the white supremacist narrative, this explains the extra judicial murder of Blacks by police, racial profiling, the disparate treatment of Blacks in the criminal justice system, the wage and education gaps, health disparities and so many other factors that affirm racism’s existence and pervasiveness in America.

Conservative whites sing Candace’s praises because she entertains them by being a Black face that castigates Black people utilizing their language. So many have tweeted, inboxed and DM’ed me that I should follow or listen to Candace. Why? Because she’s Black, and I can’t call her racist for saying the things racist whites say, right? She provides “race insurance” to white supremacists who call on her to speak at their conferences and events, and who invite her to appear on their television and radio programs.

The thing is, Candace has no connection to the Black community.

In actuality, she is not connected to true Black conservatives. Thus, white bigots are comfortable with her because she poses no threat to their views, actions or commentary about the Black community. She will never challenge their racist and distorted view because they are her benefactors. They give her validity and credibility. They pay her bills. And they love to see her perform and stick it to us social justice warriors who are always complaining about white supremacy, anti-Black bigotry and white privilege. She is their ultimate form of entertainment.

What conservative bigots seem to forget is the fact that we’ve been

here before. Today, Candace Owens is the flavor of the month, the go-to Black sycophant that gives goosebumps to the racism deniers, birthers, bigots and white supremacists — but she’s not the first to play this role. Others have come and faded away into the sunset only to be reincarnated when massa needed them again. She is today’s Stacy Dash, Herman Cain, Alan Keyes, Sheriff Clarke, Allen West and Jesse Lee Peterson. We’ve always had the Black sycophant with us and we always will. The one thing history has taught based on the shelf life of those I just named is that Candace’s 15 minutes of fame will be over before you know it. ■

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COMMUNITY

LEADERSHIP PIONEER VALLEY



Lora Wondolowski, Director of Leadership Pioneer Valley, she is passionate about strengthening the Pioneer Valley. Contact her at 413-737-3876 or www.leadershippv.org

At Leadership Pioneer Valley, we regularly get requests from non-profit leaders looking for suggestions of diverse leaders to serve on their boards of directors. They know that we have more than 275 alumni from throughout the Valley that represent a variety of diversities. From the work of our own board of directors, we recognized that diversifying boards is not as simple as suggesting a few names and hoping for the best. As a result, we created our Leaders OnBoard program nearly five years ago.

Increasingly, non-profit boards in this area are interested in increasing their racial, gender, and age diversity. I'm not sure if this is a reaction to the larger political climate and increased awareness of racism in our society. There are more than 2,000 non-profits in the Pioneer Valley that impact important issues like education, food insecurity, public health, environmental

protections, and economic development. These organizations rely on the work of their boards to hire their CEO, fundraise, provide strategic guidance, and financial oversight. Having a board with diverse perspectives and experiences is critically important. This diversity gives nonprofits a stronger ability to plan for the future, manage risks, make prudent decisions, the ability to take advantage of opportunities, and be in touch with community needs.

Yet, despite attention to this matter a 2017 survey found that 84% of board members are white, 8% African-American, 5% Latinx, 3% Asian, and 1% Native American compared to US demographics of 76.5% white, 13.4% African-American, 18.3% Latinx, and 4.8% Asian. The numbers haven't changed much over the last two decades. **Additionally, 27% of boards are all white.** Nonprofit boards are doing better than corporate boards with female representation—48% are women. Lastly, boards tend to be older than the population with 83% of boards 40+

Increasing Board Diversity

By Lora Wondolowski

and 29% of board chairs are 65+.

From many conversations, we have found that organizations have positive intentions but don't know how to diversify their boards. Many have had an initial conversation but lack an action plan. Through working with the LPV board, I've learned that intentionality is key. It is also not "one and done." We continually assess our diversity and look to the future needs of our organization. But all of this requires the first step and discussion about diversity and what it means for your organization. Where are the opportunities? Why does our board need to be more diverse? This will shed light on how your organization and community might benefit from diversity within the board. You can also discuss what opportunities you may miss if your board remains largely homogeneous. This is not always an easy conversation as it may uncover bias, prejudices, and blind spots in the board or organizational culture. You will also need to identify which diversities you wish to address; racial di-

versity isn't the only diversity.

Once you are clear on your needs, it's time to act. This may seem like the hardest part. Many organizations struggle to recruit board members and to add another dimension seems daunting. This will take looking beyond your own circles and finding new sources. Ideas include local chamber members, clients, professional or trade associations, and Linked In Board Connect. Get suggestions from community leaders you know.

Maybe you want to explore joining a board. You don't have to be wealthy or in the c-suite to serve our communities. Our Leaders OnBoard program offers training on the basics of being a board member, board matching services and are excited to partner with On Board for their matching event at the **Hall of Fame on December 3rd**. This is a great opportunity to find a board or new board members. Contact us or at <https://www.diversityonboard.net/> to take the next step. ■

COMMUNITY FOCUS

A Celebration of 50 Years of W. E. B. Du Bois in Great Barrington

By Whitney Battle-Baptiste

On Friday, October 18th, there was a great gathering just off Route 23 on Great Barrington's Egremont Plain. More than 75 people came to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the W. E. B. Du Bois Memorial Park, now known as the W. E. B. Du Bois Boyhood Homesite, where the maternal family of W. E. B. Du Bois called home. The property has a unique history, for it was in the hands of the

Burghardts since the early 1800s. W. E. B. Du Bois was born in Great Barrington in 1868. He spent his early years as a young boy in the "house of the Black Burghardts." The people gathered on the crisp fall day sat under a tent and heard stories from the event in 1969 and the struggles of keeping the legacy of Dr. Du Bois in the town of his birth. The event was a combination of efforts of the Great

continues to page 17



L to R: Guy Davis, son of Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; Whitney Battle-Baptiste, UMass W. E. B. Du Bois Center Director and UMass Department of Anthropology Professor; Dennis Lee Powell, President Pittsfield NAACP; and Gwendolyn Hampton VanZant, CEO and Founding Director of Multicultural BRIDGE.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY BEAT

Author Book Fair

By Ken Harris



Ken Harris is a former Special Police Officer and Corrections Officer. He is a graduate of STCC. Follow him at shadowedu.blogspot.com pvpeduc.wixsite.com/arts

I found the Author Book Fair held at the Springfield Central Library on September 28th a remarkable display of interaction between local authors and patrons with a passion for any subject you can imagine, ranging from medicine and historical fiction to suspense thriller.

This event took place in the rotunda area, a high traffic area for passerby's entering and exiting the building. Many of the tables occupied by the authors had free, eye-catching book marks based on their fiction or nonfiction book titles and professional business cards lining their desks in addition to the titles that were available.

Susanne Dunlap's dazzling display was no exception. Her latest book, "Listen to the Wind," is a historical fiction which has garnered much praise for its epic adventure set in the 13th century. This book is the first of a series. Her next one, "The Spirit of Fire," is coming December 6th.

Anyone with an interest in modern medicine didn't have to look far. I was fortunate to meet Jackie Garrett, MD. She specialized in allergy and immunology. The title of her book, "Does My Child Have A Food Allergy?" screamed at me. I feel most of us can relate to this book because we most likely know a child who directly or indirectly struggles with this.

I personally like suspense novels and/or thrillers so I made my way over to K.B Pellegrino, a prolific author, essayist, poet, and storyteller. It was a joy to hear of her passion for writing fiction. There was so much interest at her table, it took me some

time to slip in there! Her book, "Mary Lou, Oh, What Did She Do?" is book two of the Evil Exists in West Side trilogy. "Brothers from Another Mother One and For All! Always?" is the third book of evil in the trilogy.

Then I came across the eye-catching cover of Angela M. Grout's funny memoir titled, "Dear Baby Get Out." The picture of the baby bump with markings and crosses to track each struggling day speaks volumes. This is her hilarious perspective about the stages concerning birth. Angela also juggles her time as a designer, consultant, and owner of the Agawam Flower Shop.

Poet Eric Johnson's book, "The Conditions We Live," was described as a touching piece that conveys warmth and reality in an array of life struggles. Not too far away, I met author J L Homan. His memoir, "Out Here in the Stars," is a look at his personal journey and deals with hope, loss, and solace revolving around the loss of his partner.

I was surprised to learn writer Andrew Larkin is a personal friend of my hero, George Foreman. Andrew's book, "My Life in Boats, Fast, and Slow," is another memoir that takes place during the challenges of the 1960s and centers on Larkin's experiences in river boating and rowing. I was also thrilled to meet author and U.S. Veteran Ferris Shelton. His first novel is about an Atlanta businessman who endures horrific dreams from the slavery period.

The Springfield Author Book Fair certainly succeeded with another great draw this year!

You can learn more about these authors and their books from the Springfield Central Library Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/429617987761694/>

Like entertainment? Follow me at <https://pvpeduc.wixsite.com/arts>

COMMUNITY FOCUS

50 Years of W. E. B. Du Bois in Great Barrington

continued from page 16

Barrington Du Bois Legacy Committee, chaired by Randy Weinstein, local officials, several local churches, and a number of community members.

The history of the Memorial Park was due to two men, Walter Wilson, a white southern civil rights activist, and Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, a scholar and former national research director for Project Head Start. In 1967, Wilson and Gordon purchased the original one acre plot and assembled the surrounding properties, creating a U-shaped five acre plot that would become a park in honor of Dr. Du Bois. After a few setbacks and local resistance, these men finally moved ahead and dedicated the park on a beautiful October day in 1969. Ossie Davis served as the emcee to more than 200 people who came out for the dedication. The keynote address was given by the Georgia state legislator Julian Bond, with contributions from people such as Esther Cooper Jackson, co-founder of *Free-*

domways: A Quarterly Review of the Freedom Movement, and local leaders excited about bringing the legacy of W. E. B. Du Bois back to the town of his birth. The park was subsequently designated a National Historic landmark in 1979.

On Friday, there was a series of events for the homesite celebration, including an exhibit of artifacts excavated at the site which were provided by the UMass W. E. B. Du Bois Center and the UMass Community Archaeology Lab. The culminating event was an evening featuring an intergenerational panel, led by Gwendolyn VanZant of BRIDGE and Vice-Chair of the Great Barrington Du Bois Legacy Committee with music by Craig Harris, Wanda Houston, Guy Davis, Otha Day, MaryNell Morgan-Brown and a dance performance by Jacob's Pillow, choreographed by Joanna Haigood. It was a perfect day, one I think W. E. B. Du Bois would be proud of. ■

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

Free 'Get On Board!' Event

continued from page 5

This year Leadership of Pioneer Valley (LPV) (see article on page 16) is partnering with OnBoard as a co-presenter. Formed in 2010 to fill a critical need for a leadership program that builds a network of emerging leaders to address the challenges and opportunities of the region, LPV combines both classroom and hands-on, experiential learning at different locations throughout the Valley. The curriculum is designed to foster the skills, collaboration, and commitment needed to further a vibrant and culturally competent Pioneer Valley. The inaugural class launched in the fall of 2011.

