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Morgan Associate Professor, Coordinator of Theatre Arts nominated for two distinguished awards



By Dr. Brenda Bowe Johnson

Dr. Shirley Basfield Dunlap of Morgan State University (MSU) was inducted into The National Theatre Conference at the historic Gramercy Park Mansion The Players, a private social club founded in New York City by the noted 19th-century Shakespearean actor Edwin Booth, recently.

Associate Professor and Coordinator of Theatre Arts in the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Morgan, Dr. Dunlap was nominated by Black Theatre pioneer Woodie King, Jr. and Baltimore's Chesapeake Shakespeare Company's Artistic Director Ian Gallanar.

The New York Theatre Conference, a professional society founded in 1925, is made up of distinguished directors, playwrights and theatre scholars from the American Theatre community. Its purpose includes exploring ways of best serving the interests of the American Theatre, and to initiate, encourage and support projects of value and significance with a view to strengthening and broadening the influence of theatre as well as to connect, to support and to advocate for the American Theatre.

Continued on page 6

Dr. Shirley Basfield Dunlap
Courtesy Photo

Tips for keeping your busy, adventurous family safe

(Family Features) Families are seemingly always on the go. From soccer games and school trips to excursions with friends and vacations with the family, people are constantly on the move, exploring new places and experiencing new things.

In fact, a study by Sfera Guardian shows that kids today are using public transportation, going on field trips and taking long-distance road trips at much younger ages compared to 30 years ago. As exciting as these opportunities can be, it's important to make sure families—and kids—stay safe at home and on the go.

Around The House:

Know your neighbors— Whether you live in an apartment building, cul-de-sac or the countryside, make it a point to get to know your neighbors. Building these relationships isn't only neighborly, but can help keep you safe. Not only can you have a stronger community of people to lean on for small crises, like borrowing forgotten ingredients, and larger emergencies, such as weather-related disasters, but you'll also have a better understanding of your surroundings.

Help in an instant— While security systems deliver some peace of mind, they're not always fool-proof, and they also aren't transferable to the office, school or your summer getaway. Always on and always available, an app such as Sfera Guardian can help keep you and your family safe, no matter where you



are. By just triple-tapping your phone, even while it's in your pocket, the app connects you to a live emergency manager who can provide the help you need.

Accessibility— While baby-proofing starts in your children's earliest years, limiting their access to certain areas or items is important. When you have a young child, locks on cabinets and gates across steps may be your focus when it comes to home safety. As kids get older, ensure they do not have unsupervised access to dangerous items like cleaning supplies, prescription medicine or kitchen knives.

Fire safety— Take time to ensure your home is properly equipped in case of fire. Check that you have working fire extinguishers and that windows and fire escapes are not blocked. Be sure everyone in your family knows the plan in case of a fire or similar emergency at home.

Away from Home:

Tools to take on the road— In the past, families brought the essentials with them when on the go – a first aid kit, snacks and water bottles. Now, in addition to the basics, make sure you add modern essentials to your packing list, whether you're going on a day trip or a long vacation. Carry a portable phone charger in your bag or in your car to ensure you can always connect to family, call for help if needed or just use your phone's flashlight in case of a blackout.

Help on-the-go— Today, virtually everything is available at your finger-

Photo Credit: Family Features

tips, right through a smartphone. Now, safety is that accessible, too. Apps, like Sfera Guardian, can connect you to live experts who can help you in virtually any kind of situation. For example, if you've been in an accident, the app can detect you need help and send local responders even if you can't speak. Learn more at sfara.com.

Stranger danger— When in public, be hyper-aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Talk with your kids about how they should respond if they are approached by a stranger. If you'll be at a crowded location where you may become separated, use your phone to take a photo of your child so you have a current photo and clothing description ready if the unthinkable happens.

Volunteers needed at Baltimore VA Medical Center

If you're looking for way to serve Veterans, make a real difference in their lives and also make new friends, the Baltimore VA Medical Center needs volunteers to serve as patient escorts— transporting patients to various locations within the medical center, including the main lobby and breezeway, the parking garage and to University of Maryland Medical Center, as needed. This is an important service to help clinicians by getting patients where they need to go. Escorts must be able to push wheelchairs, stretchers, beds, and other transporting devices in order to deliver patients to the requested areas. Escorts must be able to make quick decisions and be open to asking for assistance when needed. They also assist visitors in finding their destination within the medical center and present a cheerful, friendly attitude toward patients, staff, visitors and members of the public. Escorts must undergo training and a background check, and be able to maintain patient confidentiality at all times. Volunteers who are escorts serve weekdays in the medical center— Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.. and may choose their own days and times. If this interests you, call Amanda Tuwalski at 410-605-7100.