"Oftentimes, board members are recruited from a small pool of candidates. Our goal is to create new relationships for both the individuals and the organizations who will benefit from each other's resources and experience," said Attorney Ellen Freyman, an OnBoard founder.

Get On Board! is free and open to members of the public who would like to join a board or committee of a community non-profit. There is a small \$100 fee for nonprofit organizations seeking members for their board of directors. For more information or to register as an attendee or participating non-profit, visit diversityonboard.net. ■

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Why Demand Access for All to the Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center?

By Mattie Lacewell, President, Mass Senior Action Council

Because there are access and affordability challenges too many seniors face relating to transportation and the increased cost of lunch at the Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center (the "senior center"). This demand is about Springfield seniors, like Ms. Doris Jackson who is 81-years old and lives on a fixed income, having suitable transportation to access the senior center. She strongly feels that the senior center is a great place to meet, share a meal, join in on an activity and socialize.

Doris along with her friends are transit dependent. She no longer drives and would not otherwise be able to participate at the senior center without her family supporting her transportation needs. She and her family are troubled that the new senior center came without a transportation plan for seniors. She enjoys going to the senior center for daily lunches, activities and social interaction.

However, Doris, like many seniors from across Springfield, experience great difficulty accessing the senior center. She is only able to participate when her family is available to take her. She is unable to drive, unable to take the multiple PVRTA buses and the \$6 round trip cost on the PVRTA van is too expensive. Although her family takes her to the senior center, her son, Minister Charles Stokes, is mindful of his mom's peers who are unable to get there. She often asks him if he can give a ride to some of her friends. Her son said they are deeply concerned about the seniors and their

challenges getting to and from the new Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center.

Mass Senior Action Council Greater Springfield Chapter believes that Worcester, the second largest city in the Commonwealth, has an inclusive senior center transportation model that addresses this issue. They have created a system to subsidize transportation to and from their senior center. Their subsidy ensures that no senior spends more than \$1 each way. To accomplish this, they use a combination of resources:

- 1) One is ADA van service provided through the Worcester Regional Transportation Authority. Its current fare is \$2.75 each way. The senior center provides a subsidy of \$1.75 each way to reduce the fare for seniors to \$1. Seniors schedule trips directly with WRTA and the senior center directly pays WRTA so the consumer experience is very simple and exactly the same as if they were taking any other trip except the cost is lower.
- 2) Additionally, the senior center provides subsidies for individuals who must take more than one bus to the senior center. Currently, the senior fare for WRTA is \$.85 for each bus. They provide transfer tickets to individuals to cover the cost of having to use more than one bus.
- 3) There are a small number of seniors who can safely use the senior center but are not able to



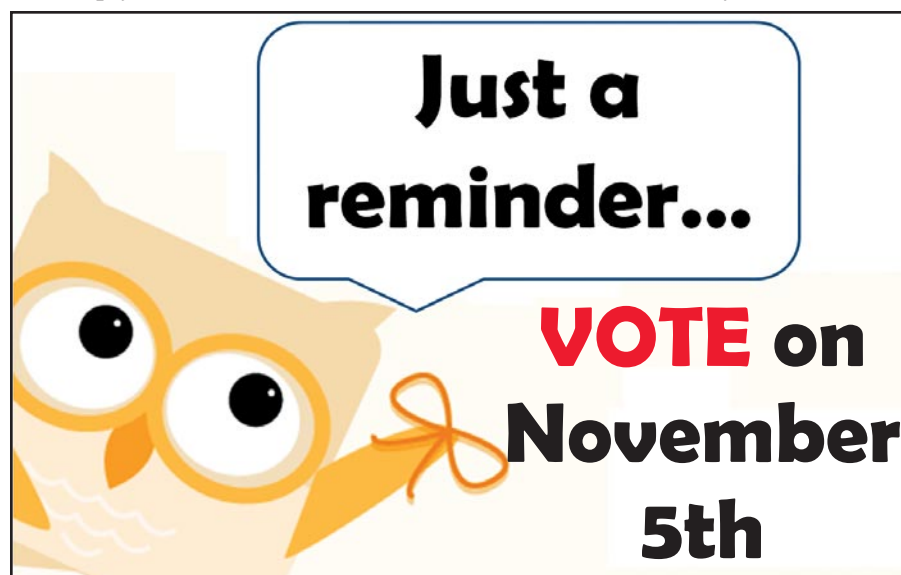
use the ADA service. For this small group of individuals, the senior center has contracted for medical transport. Each trip costs \$12.75 and again the senior center provides a subsidy to ensure the senior only pays \$1 each way.

- 4) Lastly, the senior center helped the Worcester Housing Authority to secure a community development block grant (CDBG) to provide transportation to seniors living in Worcester Housing Authority buildings. These grant funds enable the Authority to use their vans to pick up seniors at six elderly housing buildings.

The Worcester senior center reports that this combination of services has increased attendance and participation and enables seniors who would not otherwise be able to participate to enjoy the activities of their senior center.

In Springfield, it's for seniors like Doris that we are demanding the City of Springfield create a transportation plan to help all Springfield seniors *ACCESS* this new, beautiful \$12.8 million dollar building because the senior center is still out of reach for many Springfield seniors.

The time has come for the City of Springfield to finally comprehensively address the need for an affordable transportation plan to help seniors get safely from their homes to the new Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center. ■



LOCAL COLLEGES IN THE NEWS

State's First Cannabis Education Center

continued from page 8

begin on Jan. 11, 2020, at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute. Registration and scholarship information will be released on the Cannabis Education Center website on Nov. 1, 2019.

C3RN and HCC will also be running five courses for the entrepreneurship track in the Social Equity Program starting November 23, 2019, at HCC's Picknelly Adult and Family Education Center, 206 Maple St.,

Holyoke. The first, two session class, Nov. 23-24, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., will focus on business plan creation and development. The Social Equity Training Program is designed to provide training and technical assistance to those negatively impacted by the drug war.

Information about scholarships will be posted soon on the Cannabis Education Center website. ■

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

Point of View Valedictorian Encourages 100 Men of Color to Tell Their Children, “I BELIEVE in YOU!”

By Dwight Bachman

“Before I say anything, allow me 30 seconds for a short prayer, something I try to do first, before everything I do...

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and
forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory,
For ever and ever.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for keeping your loving arms around every family represented in this room. Heal any sicknesses in any family, and shower your richest blessings on them all. Help us laugh this evening as we try to “Bridge the Village” in our communities. I ask this blessing in the name of your precious son, Jesus. Amen!

The Bible tells us to “Give thanks in all circumstances.” My Mother taught me to never let the sun go down without saying “THANK YOU” to people who do something nice to you, or for you.

So I want to thank you, Dr. Archer, for that introduction and thank you profusely for this award. It is my high honor to accept this award and recognition from you and your organization, the June Archer & Eleven28 Entertainment Group.

I am truly overwhelmed at being described as a valedictorian. If you saw my grades in undergraduate school, under the classical definition of a valedictorian, you’d do what they used to do at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem when someone got up to perform or present—throw them off the stage.

But I thank you, tonight, for letting me know that you appreciate me telling the story of our people from a positive, love perspective in the African American press. For that, I am truly grateful.

I want to thank Mr. Bill Costen, a deacon in my church, for nominating me. I declined his offer twice before. This time, he pushed it through without my permission. God Bless him for being so kind.

You, yourself, Dr. Archer, have an enviable track record of excellence in music, the arts, as an



June Archer and Dwight Bachman

executive producer in entertainment and business entrepreneurship and as an author. What I love about you most is that you care about others. You open doors for others. You are a true leader in the community. You make followers, leaders. You inspire excellence in them, and to pursue their dreams. The world needs more people like you, Dr. Archer! Can we all give Dr. Archer a hand!

I believe every man honored tonight will agree that they did not arrive to where they are in life on their own. The Bible says “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.” So whoever you looked up to, whoever guided you along the way, I believe God sent them there.

I don’t have time to name the many people who I have grown to recognize as true ANGELS in my life. One of them is Archbishop Leroy Bailey Jr. There sits a wise prophet. A loving, caring pastor.

The late Dr. David Carter, former president at Eastern and later, chancellor of the CT State Colleges and Universities System, was another angel in my life. He told me something many angels had conveyed to me in different ways, but never said to me. In the middle of the crisis that he thought I could have managed better, he said, “You can handle this. Man, I BELIEVE IN YOU!”

Three little words—I BELIEVE IN YOU. It changed me greatly. People have inspired me throughout my life, but no one in my life had ever literally said that to me before. Not like that.

I BELIEVE IN YOU! Try it on your son. He’ll set a world record in something, or go to the top of his class in Chemistry, or whatever.

I am sure, Ms. Natalie Redd and Mr. Omar Wilson, that you, too, have angels in your lives.

For sure, Mr. LaSalle, you have had angels in your life. Your Mom, Ada Haynes; people at Weaver High School and the Artist Collective—I could go on. I used to watch you on ER all the time, saying to myself, I could be doing that. (My lead role in DREAMY KID.) You do us all proud, earning all those NAACP Image Awards and Emmys!

Three things: Tonight is about letting all of us know that we, indeed, are a bridge to each other, and each other’s child; that we, indeed, do belong to each other. Archbishop, you teach us to take care of each other in our church and in our community.

I told Cliff Marrett, a Class of 2018 Men of Color honoree, that I wanted to speak about the Power of Young People. He told me they should know that this elegant evening is not about our job titles. It is about much more. “We are fathers. We are uncles. We are brothers—blood and fraternal.” I love the way brothers greet our children when they return to school each year, letting them know we want them to succeed. Watching the greetings each day for a week reminded me of two Negro spirituals—“My Lord What a Morning!” and “Don’t Let Nobody Turn You Around!”

Gregory Sneed, Class of 2016 said to challenge everyone here to not only go back to your communities and to continue to do what got them nominated, but also bring a child every year to this event so that the children and young people can see the diverse group of options and opportunities that await them. So many different professional stars here. YOU await them. They need to know that YOU are here for them. They need to know that in this toxic world, they belong, and they belong to YOU. You are their bridge in this village.

It is evident to everyone here tonight that we live in a toxic world, a world that, on many levels, tells us we don’t belong. Our communities are under attack, in schools, on the job, in business, in sports.

continues to page 38

Around Town & . . .



The Bilingual Veterans Outreach Centers of Mass Inc. Executive Director Gumersindo Gomez honored the Western Mass Stand Down by Coordinator Betty Borders.



At the Getting to the Root Total Women's Health Summit were from L to R: Dr. Gayle Jones, Dr. Ebony Butler, event presenter Dr. Yolanda Lenzy, Dr. Lauren Powell, Robin Haynes, and Springfield Health and Human Services Commissioner Helen Caulton Harris.



Anti Racism Rally



The Western Mass Chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses held their annual gala recently.



The Puerto Rican Parade committee held their first annual Springfield Puerto Rican Parade gala. Committee Members from L to R: Melvin Sanchez, Pablo Morales, Victoria Rodriguez, Lizzy Ortiz, Farah Rodriguez, Kelvin Molina-Brantley, Sasha Jimenez, and Springfield City Councilor Adam Gomez.



Marchers in the 2019 Springfield Puerto Rican Parade.

. . . In The Community



Palate Restaurant's held its fourth anniversary celebration. L to R: Ray Berry from White Lion Beer, Palate restaurant owner Jose Hernandez, City Council President Justin and wife, School Committee Member Denise Hurst.



Suez Court #149 held a Breast Cancer Fundraising Brunch at the Eagles recently.



The Gándara Center's Project Health program hosted a National Latinx HIV/AIDS Awareness Day vigil concluding with an AIDS awareness flag raising ceremony.



L to R: Dr. Shakenna K. Williams; Honoree Professor Alyssa Arnell; Keynote Speaker Dr. Yves Salomon-Fernandez, President Greenfield Community College; Dr. Ruth Bass; Founder of the African American Female Professors Award Association, Professor Traci Talbert-Gaynor; Dr. Gina Joseph Collins; Dr. Josie Brown; and Dr. Ayesha Ali.



Members of Zion Baptist Church and their pastor Rev. Dr. Atu White (center) were honored with a 2019 Hickory Street Harambee Award at the 1st Annual Hickory Street Harambee Honors Dinner



The Hickory Street Harambee Committee from L to R: Freddie McDonald, Bruce King, Jr, President Tacy Chappell, Cedric Williams, Vice President Veronica McNair, and Jenal Rentas.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY FOCUS - CONNECTICUT

Academy Award Winner Ruth E. Carter Tells Hartford Girls Rock! “Be Your Authentic Self! Think Outside the Box! Do Something Special!”

By Bobbi Brown



Bobbi Brown



Ruth E. Carter

With 7 awards and 40 film credits to her name, Academy Award-winning costume designer Ruth Carter graced the stage on Sept. 22 at the Connecticut Convention Center for the Sixth Annual Hartford Girls Rock! A sold out crowd heard Carter describe her role as a costume designer, her Academy Award and her road to success in the film industry.

Carter, a Hampton University alumna, congratulated the ten young women in Hartford Girls Rock! for their outstanding academic achievements, leadership, and community service throughout the Greater Hartford area. Founded six years ago, Hartford Girls Rock! is a unique program developed by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter (AKA), in partnership with the Foundation for Educational Opportunities, Inc. (FEO). Mentored by AKAs and members of the community, these ten young women participated in workshops on goal setting, creating and maintaining healthy choices, career exploration and self-empowerment. Many noticed their achievements, and community-based organizations chose them to be recognized.

The young women recognized included **Makiyah Berry** of Pathways Academy of Technology & Design; **Dayzra Bourne** of Capital Community College; **Danielle Cloud** of Farmington High School; **Chyla Drawhorn** of the University



Academy Award Winner Ruth E. Carter is surrounded by Hartford Girls Rock! Class of 2019

of Connecticut; **Shian Earlington** of Capital Community College; **Onyae Hill** of Bristol Eastern High School; **Shawndia Jones** of Watkinson School; **Datari Mathis** of the University of Bridgeport; **Angelique Phillips** of Watkinson School; and **Sherisa Smith** of the Connecticut International Baccalaureate Academy.

More than 900 people roared cheers as Carter approached the stage. She offered the audience some sage advice and numerous pearls of wisdom on self-confidence and focusing on accomplishing one's goals. “Don't worry about someone being better than you... have confidence to be your authentic self. Authenticity finds itself in your research. Research brings out something new within you that you did not even know you had in yourself. Do the work, don't worry about the competition.”

In addition to proper, thorough research, Carter urged the young women to find something they really enjoy and pursue it with a passion. “It took me 17 weeks to just prepare for “Black Panther”. A ton of research goes into everything I do to give the proper voice and detail to the story we want to tell.”

She said she studied the Amistad case here in Connecticut and the growing protests and Civil Rights Movement to produce costumes for the movie “Selma.” She cited Lorraine Hansberry's “A Raisin in the Sun” and “For Colored Girls Only,” as examples of research she conducted in preparing for designing costumes for films. “**Detailed research is my civil rights duty to the struggle for human and civil rights.**”

A native of Springfield, MA, Carter began her costume-designing career at a theatre in Springfield. There, she eventually collaborated with Hartford Stage. While working locally, she always knew she wanted to do something special. Then, it happened. Carter recalled a moment she will never forget:

“One day, I get this call and the voice on the other end said, ‘This is the man of your dreams!’ I laid back, closed my eyes and said ‘Denzel!’ The voice said ‘Naw, Baby, this is Spike Lee!’” Director Spike Lee hired her to design costumes in his film, “School Daze,” launched in 1988. After that, she worked in a number of films ranging from “Do the

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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.

Western New England University School of Law is pleased to announce the launch of its new Center for Social Justice. The University honors its milestone centennial year of promoting community-based education with this initiative, which reflects the School of Law's efforts to work toward a more just, equitable and inclusive society.

In a statement to commemorate this launch Dean Sudha Setty said, "The School of Law has a strong foundation of social justice engagement." She went on to add, "The Center for Social Justice will not only serve as an organizing framework for our varied offerings and provide a cohesive presentation of justice-related teaching, scholarship and service, but will also broaden the School of Law's

From Justice to Action: Western New England University School of Law Center of Social Justice

By Lauren Carasik, Clinical Professor of Law

academic offerings, engage students more robustly, and work with community organizations and partners to identify and begin to address unmet needs that cut across law and other fields."

The Center will focus on facilitating discussion both in the community and in academia on issues related to social and economic justice, in addition to promoting social justice scholarship and advocacy. The Center draws on the existing strengths of the School of Law's nationally recognized faculty areas, including civil rights and international human rights; community economic development and economic justice; gender equity and legal issues faced by the LGBTQI community; immigrants' rights; and racial justice. Western New England University President Anthony Caprio commented, "The Center for Social Justice will deepen

the university's engagement with Western Massachusetts and enhance the School of Law's mission of training a diverse group of lawyers to serve their communities. This innovative and exciting initiative is a fitting way to position the School of Law for its next century of service."

As part of its mission, the Center for Social Justice will host programs on topics of interest to the community. In its inaugural year there will be programming specifically related to racial justice and criminal justice reform, including a talk by Alfred Woodfox, one of the "Angola Three," who was held in solitary confinement for more than four decades at the maximum security Angola Prison in Louisiana for a crime he says he did not commit. Wilcox was finally released in 2016. He will be talking at the School of Law about his memoir, *Solitary: Unbroken* by



Lauren Carasik is a Clinical Professor of Law, Associate Dean for Clinics and Director of the International Human Rights Clinic at Western New England University School of Law.

Four Decades in Solitary Confinement. My Story of Transformation and Hope. The talk, which is open to the public, will be on November 13 at noon. The Center for Social Justice's other public programming is viewable on the Events tab of the website, www.wne.edu/social-justice. ■

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

Ruth E. Carter Tells Hartford Girls Rock! "Be Your Authentic Self! Think Outside the Box! Do Something Special!"

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Right Thing," directed and starred in by Lee himself, to "Selma," directed by Ava DuVernay, "Malcolm X" and many more.

However, she made history in the phenomenal, blockbuster film "Black Panther." At the 91st Academy Awards earlier this year, Carter became the first African-American woman to win in the category of "Best Costume Designer." In "Black Panther," more than 700 costumes depicted African culture through textiles and patterns. Carter placed emphasis on how she wanted to portray the African culture as authentically as possible. "I love telling stories, espe-

cially our stories... Historical research tuned me in. I had to be tuned into African kings and kingdoms to create those intricate costumes."

Just as European powers have stolen Africa's natural resources throughout history, in "Black Panther," invaders tried to steal the natural resource vibranium, a rare, powerful metal found in Wakanda which reflected how scientific Africans were. Vibranium powered African technologies and was used in their weapons. And, yes, thanks to Carter, "Black Panther" himself even wore a vibranium suit, which absorbed kinetic energy that he could use as a negative force energy to repel

his enemies who tried to steal the vibranium from Wakanda.

After making history Carter expressed, "At times, the movie industry can be pretty unkind. Nevertheless, it is about sticking with it, keeping faith and growing as an artist. This award reflects resilience. We need to keep encouraging young Black girls to achieve... to be a student of your passion. Never ever stop learning."

Think outside the box and go do something special. You have your whole life to live, so begin thinking early on of something special you want to do. Then, go do the research. Go do the work. Thank you all so

much. I love you. I have to go catch a plane to go back and finish my work on "Coming to America 2!"

The audience gave Carter thunderous applause as she left, carrying a framed image of the 10 young women honored and proclamations from the City of Bloomfield and Hartford and gifts from the Foundation for Educational Opportunities, the AKA sorority and Hartford Girls Rock!

Sponsors for this year's Hartford Girls Rock! featuring Ruth Carter include The Travelers, ESPN, Aetna, Fairview Capital, Liberty Bank, 50 Elm & Spirits, Connecticut Health Foundation and Charter Oak Health Center. ■

EDITORIAL

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

MY POINT OF VIEW

Frederick A. Hurst



Revisiting Age and Political Office

By Frederick A. Hurst

I know I should leave it alone. But it's such irony, this age thing and politics. I don't believe I'm an outlier when I suggested several years ago in a previous article that the older politicians should get out of the way and let the future happen. I feel the same way now.

The failure of the Constitution to incorporate term limits is one of its few failures that probably resulted from the fact that our original politicians, who framed the document, had no interest in serving for a lifetime and did not contemplate that anyone ever would. Madison, Hamilton, John Jay, Jefferson and so many others are probably rolling over in their graves watching politicians jockeying for lifetime political office and treating their office as though they own it like

a piece of coveted real estate.

And the longer they remain in office, the more even principled, informed voters seem to accept their presence as necessary while complaining about general voter apathy from people who know full well they are not being properly represented by old politicians who are wallowing in their positions while suffering political rigor mortis.

Too many of those politicians are purchased...signed, sealed and delivered to the moneyed interest. Anybody can name them. And if you want to find out who they are, just do some simple research. They are the ones with the big bucks in the bank. And their contributors are public information. I've said it before and I'll say it again in other words. No matter how powerful they are, we need to regularly refresh and diversify our political gene pool rather than allow politicians lifetime occupancy.