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Do we take better care of our cars than our teeth?

News & Experts— When you buy a new car, you get an owner's manual that tells you when to get the oil changed, how much air to put in the tires, and when to get the brakes repaired, among other important details about routine maintenance.

When it comes to our teeth, though, we aren't always as conscientious about following maintenance schedules— and our oral health suffers as a result.

"Every child and most adults should be given an operator's manual for dental care," said Dr. Ami Barakat, a dentist and author of *Perfecting Smiles, Changing Lives* (www.villanovadental.com). "Too many people have no idea how to maintain good dental health."

It makes a significant difference when they do, he says. For example, parents who have a history of good dental care usually pass that knowledge on to their children. But unfortunately, according to Dr. Barakat, parents with little or no knowledge of the proper way to care for their teeth and gums don't have good habits to pass on— so the cycle repeats generation after generation.

If there were an owner's manual for dental care, here are a few things Dr. Barakat believes it should include:

- Basic routine maintenance. Everybody has heard about brushing and flossing, but not enough people actually floss or know the proper way to do it. The four most common flossing mistakes are flossing too often, moving too quickly, missing both sides of the tooth and quitting at the sign of bleeding gums.

- It's not just the mouth. Too many people think dentists worry only about cavities and the smile. In reality, the mouth can be linked to back injuries,



neck injuries, headaches and a host of other issues.

- Easy fixes. Just as keeping tires properly inflated is an easy fix that will prevent big problems, dentists have a few of those too. Easy, quick and comparatively cheap fixes are available for chipped teeth, cavities, sensitive teeth care and gingivitis.

- How prevention is cheaper than correction. Good dental health is frequently a pocketbook issue. A comprehensive and frank discussion with your dentist about what your dental-health-insurance coverage is, what you can afford and what you cannot, will enable you to plan for your future.

"We are doing a poor job of educating the general public about good dental health and what dentists can do to improve dental health," Dr. Barakat says. "People need to understand that preventative care works just as well in dentistry as it does in automobile care."

Dr. Ami Barakat, author of "Perfecting Smiles, Changing Lives" is a general dentist who has trained extensively in orthodontics. He has received several prestigious awards in recognition of his talent, achievements and passion for dentistry. For more information, visit: www.villanovadental.com.

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Doctors' critical role in making the diabetes heart connection

By Dr. Omar M. Lattouf

One in 10 Americans lives with type 2 diabetes. Among many communities, diabetes is downplayed as "having a little sugar" and, with long family histories with the disease, dismissed as an inevitability.

The disease is far more dangerous than most realize. Diabetes doesn't merely put patients at risk of shock, limb amputation, and obesity. Patients with diabetes are up to four times more likely to die of heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States, than their non-diabetic peers.

Many people who have had diabetes for years unfortunately learn of the risks of heart disease and stroke only after having an attack. We must do more to raise patients' awareness of the connection between these deadly ailments and empower them to lessen their risks. Right now, two in three people with diabetes don't realize that heart disease is their most probable cause of death.

If more people knew about the risks, they could take preventative action. Ninety-nine percent of individuals with diabetes report that such knowledge would lead them to seek remedies.

Type 2 diabetes prevents the body from efficiently producing insulin, a hormone that regulates the amount of sugar in the blood. As a result, patients' blood sugar levels can swing wildly.

Elevated blood sugar levels damage blood vessels over time, stiffening them and degrading the elasticity necessary for efficient circulation. That's a deadly recipe for heart attacks.

Further, African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians have a 50 to 100 percent higher burden of illness and death from diabetes than white Americans. This higher diabetes rate could help explain why these populations are notably more likely to die of heart disease.

Many people with diabetes aren't doing enough to prevent heart disease. About half of adults with diabetes do not meet recommended blood sugar, blood pressure, or LDL cholesterol levels. Given the knowledge and tools we have to address these risk factors, the cardiovascular toll of diabetes should be decreasing. Instead it's on the rise.