Nothing disturbs me more than

listening to arguments from those who say we should keep Richie Neal in office because of his influential position as head of House Ways and Means. By their standard, almost every incumbent should be a lifer. My only measure of a politician is the quality of his/her service to their constituents. And it has been my observation over the years that, over time in office, the quality of services tend to decline and narrow to cover a smaller and smaller group. And over a long period of time, they tend to decline dramatically, which probably explains the victories of Ayanna Pressley (Boston) and Alexandria Ocasio Cortez (New York) over long term incumbents. And the removal of these long term incumbents has revitalized and excited the body politic and altered conventional narratives while their constituents have not suffered from the losses of incumbents who believed they were essential and entitled to lifetime tenure.

Some of those most benefiting from marijuana legalization, for example, are connected to long term incumbents who could care less if our communities are left out. They don't mean us any harm. They simply support their own interests and those within their narrowed circle. And those are the folks who will be enriched while the rest of us remain as sidelined observers. It is mind boggling to watch this situation unfold—just as it has unfolded in many other economic development scenarios in the region.

The reality is that most of us don't count unless we exercise our power to vote for change. So to those who vote for incumbency election after election after election, I can only say, "You take the money if you can." We will take the change. We may not get the change immediately. But I assure you, it will come. ■

AF-AM NEWS bits

By Frederick A. Hurst

continued from page 4

IF THIS IS NOT A PERFECT CASE FOR THE CONVICTION OF A WHITE POLICEMAN FOR MURDER OF A BLACK PERSON, NOTHING EVER WILL BE!

28-year-old Atatiana Jefferson was in her Fort Worth, Texas home playing video games with her 8-year old nephew when a White police officer, responding to a neighbor's non-emergency welfare call that Atatiana's front door was open, drove up to her house, walked around to the back to a window and fired a fatal bullet through the window one second after shouting at Jefferson to show her hands. No knock on the door; no knowledge of who might be inside; no

evidence of an intruder. Nothing of merit justifying the firing of his weapon. Just knowledge that he was in a Black neighborhood. And Atatiana Brown's life is over. If this is not the perfect case for the conviction of a White policeman for the unjustified murder of a Black person, nothing ever will be. Fortunately, the officer was arrested on murder charges so there is hope.

"THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES AND THE WHITE PRIVILEGE OF IOWA AND N.H."

That was the headline of the *Boston Globe* article by Ben Jackson, who graciously concluded his article by writing: "I'd like to surrender my electoral white privilege....I hope my

party let's me." What Jackson was referring to was the outsized influence of the first two Democratic primary election states, Iowa and New Hampshire, who often decide who wins and who loses simply because the two states' primaries are first. His statistics are revealing. "In 2017, Iowans were 86.5 percent white, 5.7 percent Hispanic, and 3.3 percent black. New Hampshire is even whiter – it's 90.9 percent white, 3.4 percent Hispanic, and 2 percent black. How does that compare to the rest of the nation?...As a whole, the United States is 61.5% percent white, 17.6 percent Hispanic, and 12.3 percent black. The powerful and early contests dramatically underrepresent American voters of color." But when looking at the demographics of just Democrats, the numbers are even worse. Jackson wrote: "More than 90 percent of black voters preferred the Democratic candidates in the 2018 US House races. Nationally,

when given a two-party choice, white voters identified as Democrats only 43 percent of the time. Only 39 percent of whites voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016. But black voters? They identify as Democrats 84 percent of the time. While black Americans are fewer than 13 percent of the population, they are about 20 percent of all Democratic voters. This is similarly true of Hispanic and Latinx voters: Nearly 70 percent voted for Democrats in 2018." And then Jackson's dramatic disclosure: **"BY LETTING WHITE STATES GO FIRST, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS IGNORING ITS MOST LOYAL VOTERS IN FAVOR OF A DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP THAT IS ABANDONING IT. THIS IS WHAT INSTITUTIONAL RACISM LOOKS LIKE."** (Emphasis added)



Steve Pemberton

BOSTON, MA, Oct. 14, 2019 — Steve Pemberton released the following statement today on his decision to end his candidacy for the United States Senate:

“In July, I stood before friends and family in my hometown of New Bedford and announced my candidacy for the United States Senate. It was an unlikely stop on a life’s journey that had begun in the shadows of society.

You see, I was born to a mother who was in the middle of a losing battle with alcoholism. At 1½ years old a babysitter – seeing how desperate the situation was – said of me: “This little boy doesn’t have a chance in the world.”

At the age of 3, I was taken away from my mother never to see her again. Two years later, my father was killed in an act of gun violence. What followed was the lonely journey of a bi-racial foster child lost in the gaps of a strained and burdened foster care system. I was shuffled in and out of unstable and violent foster homes trying to find a normalcy that never came, trying to be seen as any human being wants to be seen: for the possibilities of my life and not the circumstances.

This inherited circumstance, handed down from one generation of my family to the next, was not my fault but it was still my responsibility. That determination to better my life was met by the kindness of everyday citizens who affirmed that fight. All these years later, as time and life has

moved on, I have not forgotten those human lighthouses or the lessons of service and integrity they instilled in me.

They were the reason that I made improving the lives of others the purpose of my own life. They were the reason I focused my career on providing equal access to the great engines of the American Dream – higher education, career advancement and healthcare. And most importantly, they were the reason I found what will always be the greatest treasure of my life – the one thing that I had sought all along – family. And with my wife Tonya and our three teenage children – Quinn, Vaughn, and Kennedy, we have broken the cycle. My children and their children will never have to face what I did. It ends, and it has ended, with me.

In the weeks since that announcement, I have spoken to scores of citizens across Massachusetts who relate to that journey because it is part of their journey as well. I was not the only one who fought the good fight, not the only one who refused to accept the label of victim, not the only one who grew up far away from the world of entitlement and privilege. The path to healing America lies in recognizing that none of us have the same story but we do have mutual chapters.

I was inspired and energized by these stories of courage, determination, and faith. It affirmed for me that the greatest heroes in America are al-

wards those lives, and take example from them, we can come together to address the cycles of poverty, addiction, mental health, violence, hopelessness and abandonment that have claimed so many lives.

But this Senate race will not be the path for me to help make that change. And that is because – while I saw so much in the decency of this Commonwealth and its people to spur me on during this campaign – I also ran into an impenetrable wall of legacy and birthright – of incumbency and connections – that so often has stifled and blocked diverse and urgent voices from succeeding in the political arena.

While we were able to raise nearly \$500,000 in our first quarter, it also became clear that the barriers placed before anyone attempting to take on entrenched power are in so many cases too towering and too irremovable to overcome. They are bolstered by state and federal party bosses who privately blacklist anyone attempting to aid an insurgent campaign while publicly espousing the importance of diversity and inclusivity. They are supported by a campaign finance system that allows incumbents to hoard millions of dollars in special interest PAC money – right up to the point where they “see the light” and conveniently embrace campaign finance reform for short-term political advantage while sitting comfortably on their bloated war

ready amongst us, working hard each day to create a better day in America. I believe that if we point our sail to-

chests. And they are protected by the insiders who criticized me for breaking the party ‘rule’ of challenging an incumbent, forced consultants off of my campaign, and then changed their tune when Congressman Kennedy, in unprecedented fashion, entered into the race. The message, delivered to me, in word and in deed was abundantly clear: those same rules did not apply to him.

Many of us walk through the world with the scars and the voids of a life forever altered because of failed policies by those who have been in Washington long enough to have taken a stronger stand. To simply empathize with those experiences is no longer enough. The Democratic Party will have to find a way to fully embrace those voices rather than deny them because those lives, often unseen, still have value and they should have a place in our public discourse. But until we really challenge this rigged system that favors wealth, longevity and legacy, the public will be denied true choice in the voting booth and will be forced to pick between subtlety different shades of the same political establishment candidates.

Tonya and I are so thankful to all the people across the country and the Commonwealth who supported this campaign – who, like us, thought that in these trying times different perspectives and more urgent voices were needed in Washington, DC. We still believe that is needed. We still believe that we must not just focus on climate change but climate justice, not just on gun reform but gun violence prevention, on treating addiction as an illness and not a moral failure and treating healthcare as a human right. We still believe a new culture is needed in Washington, one that focuses on doing right rather than

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RELIGION

RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW



Dr. Atu White, Editor, serves as Pastor of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 33 Oak Street, Springfield, MA and as First Vice President of the United Baptist Convention of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. atuwhite@gmail.com

As we approach Thanksgiving 2019, this holiday, like so many others that we celebrate, has become so commercialized that we have forgotten the real reason and meaning of the celebration. It originated as a harvest festival celebrated by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World in October 1621. It began as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest, which included prayers of thanks and special thanksgiving religious services. Modern day “Thanksgiving” has retained the “feast” part of the original holiday but has almost lost the “giving thanks” aspect of the day. Granted, we do not have to go out and harvest grain, fruits, and vegetables, or slaughter animals for our Thanksgiving meal, but having the means to go

to the grocery store to purchase food is a reason to give thanks because so many people don’t. As a matter of fact, everyday should be “Thanksgiving,” a day of giving thanks for all the blessings God has given us.

We have become a society, a people, a world that thinks that we are entitled—entitled to wake up every morning, entitled to have food on our tables and a roof over our heads. I see so many people sit down to eat a meal and never bow their heads to give thanks. In fact, recently I saw something that I had not seen in a while. I saw some children sit down to eat and they bowed their heads to say grace before they ate. I thought to myself, someone is bringing those children up right. God deserves more thanks than we give Him; we should teach our children to thank Him as well. Perhaps when I was young, I did not think too much about giving God

Give Thanks

By Rev. E. Maxine Moore

thanks, but the older I get, the more I appreciate God’s blessings. Take a moment and look around you. Consider the words of this old song, “Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your blessings, see what God has done.”

As you gather around the Thanksgiving table with family and friends, don’t forget to “Give Thanks.” Heavenly Father, on this Thanksgiving Day, we bow our hearts

to You and pray this prayer: *“At this blessed feast, may rich and poor alike remember that we are called to serve one another and to walk in Your gracious light. With thankful hearts we praise You, our God, who like a loving parent denies us no good thing. In Jesus name, Amen.”* ■



Rev. E. Maxine Moore

LET’S CONNECT

“Thankful for Change”

By Beverly Guerrero-Porter



Beverly Guerrero-Porter

Ecclésiastes 3:1 states that “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” This verse came to mind as I was admiring the fall foliage while driving around the city. How majestic the array of hues that adorned the trees: pumpkin orange, apple red and plum colored leaves dancing wistfully as they were gliding toward the road below. It was a most serene sight.

Autumn is my favorite time of the year—not just because of cooler weather, Peppermint Mocha lattes and a good excuse to break out my favorite blanket and movies—but because it allows an opportunity for reflection, inspiration and redirection. It’s far enough in the year to have a proper assessment of the things that have been progressing and what has not. It also still allows a few months’ time to make adjustments in areas that can use improvement.

Like the literal transition of weather from summer to fall, there are seasons of change in our own

lives. Admittedly, I have not always been a fan of change. As a matter of fact, I am generally one who likes routine and consistency. It just makes sense in my world and allows for life to feel predictable and safe. Life, however, is anything but. Things can alter instantly. The very thought of that can trigger anxiety in one who prefers the monotonous and mundane.

Though the shifts we experience can be overwhelming and challenging at times, it is those very periods that can stretch one’s character, give deeper insight and broaden perspective. The ebb and flow of life carries us to distances that are more profound than we can handle initially; but transforms us into one who can expertly ride its waves. Renovation of oneself is never an easy or glamorous process, yet it produces splendid results if the work is allowed to complete its course.


The experiences we face, with all of their twists and turns, shape us into who we ultimately become: Strong, powerful, knowledgeable, accomplished, empathetic, humble, spiritual, beautiful—all things to be thankful for. ■




Family Church, Rev. Gail L. King, Senior Pastor, held a winter coat give away event recently.

Pastors, Ministers, Professors and Theologians, please submit your articles for the “Religious Point of View” to Rev. Dr. Atu White at: atuwhite@gmail.com

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Racism. A Way Forward

A perspective from two white males.

By John Davis and Paul Robbins

Race. Racism.

In the instant that you are reading those words, maybe half of readers have an immediate impulse to turn the page to find another article, or if reading this on your computer or mobile device there may be the urge to click or swipe, moving to another online item.

There are few words that evoke such a visceral reaction like those. Introduced into a conversation, there can be a palpable tension travelling up the spine. We have observed that most people try to avoid the topic. This is particularly true for white males. We know this from personal experience because we are both white males.

If religion or politics are conversation killers at a party, watch the reaction when race comes up. Toxic. Even though it remains America's most challenging social issue, we are loath to engage. At the same time, it casts a long shadow—from education to the economy to public safety to the way our media reports the news. It is like an invisible gas surrounding us—aggravating wounds old and new, with any promise of resolution seemingly forever elusive.

In this piece we will avoid definitions—which tend to generate a lot of heat rather than shed light—leaving that for social scientists and pundits. We won't even get into the now universal and scientific truth that there really aren't races at all—just variations within the species, and one variable, and science tells us a small one at that, being skin tone.

Our perspective is that at the heart of racism is a deeply held notion, never openly articulated, that people of white skin are inherently superior to those of brown or black skin. Roseanne Barr's infamous comment about "apes" offers testimony of that. White people sometimes hint at it when they say "my people were able to raise themselves by their bootstraps..." as if people of color don't possess

the same natural or inherent abilities. Both of us have heard some variation of this.

We learned in history, though this is not usually shared in history class, that at the very beginnings of our Republic the not-so-subtle notion of inherent superiority and inferiority was advanced. It was in the Federalist Papers, Federalist #54, the precursor to the Constitution, that assigned the human value of three-fifths to those in the Union with black skin and formerly slaves in determining a state's total population for legislative representation.

The Pioneer Valley is no different in struggling with this issue. It may not surprise every reader to learn that the University of Michigan Population Studies ranked the Springfield metro area number one in the country in Hispanic-White segregation.

So, why do two white males like us, with all the requisite privileges we have, care about this issue? As we look at the many instances of racial profiling in the news, like the arrest of two African Americans in a Philadelphia Starbucks for just being persons of color, we see a nation still reluctant to engage on the issue of race.

We look around at the real divide and the systems and institutions we value, and realize something needs to change. So we have been doing something about it. A little over five years ago, a small group of people in the Valley started to meet, including the two of us, to begin a dialogue about what we might be able to do, even in a small way, to advance the notion of racial equity in our region.

Inspired by a City2City Pioneer Valley trip to Grand Rapids where we discovered the Healing Racism Institute embedded in the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, we embarked on a journey that led to the formation of the Healing Racism Institute of Pioneer Valley.

Our rationale and that of our cohorts was to reverse racism one person at a time. No government program or initiative will be able to wave a wand



John Davis



Paul Robbins

John Davis is a principal at Ventry Industries LLC and a Trustee of The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation. Paul Robbins is principal and owner of Paul Robbins Associates Strategic Communications. Both are among the founders of the Healing Racism Institute of Pioneer Valley.

and eliminate racism, a condition that afflicts those who possess it and don't realize it and those on the receiving end. Racism holds down our economy and marginalizes those who could advance themselves and our nation if we could only eradicate it from our conscious and sub-conscious thinking.

The group behind the Healing Racism Institute of Pioneer Valley has been working collaboratively with others. In many ways, it is the hardest work any of us have ever done, but we can report progress.

So far, over 800 people have participated in our signature two-day Healing Racism program. Over 200 organizations from businesses, nonprofits, education, law enforcement and media have participated. Our program has most recently expanded in the Boston area.

While much of what is discussed and presented offers history and context about racism's roots and how it has become institutionalized, much of what we do is about changing people's hearts. Changing just one heart at a time is how, we believe, we can start the process of curing racism. It makes practical sense, too—making a company or organization better, and sending a message to its workers and leaders that there is no place for racism.

We are gratified that so many of our friends, colleagues, co-workers and associates have taken the brave step of immersing themselves in our two-day workshops. We are making progress in the Valley, but there is still a long way to go. ■

Steve Pemberton Ends Candidacy for the United States Senate

continued from page 25

being right, on waking up each day seeking to build up rather than break down, on looking to serve rather than stop.

We also still believe in the power of service and the idea that anything is possible in America. Our journey is evidence of that. That belief is why

we will spend the coming weeks thinking about how best we can serve, how my journey and my experience can help those too often forgotten and left behind in our society.

I believe I brought to this race a fighter heart's and a servant's spirit and a lifetime of unifying, building and serving. I still

believe we should have a government that reflects the diversity of experience in America and is filled with representatives who understand the challenges people face every day because they have lived them. And I will never stop believing that everyone in Massachusetts deserves a chance in the world." ■

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.

Someday, this world will be yours.

You and other kids like you will be in charge of ensuring that the water's clean, the air's breathable, the land is healthy, and people are safe. Yeah, you might think you're just a kid now but as you'll see in **"Kid Activists"** by Robin Stevenson, illustrated by Allison Steinfeld, every good change-maker had to start somewhere.

What do you do when you see something that you think is wrong or unfair? A lot of kids whine and do nothing else but if you're the kind of person who takes the issue to an adult and tries to change things, you're in good company; for much of history, everyday people have stood up for what they think is right.

Before that happened, though, every one of those people was a kid.

Take Dolores Fernandez, for instance.

Little Dolores was born in a tiny town in New Mexico, the granddaughter of immigrants. When she was a kid, her parents split but she kept in close touch with her father, who was a labor organizer and a politician. As a teenager, she noticed discrimination in her high school and she started paying attention to the world outside of school. These, and other injustices, spurred her to become an activist as an adult.

No doubt, you've heard about Rosa Parks and her refusal to move to a different seat on a bus

"Kid Activists"

By Robin Stevenson Illustrations by Allison Steinfeld
c.2019, Quirk Books \$13.95 / \$15.95 Canada 224 pages

Reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer

back in 1955. Of course, Mrs. Parks was a child once, growing up right in the middle of racism and discrimination and she naturally didn't understand it. But that was the way things were, until she got involved with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and she learned that with just one small, quiet action, change would come.

Helen Keller learned to communicate as a child and later inspired others with her social justice efforts. Six-year-old Ruby Bridges was instrumental in integrating schools in Louisiana. And Autumn Peltier *still* works to ensure that the world's water is safe to drink and use.

On the national stage, protests are nothing new. Your child has likely grown up with them on the nightly news, and has perhaps participated in a march or rally herself. In **"Kid Activists,"** author Robin Stevenson

shows children that small starts like theirs can make big change.

In addition to the relevance of the tales here – sixteen tales that show kids how activists were once just like them – this book offers a wide range of diversity, both economically and racially, in the profiles presented and in the names that will be familiar and new to the age group for which this book is intended. The stories also illustrate a wide variety of early influences and backgrounds, proving to kids that where they come from isn't important when fixing something that is.

Add artwork by Allison Stein-

feld and you've got a magnet that will attract young leaders and make them want to read. Give your 8-to-12-year-old **"Kid Activists"** today, and it could make a world of difference. ■

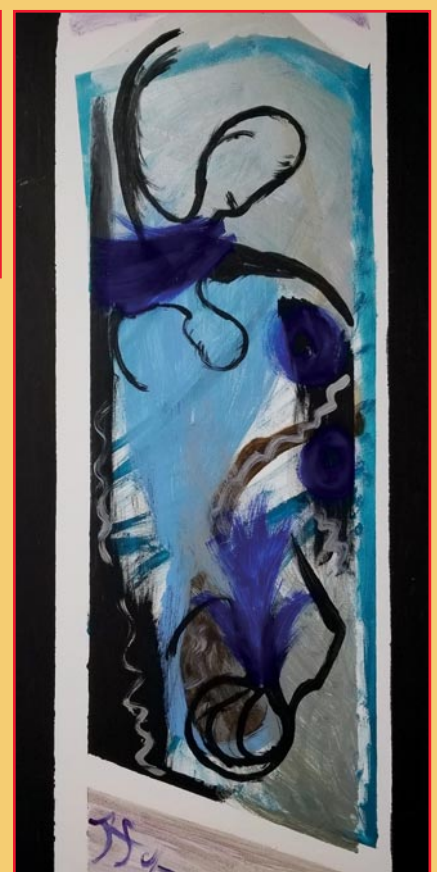


ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



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.

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THE ARTS

PEN & INK



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, 10 books including “Centos of Life”. 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

How Seniors Are Treated

By Juanita Torrence-Thompson

After his two week vacation in San Antonio, Texas ended, he came home from work with a memo. This memo went to ten senior employees. In essence, Thank you for your service, but you are no longer needed. Clear out your desk in two weeks.

You will get severance pay.

He told his boss, I’ve worked here 19 years. All right, you can stay five months and you will get eight weeks severance pay. Where is my health insurance? My wife and I need that.

OK, we’ll give you health insurance, but we’ll take away six weeks of your severance pay.

Thanks For Giving

By Renay Intisar Jihad



Renay Intisar Jihad

Shhh!
There are people praying.
Be quiet until they’re done.
As long as someone is praying,
there is hope for everyone.

Shhh!
People are praying.
Be as still as you can be.
Blank out pulsing screens.
Pause lively activity.

Appreciate those
reverencing Creator,
for when they are
bended in prayer,
there is mercy for everyone.
There is mercy everywhere.

Lest We Forget – November

Educator and Reformer
Booker T. Washington
Born April 5, 1856 (estimated)
Died November 14, 1915

Abolitionist Sojourner Truth
Born 1787
Died November 26, 1883,

Author and Poet Richard
Nathaniel Wright
Born September 4, 1908
Died November 28, 1960

Thanksgiving With A Friend

By Berdia M. Brown

There’s a brisk wind, and chill, on this November day.
I’ve noticed squirrels scurrying about, storing acorns and nuts away.
Last night I heard a flock of geese flying over to get away from the cold.
I’m thankful, and blessed, as I’m eighty-six years old.

There’s one thing about me, I try not to complain; just like anyone my age, I have my aches and pains.
Day by day, I thank the good Lord for being alive. My beloved wife, Bessie Mae, died in 1985.
When she died, it broke my heart.
For sixty years, we were never apart.

I have a nice lady friend. We attend the same church, True Vine.
I’ve known Annie Mae for nearly twelve years. I was by her side when her husband, Deacon Randolph died.
Annie and I are the best of friends. I don’t plan to marry again. I thank God he blessed me with a good friend.
Annie’s feelings are mutual; we both were married to our soul mates.
Annie and I love attending church, and we also have dinner dates.

We enjoy the company of each other so much, we take day trips.
I don’t want anything to mess up our friendship.
I’m here for her, and she’s here for me;



Berdia M. Brown

just as a true friendship ought to be.
Annie invited me over for Thanksgiving dinner, with her family, and I couldn’t say “no.”
I told her, “Sure I’ll go.”
The aroma of Thanksgiving dinner greeted me at the door, as Annie invited me in.
“This is Lee Otis Cleveland, he is my dearest friend.”

I felt so welcome amongst her family, some whom I’d never met, and yet;
Everything felt so welcoming and warm, as Annie led me to the kitchen table by my arm.
As we were seated around the dinner table with joined hands and bowed heads,
I could smell the aroma of Annie’s homemade rolls and bread.

Annie asked if I’d bless the meal.
God has blessed me with a true friend, who is so special, down-to-earth, and she is real.
I began by thanking God for blessing us to gather in His holy name, and the blessing of our Thanksgiving dinner, which has been prepared for our consumption. Lord, thank you for this family that’s gathered around this table to give thanks to you.
Lord, thank you for the gift of prayer.

May we always remember, not only to seek you when we’re in need, but seek you, Lord, at all times.
You have shown your love for us Lord, and made us more compassionate people.
Help us show the same love towards others who are going through hard times.
In your holy name, I pray. Amen

THE ARTS

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW



Yvonne Mendez is the Director of Education & Engagement at the UMass Fine Arts Center. She produces events for the Valley Jazz Network, and also works with the Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival.

It is no secret that the music industry has been dominated by men. On stage and off stage, men are front and center. Women have always had to prove their worth, being marginalized within the industry.

Except.... that women have always had talent, strength, and creativity that is of special worth in the development of music and society.

I can name some of the multitude of women who have made a measurable impact on music, starting with Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, Pearl Bailey, Aretha Franklin, Geri Allen, Miriam Makeba, Dianne Reeves all the way to Beyoncé, Rhianna, Stevie Nicks and Lady Gaga. Sheila Jordan became one of the only women to have her own recording with Blue Note Records. In her biography, *Jazz Child*, Sheila talks about her life in jazz. There were the male cliques, the jokes, the dismissive male attitude towards women, and the “locker-room/inner circle” talk in the music industry that included misogynistic jokes and tokenism of women.

Often women were pigeon-holed into being vocalists in the industry. And many ended up being background singers. The documentary *Twenty Feet from Stardom* by Malcolm Neville (currently on Netflix) shows the social and political issues for black women, relegated to being background singers, despite their true musical talent. There were many white musicians looking to enhance their music with the “soul music” sound gaining popularity in the 50s. Some of those musicians included Bruce Springsteen, Mick Jagger, Sting and others. They relied on black female singers to give them that edge. The documentary follows Tata Vega,

Women’s Roles in Music or...Women Can’t Play The Saxophone or The Drums!

By Yvonne Mendez



Terri Lyne Carrington (Photo by John Watson)

Darlene Love, Merry Clayton, Judith Hill, Lisa Fischer and others. These women shaped the sound of popular music as we know it today, without hardly any credit.

And even popular society added to this dilemma with ideas that men

can play any instrument, but women should play more “feminine” instruments like the flute, piano, violin or stick to being singers. A female drummer, saxophonist or bassist was unheard of! But at the early age of 14, Terri Lyne Carrington entered the mu-

sical stage as a protégé, playing and touring just like the big boys. Terri Lyne went on to earn a faculty appointment at Berklee and now spearheads a vibrant movement to nurture and support female instrumentalists. She also began the Jazz and Gender Justice Institute at Berklee. Carrington works with female artists in the studio and beyond including Esperanza Spalding, Geri Allen (now deceased), Dee Dee Bridgewater, Meshell Ndegeocello, Rhapsody and others. Instrumentalists like Tia Fuller, Melissa Aldana, Camille Thurman, Endea Owens and Grace Kelly are now making their mark in jazz music.

As well, there is a growing #MeToo movement in the music industry. Often women are unaware of their rights and the actual nature of discrimination. The movement includes support and knowledge in that regard.

“Inspired in the #MeToo movement, several jazz female musicians from around the world founded “We Have Voice” against sexual violence and gender discrimination in music. It’s quite interesting that the first article in their [manifesto online](#) states their “commitment to creating a culture of equity in our professional world.” Their website also features a definition of sexual harassment, useful information on assault, consent and even tips for bystanders.” [From <https://theconversation.com/women-jazz-musicians-are-using-metoo-and-taking-a-stand-against-sexism-89663>

The #MeToo movement is changing the role women play in all professional fields, showing that women do matter and are capable of great things. Recognize and support the role of women in all aspects of music. ■

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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.

Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis, Jr. and Naughty By Nature at The Big E

By Moyah Smith



Billy Davis, Jr. and Marilyn McCoo

I was on pins and needles knowing I was going to see one of my childhood idols. I thought about why Marilyn McCoo always brought me such warm and fuzzy feelings when I was a little girl. It could have simply been that she was a beautifully stunning Black woman who was highly revered by many, especially in a time when Black folks were not always shown in the best light on television.

The late 60s and 70s was when the group, The 5th Dimension, were putting out hit record after hit record— songs such as *Up, Up and Away*, *Stoned Soul Picnic*, *You Don't Have to Be a Star*, *Last Night (I Didn't Get to Sleep at All)*, and their biggest hit, *Aquarius/Let the Sunshine In*. To be honest, I believe

McCoo has always made me think of my mother, who passed away in the late 60s. When The 5th Dimension were on shows like Ed Sullivan, Soul Train or American Bandstand, you

could not pull me away from the television set. I was completely mesmerized by Marilyn McCoo's beauty.

Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis, Jr., who separated from five-

member group in the early 80s, are celebrating 50 years of marriage this year. When they performed at the Big E stage in September, they sang a good part of their repertoire and it seemed that they brought all 50 years of love to the stage with them in their performance. There was lots of cute bantering back and forth between the two. Marilyn sang her solo from the group's popular break-up song, *One Less Bell to Answer*. Billy teased her when he came back on stage, telling her not to worry because he "ain't going nowhere."

After an afternoon of smooth sounds from the 70s, later that evening I met my daughter to enjoy some old school Hip Hop. On that same Court of Honor Stage at The Big E, there was a completely differ-

continues to page 33



Smokey Robinson

Smokey Robinson. The legend. Iconic for his smooth vocals, green eyes and utter sexiness. At the ripe, young age of 79, not one ounce of any of those traits has

waned. Still sexy and still smooth as silk. Smokey crooned to the audience with a full 90-minute performance. No break; no intermission.

Robinson is known for being instrumental in the start-up of the Motown record label when he was around 19 or 20 years old, with songwriter Barry Gordy. Smokey's hit record-making career began in the 60s with his singing group, The Miracles, as well as a range of chart-toppers that he wrote for groups like the Temptations, Diana Ross & The Supremes, and many more.

His appearance at Symphony Hall was sponsored by MGM Springfield. Backed by a six-piece band and three back-up singers, he brought along a plethora of songs to perform.

Smokey Robinson. The Legend

By Moyah Smith

He began a 13-song set with his 1981 ballad *Being With You*, followed by a 1969 Smokey Robinson & The Miracles dance tune, *I Second That Emotion*. The show continued as he covered three decades of hits, including ballads like *Quiet Storm* ('75) and *Ooo Baby Baby* ('69). The latter, by the way, brought the audience to a standing ovation. He sang smooth dance melodies like *Tears of A Clown* ('70), *Just To See Her* ('87), and *Tracks of My Tears* ('69) with an energy level that would make you doubt his age.

It was a great pleasure to hear the many Motown memories he had working with the likes of Stevie Wonder and many others. He performed a medley of songs that he co-wrote for

the Temptations, including *The Way You Do The Things You Do*, *Get Ready* and *My Girl*.

Smokey revealed that he has studied the Spanish language for the past seven years and is working on an upcoming EP that will be completely in Spanish. He gave us a little taste with his new single, *La Mirada* (The Look). It was delicious, so I encourage you keep an eye out for the upcoming project.

Robinson closed the show perfectly with his 1979 hit *Cruisin* as he encouraged crowd participation, pitting the two sides of the Symphony Hall audience members against each other. What a night to remember! ■

SEEN AT THE BIG E



ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW

Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis, Jr. and Naughty By Nature at The Big E

continued from page 32

ent vibe that night. The 90s Rap group, Naughty By Nature, straight out of East Orange, New Jersey, had the crowd completely hyped with songs like *O.P.P.*, *Feel Me Flow* and *Hip Hop Hooray*. Springfield’s DJ Anomaly from Vision Entertainment had the crowd on fire before group members Treach and Vin Rock arrived to the stage with their own DJ Kay Gee.

We hit two ends of the musical spectrum on that day. It was pretty fantastic! Make sure to check out www.thebige.com next year for the entertainment lineup. Most shows are free and quality acts. ■

COMMUNITY

GOOD NEWS - NOVEMBER 2019

Make Sure You Vote on Tuesday, November 5th!!!

By Jay Griffin



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

I am ashamed of myself. I didn't vote in this year's primary for a number of reasons. Primarily, I did not do the planning and preparation needed to take advantage of voting ahead of time. I will not make this mistake again. I ran through the newspaper to get the results of the vote. I was mainly concerned about the Ward 4 ballot. I would normally go to the Mason Square library sometime in the morning and vote. I would ask the clerk at the desk how the voting was going. I would get the same response—light, light, light. I would be very disappointed. Now, I'm disappointed in myself.

I want to utilize this space in *POV* to urge everyone to vote, not just vote but get on the phone and call others to encourage them to vote. I want the Ward 4 voters to vote because we fought long and hard for ward representation in the ward. We must not waste this effort. Make your decision known. Ward 4 has two candidates. Take your time and decide on Malo Brown or Jynai McDonald. I consider both of them good candidates.



I can only plead with you to **VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!** Let's get the ball rolling. Pick up the phone and call others and get them to vote also, especially your family members and friends! Give those who need it a ride to the polls. We fought long and hard for the right to vote. I won't be ashamed again!

November 5th Final Election Candidates

Mayor

Domenic J. Sarno
Yolanda Cancel

City Council At Large

Justin J. Hurst
Jesse Lederman
Kateri B. Walsh
Tracye L. Whitfield
LaMar Cook
Sean Curran
Johnnie Ray McKnight
Kelli P Moriarty-Finn
Christopher J. Pohner
Israel Rivera

City Council Ward 4

Malo L. Brown
Jynai S. McDonald

City Council Ward 5

Marcus J. Williams
Edward Green

City Council Ward 6

Victor G. Davila
Timothy Ryan

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TO ALL!**

LIVING

GOT H.E.R.S.

Take the Doubt Out of Faith

By Latoya Bosworth, PhD



Dr. Latoya Bosworth
dubbed herself
Brenda's Child in
honor of her late
mother. She is an edu-
cator, author, speaker,
and self-esteem expert.
www.brendaschild.com

Are you practicing fake faith? Do you pray about it? Let go and let God, but then find yourself worried about things you ultimately have no control over? Up late, tossing and turning with anxiety? Do you use words like *manifest* and *law of attraction*, but don't take calculated risks?

Then it may be time to re-examine your faith. This doesn't mean you have to change your religion or stop practicing; it just means it's time to shift your thought patterns. Mahatma Gandhi said, "Faith is not something to grasp, it is a state to grow into." This means you have to constantly work at surrendering to process and outcomes. It is probably one of the hardest things to do because we often become skeptical due to our past experiences. It's difficult to believe that you can have the life you've always dreamed of, that everything will work out perfectly if you ever operated from a place of lack: of food, security, love, safety, money. However, it is possible, and eliminating the lingering, nagging doubt is the first step.

- 1. Acknowledge it and reaffirm it.** Recognize and label those feelings. Is it doubt, fear, anxiety? Then ask yourself why you feel the way you do? Is it a response to the past, to the opinions of others? This will determine the self-talk you need to reaffirm your faith.
- 2. Reaffirm your faith or trust in the universe with *Just Because* statements.**

Just because X (a negative event) happened, doesn't mean it will happen again.

Just because people say (insert negative remark), doesn't mean I have to own this as my truth.

Just because I'm scared, doesn't mean I can't be brave.

Just because no one has ever accomplished this, doesn't mean I can't be the first.

- 3. Create an affirming environment.** Surround yourself with people who are positive and supportive, people who will fuel your faith instead of extinguishing it. Secondly, any space that is yours—office, car, bedroom, etc. should be shrouded in affirmation. Quotes, colors, and sounds that remind you anything is possible and that you are supported by your angels, ancestors, and God /Allah/the Universe. What is the ring tone on your phone? When you wake up in the morning, what is the first thing you see? When you see it, hear, or speak it every waking moment, you will be more likely to believe it.

- 4. Faith Followed by Action Yields Results.** If you say you believe or that you are "speaking it into existence," the next step is to act. Whether you are religious or not, the laws of motion are real. If you move, so too will the universe. This may mean that you begin behaving as if whatever it is you are asking for has already happened, or it could mean you taking one step towards what you want. Demonstrate your faith with a small leap and watch the magic/miracle happen. ■

COMMUNITY

NABVETS Corner

Changes at NABVETS Springfield Chapter —102

By Milton Jones, Member

Recently, our Office Manager left our employ for greener pastures. Over the past three months, we have had several members volunteer to spend some time in the office to fill in and, at the same time, we have embarked upon a hiring process targeting two office personnel—one to lead our outreach efforts and one to provide clerical support services. Commander Tony Bass and Vice Commander Sam Smith led this effort with support from the membership, as needed. The results of our hiring process are as follows:

Wanda L. Givens



We have hired Wanda as our Outreach Coordinator. She will be working closely with Sam Smith and Gene Brice to develop relationships with other Veteran Service Organizations and the community in general to improve access to needy veterans and their families, in-

crease our ability to serve veterans and their families, and to increase membership in NABVETS, Springfield Chapter #102, as well as provide support for the activities of NABVETS.

Wanda is a Springfield native who has strong roots in community activism. She worked for many of the Human Services organizations in the Springfield area, private and city/state funded. She directed the welfare to work program and she was director of the Mason Square health task force, just to mention a few of her accomplishments. She is also an Entrepreneur who runs a small business and, in her spare time, directs, acts and helps to write plays.

Karen A. Irizarry



Karen was recently hired as our Office Support Personnel to work with Commander Tony Bass to greet veterans and others who come into the office, help maintain and improve paperwork flow

systems, and provide general clerical support including computer work, filing, light book-keeping, etc.

Karen is from California and most recently worked as a Program Specialist for a pharmaceutical company helping people who could not afford their medications. Having a strong background in Office Management/Support, she moved from the West coast to the East coast where she continued to work in pharmaceutical manufacturing and with non-profits. She is “good with people” and is able to connect with them and build rapport.

Karen is a veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from 2007 – 2012. During her service, she drove small boats, destroyers and battleships. She said she really enjoyed the experience, except driving at night was a real challenge.

The NABVETS Springfield Chapter membership wants to welcome Wanda and Karen and look forward to them utilizing their skills, abilities and contacts to help the Chapter continue to grow. ■



Milton Jones



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www.wtccfm.org

THE SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER OF NABVETS



The Springfield Chapter of NABVETS, local veterans organizations, dignitaries and community partners gathered on October 26th to commemorate the nation's oldest Vietnam War Memorial and pay tribute to the five men killed in action in Vietnam between 1967-1968 and give recognition to their surviving families. These men are: Specialist Four Norman C. Farris, Private Gus Stovall, Jr., Lance Corporal David L. Owens, Staff Sergeant James C. Starnes and Specialist Four Ronald C. Hurst.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR — NOVEMBER 2019



*Jynai McDonald,
POV Community
Calendar Editor
Please submit your events
with attn: Jynai in the
subject line to
info@afampov.com*

November 1 (Friday)

Delta Sigma Theta Red Carpet Movie Event: Harriet

Where: Cinemark West Springfield
15 864 Riverdale St.,
W. Spfld., MA

When: 6:30PM

info: [www.arisespringfield.org/
communityresourceboard](http://www.arisespringfield.org/communityresourceboard)

November 2 (Saturday)

ARISE and Dance for Climate Justice: Benefit for ARISE for Social Justice

Where: Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall
18 Meadow St., Florence, MA

When: 7:30PM–10:30PM

**Cash bar & complimentary
snacks available*

info: [www.arisespringfield.org/
communityresourceboard](http://www.arisespringfield.org/communityresourceboard)

November 2 (Saturday)

First Time Homebuyers Workshop

Where: Springfield College
Locklin Hall Rm 331
263 Alden St., Spfld., MA

When: 9AM–5PM

info: 413-739-4737 ext. 100 or
www.springfieldnhs.org

November 2 (Saturday)

Gardening the Community's Fall Harvest Celebration

Where: Trinity Church
361 Sumner Ave., Spfld., MA

When: 4PM–6PM

Tickets: (advance) \$6/adult, \$3/child
(at door) \$9/adult, \$5/child

info: 413-693-5340 x5 or
www.gtcspringfield.org

November 2 (Saturday)

2nd Annual Harvest Horse Fundraiser: Grown Folks Prom

Where: Bond Ballroom
338 Asylum St., Hartford, CT

When: 7PM–11PM

Tickets: \$65/pp, \$120/couple

info: www.ebonyhorsewomen.us

November 3 (Sunday)

Double Dose of Art

Springfield Central Cultural District

Where: Springfield City Library

220 State St., Spfld., MA

When: 2PM–4PM — **FREE**

November 5 (Tuesday)

General Election Day

Where: Various Polling Locations
Springfield, MA

When: 7AM–8PM

info: 413-787-6190

November 6 (Wednesday)

Talkin' Turkey Table Top

Unique opportunity for businesses to
promote/market to decision makers

Where: Twin Hills Country Club
700 Wolf Swamp Rd.,
Longmeadow, MA

When: 3PM–7PM — **FREE**

info: 413-224-2444 or
<http://ERC5.com>

November 7 (Thursday)

A Taste of Hope Hartford

Wine & food tasting

Where: The Society Room of Hartford
31 Pratt St., Hartford, CT

When: 6PM–9:30PM

info: www.atasteofhopehartford.org

November 9 (Saturday)

PBS KIDS Fan Day

Where: Naismith Memorial
Basketball Hall of Fame
1000 Hall of Fame Ave,
Springfield, MA

When: 10AM–3PM

Tickets: \$10/adult, \$5/youth,
FREE/under 12 months

info: 413-735-6605 or
wgby.org/fanday/tickets

November 9 (Saturday)

Werk 2019 Fashion Show

Hosted By: Parris Nichols

Where: Panache Ballroom
827 State St., Spfld., MA

When: 4PM

info: 845-350-2675 or
www.trueheartent.com

November 14 (Thursday)

Health Careers Exploration Night

Where: Springfield Technical
Community College
1 Armory St., Spfld., MA

When: 10AM–3PM

Tickets: \$10/adult, \$5/youth,
FREE/under 12 months

info: 413-735-6605 or
wgby.org/fanday/tickets

November 16 (Saturday)

40th Birthday Celebration Honoring Dr. Atu White

Dinner & Live Band

Where: Chez Josef
176 Shoemaker Lane
Agawam, MA

When: 6PM–11PM

Tickets: \$80/adults, \$45/child

info: 413-796-1613 or
413-785-5664

November 16 (Saturday)

Community Dental Day STCC to offer FREE service

Where: Springfield Technical
Community College, Bldg. 20
1 Armory St., Spfld., MA

When: 9AM–4PM — **FREE *First
come first serve basis**

info: 413-755-4900

November 16 (Saturday)

Holiday Warm Up Day Party

Where: Smokey Joe's Cigar Lounge
395 Dwight St., Spfld., MA

When: 2PM–7PM

**Requesting non-perishable
food donations*

Tickets: \$10/advance, \$15/at door

November 16 (Saturday)

2019 HBCU College Fair Bus Trip & College Readiness Workshop

Where: MLKFS Community Center
3 Rutland St., Spfld., MA

When: 6:30AM Depart s—**Tickets:** \$40

info: 413-746-3655 ext. 140

November 17 (Sunday)

Chili Cook-Off Fundraiser Hosted by: Hampden County Bar Foundation & The Dante Club

Where: The Dante Club
1198 Memorial Ave.,
West Spfld., MA

When: 12PM–3PM

\$25/Chili registration

info: www.hcbar.org or
413-732-4660

November 17 (Sunday)

Boys & Girls Club Family Center Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Where: 100 Acorn St., Spfld., MA

info: 413-739-4743

November 20 (Wednesday)

Forward Fifty Gala

Springfield School Volunteers Cele-
brates 50 Years

Where: MGM Springfield
One MGM Way, Spfld., MA

When: 5:30PM–8PM

Tickets: \$50/general admission,
\$500/table of 10

info: ssvgoldengala.eventbrite.com

Mondays

Women & Girls Open Gym

Where: South End Community Center
99 Marble St., Spfld., MA

When: 6:30PM–8:30PM — \$1 fee

info: 413-788-6173

Tuesdays

Adult Basic Education (GED/HiSET Classes)

Where: Training Resources of America
32-34 Hampden St., Grd level
Spfld., MA

When: 11AM — **FREE**

info: 413-732-2223 or
jmcdonald@tra-inc.org

Tuesdays

Mason Square C3

Community Engagement Initiative

Working Together for a Safer Community

Where: Mason Square Branch Library
765 State St., Spfld., MA

When: 11AM — **FREE**

info: 413-263-6853

Wednesdays

Playgroup

Ages birth - 5 years old
(siblings welcome)

Where: Mason Square Branch Library
765 State St., Springfield, MA

When: 10:30AM–11:30AM — **FREE**

info: 413-263-6853

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Co-Ed Adult Kickball League

Where: South End Community Center
99 Marble St., Spfld., MA
\$100/team, \$15/individual

info: 413-788-6173 ask for Dion

Saturdays & Sundays

Basketball Weekend Skills Development

Where: South End Community Center
99 Marble St., Springfield, MA

When: ages 5-8 9AM-10:30AM
ages 9-11 11AM–12:30PM

info: 413-732-2223

Introductory Swahili

Where: Boys & Girls Club Family
Center
100 Acorn St., Spfld., MA

When: 9AM

info: 413-739-4743

SPECIAL TO POINT OF VIEW

“I BELIEVE in YOU!”

continued from page 19

I won't mention his name, but he calls us “Sons of Bitches” for daring to say we don't like you shooting and killing our men, women and children, even in our homes!

This is nothing new. These so-called founding fathers—they were founding fathers all right—they found them some African women and raped them. (Where do you think the name BACHMAN came from!)

WE made cotton king. WE laid the railroads west. WE built the White House. In the whaling industry, we were behind all the perfumes and colognes the rich folk wear. WE saved this country in war. Ask the Tuskegee Airmen, who pursued excellence while our people were being lynched all around them. I could go on.

When we stood up against the rapes and other evil activity, they lynched us. There are mass graves of ours all over this country. Our elders can tell you much, if we just sit down and talk with them. Today, they kill you in your own home.

When we stand up for right, we're told to “Go Back Where You Came From,” to your “Shithole Countries.” Imagine that!

Let me tell you this—Don't ever be ashamed of where we came from—Africa. They tell you Africa is a “Dark Continent.” If that is true, why are they still, today, stealing billions of dollars in Africa natural resources.

Know and believe this—God did not make a mistake in creating us. If you just open up one book, “Great Men of Color,” you will learn about all the great kingdoms of Africa.

They make jokes about Timbuktu, but Timbuktu was the center of commerce for the entire world, until some jealous Europeans came and used their fire power to rape, kill and underdevelop the continent.

Our women were walking about in silk while Europeans were killing animals and putting their bloody dry skins on the=ir behinds.

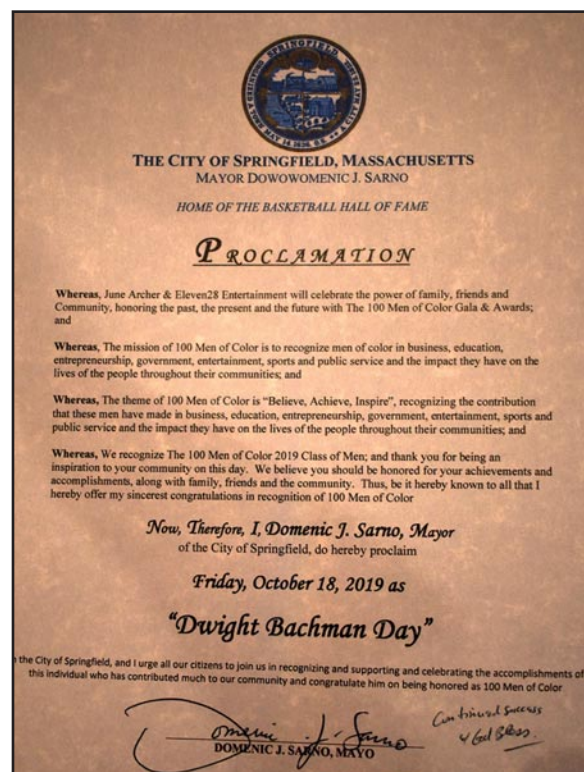
The movie Black Panther has inspired a new “Wakanda Forever” movement. We're slowly getting back on track. Three black women set world records just this past weekend.

But we also need to excel in the new technologies that already are hiring right now, excluding us—Augmented Reality, Robotics—and become the new generation of inventors. Be the new George Washington Carver. Be the new Madame C.J. Walker!

If we don't connect our kids to the new tech-



100 Men of Color Western Massachusetts honorees L to R: Previous recipient Tony Pettaway, Ronald X. Johnson, Billy Thomas McBride, President and CEO of ELEVEN28 ENTERTAINMENT June Archer, Soloe M. Dennis, Domingo Sanbula, and previous recipient Joe Young.



nologies, we will be the new slaves of the 21st century.

The ugliness in the air today is stressful. Dr. King said it well, “We've got some difficult days ahead.” A young Black man is probably feeling like, “Sometimes, I Feel Like a Fatherless Child.”

But if we remember to trust God, we'll be all right. We'll have peace of mind. He said, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” All we have to do is BELIEVE Him. For me, If God said it, that settles it.

I'm old school. Tonight's celebration of 100 Men of Color reminds me of some old Negro spirituals—“We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder,” “He's Got the Whole World in His Hands,” “Let My People Go!,” “This Little Light of Mine,” “Don't You Let Nobody Turn You Around,” and “Oh Happy Day.”

If we learn our history—WAKANDA FOREVER! But if we want to make it to Heaven, we must put our trust in God, and study His Word to discover our purpose and destiny in life, so we can truly do His will for our lives with passion. We can Bridge the Village in our community. We can take back our community and create a much stronger and more positive environment for our young people.

If we do this in honor of God, then our living will not be in vain.” THIS is a story we can GLADLY share with our young people. I'm old school. I say, let's “Go Tell It on the Mountain!”

Thank you all, and God bless each and every family represented here tonight!” ■

CONGRATULATIONS CORNER



Roy Goodman poses with Mayor Sarno and members of his family after the announcement of his promotion to be the 311 Director for the City of Springfield.



From L to R at Such's album release party are WTCC staff Vanessa Lyons and Moyah Smith, Smokey Joe's co-owner Toni Hendrix, The Vocalist Such, Smokey Joe's co-owner Joe Hendrix, and Curt T from WTCC.

The Reopening of Pahmusa Gallery



The Honorable Tina Page, Superior Court Judge (Retired), spoke about her career path at Western New England University School of Law at their Color of Law Roundtable Discussion.



Captain Rupert Daniel (center) poses with Mayor Domenic Sarno and Springfield Police Commissioner Cheryl Clapprood after being promoted to Deputy Chief effective Sunday, October 13, 2019. He is the first black Deputy Chief in Springfield, MA.

The Forgotten Spirit – The Musical

By Wanda Givens

JELUPA Productions is back to give you another stellar performance, only this time its going to be bigger and better than anything you've seen. Rumor has it that it just might be historical. This Thanksgiving weekend the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Presbyterian Church, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Terrlyn Curry Avery, in collaboration with JELUPA Productions, will bring you a play that is bound to be talked about for months to come and sought-after year after year. The play is called "The Forgotten Spirit – The Musical."

What makes this play so significant is that it comes from a book called "The Forgotten Spirit," written by Evie Rhodes, a note-worthy author in the



African American Literary world and author of seven books. Ms. Rhodes has been recognized by the African American Academy of Arts and Letters. The "Forgotten Spirit" started as an article featured in *Today's Black Woman* which noted her writing as "undefined in contemporary times." It is the first African American Christmas story in the country based on the Gospels of Jesus Christ.

But the magic doesn't stop there. L'Kuicha (Leslie) Parks, the Executive Artistic Director of JELUPA Productions, Inc., has taken

this masterpiece and turned it into a musical that defies description. Ms. Parks has been bringing us quality productions through JELUPA for years. The works she chooses to produce are always culturally and socially relevant. She is known for taking everyday people (like myself) and turning them into local stars! The list of individuals in Springfield who have been bitten by the acting bug is long, in large part, due to her commitment to the arts and to her community. As is the case with "The Forgotten Spirit – The Musical," Ms. Parks has brought even more magic than usual to this production.

The Musical Director for "Forgotten" is none other than one of our own, very well-known musicians, Mr. Marcus Pitts. He'll be providing us with some original pieces combined with well-known traditional gospel and Christmas tunes. Then there's the dancing, choreographed by yet another Springfield native, Ms. Tracey Thomas. She'll be lending her expertise to the Spirits in the play, who'll be dancing around you.

"The Forgotten Spirit, The Musical" is a Christmas story you don't want

to miss. It's the perfect family outing for the Thanksgiving weekend. Performances will be held at American International College in the Karen Sprague Performing Arts Center Friday, November 29 at 7:30pm and Saturday, November 30 at 7:30pm with a VIP reception at 5:30pm on Saturday, where you can meet the cast and crew. Tickets are on sale through Eventbrite, at Erika's Hall of Fame Kitchen, MLK Church and Olive Tree Book Store. Group sales are available.

For more information contact Wanda Givens @ 413 209-2728 or L'Kuicha Parks @ 413 478-8573. This event is supported in part by the Springfield Cultural Council.

Starring: Londyn Williams
Director: L'Kuicha Parks
Musical Director: Marcus N. Pitts, III
Novel by Evie Rhodes
Musical Adaptation: L'Kuicha Parks
Set Design: Craig Milne



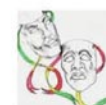
SAVE the DATES!
Nov. 28th, 29th, and
Dec. 1, 2019

Presented by
JELUPA Productions, Inc. and the
Women of Martin Luther King, Jr.
Community Presbyterian Church.

MUSICAL
 ADAPTATION

The musical adaptation of *The Forgotten Spirit, A Christmas Tale* is a family experience you won't want to miss. The book, by Evie Rhodes, is an African American interpretation of the age-old story of the miracle of Christmas and this theatrical performance will mark the first of its kind.

Adapted and directed by L'Kuicha Parks, Executive and Creative Director of JELUPA, *The Forgotten Spirit, the Musical* will feature local actors, artists and musicians with original sound tracks. **For more information contact L'Kuicha Parks @ 413.478.8573, Delphine Harris @ 413.231.7779 or Wanda Givens @ wanlorgiv@gmail.com.**



JELUPA Productions, Inc.



This program is supported in part by a grant from the Springfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.