Part of the challenge is that even physicians aren't fully informed about the connection between diabetes and heart disease. There are "educational gaps in physicians' knowledge" of diabetes which prevent them from making informed treatment recommendations to patients. While focusing on controlling glucose levels in the blood is important, that alone may not protect people with diabetes from heart disease.

A good start is more closely monitoring and managing patients' blood fats, including cholesterol levels. Studies show that patients with high LDL cholesterol levels are more likely to develop heart disease. Doctors can recommend these patients change their diets, increase their physical activity or prescribe cholesterol-lowering drugs.

Physicians should also closely monitor patients for high blood pressure. Hypertensive diabetics are twice as likely to develop heart disease compared to those without high blood pressure.

Doctors cannot stand by as heart disease and diabetes ravage our country. By better understanding the link between these conditions— and educating patients about that connection— physicians can play a leading role in combatting these costly, coexisting and chronic conditions.

Omar M. Lattouf, MD, Ph.D. is a Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Emory University School of Medicine.



Community Affairs

‘Food For Friends’ kicks off at the Pratt Library

Baltimore— The Enoch Pratt Free Library is proud to partner for another year with the Maryland Food Bank to collect food during the month of January. The newly named, “Food for Friends” program runs until January 31, 2019. Food for Friends replaces the popular Food for Fines program.

“The Pratt Library is now fine-free. But we want to continue our support of the Maryland Food Bank during the winter,” said Pratt Library President & CEO Heidi Daniel. “I encourage everyone to drop off canned goods at our Pratt branches to help in this citywide effort to give back.”

In return for donating one can of food, library customers can eliminate one dollar from their library fees, which may include lost or stolen materials charges or replacement library card fees. The donation will be capped at \$50 per customer for the month. Cans must be unopened and unexpired and no glass



containers will be accepted.

Last year, the Pratt Library collected 7,411 pounds of food, enough to help feed more than 6,175 Marylanders.

“This year marks our 40th year of feeding hungry Marylanders across the state, so we are especially excited to kick off 2019 with the help of our friends at the Enoch Pratt Free Library,” said Carmen Del Guercio, President & CEO of the Maryland Food Bank. “Campaigns like Food For Friends are instrumental to the work we do, not only because it’s an easy way for people to donate nutritious food, but because they bring attention to the fact that hunger is a year-round issue, one that doesn’t end once the holidays are over.”

For more details about the program, visit: www.prattlibrary.org.

You don't need a New Year to get to a new you!

By *Morgan A. Owen*
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Let's be really honest, how often do we neglect our New Year's resolutions after January? Many times, we set resolutions but don't know where to start. We get stuck and revert to old habits that aren't helping us bloom into the best we can be.

Often, we are our own worst enemy by second-guessing, self-doubt and self-sabotage can get in the way of our success. We can try to blame others for our failures but sometimes we need to take a good look in the mirror and realize it may be ourselves.

Here are some of my tips on how to get to a better you, right now:

Break the Rules— How many times have we looked at job descriptions for jobs we really wanted, seen one qualification that we weren't well-versed at, and told ourselves, "why even bother applying? I won't get an interview."

How many times have we worked with

a co-worker or manager and asked ourselves, "How did they get this job? They aren't qualified at all."

Many of our counterparts go after these positions without hesitation— maybe it's a result of their sense of privilege, but it's also fearlessness.

Go for it. Make a list of everything that you haven't accomplished because you felt you weren't qualified, or that it wasn't the right time to pursue it. Once you see an actual written listing of the

person that is ready to receive them.

While we are building our careers, taking care of our families, let's remember our why and our worth.

Self-care is Not Selfish— Learn to say "no." As women, we tend to think we have to do it all but really, we don't. We tend to take on other's responsibilities and use that as the reason why we can't pursue our own passions.

When I learned to start saying "no," my life began to flourish.

that won't help our personal growth, but not in the personal and/or professional development tools that will. Investments can take the form of both time and money.

When I started my weight loss journey I had to invest my time into getting healthy by working out. Carving out time in my week to dedicate to my personal fitness goals and health. That sometimes meant saying no to other things such as hanging out with friends. Try investing in a course to further your career, a workshop to help build your business or even time devoted to accomplishing a major goal. Your investment will pay off and more!

Let Your Haters Fuel Your Success— There will always be someone who has something negative to say about every goal or move we make to better ourselves. That can be a huge deterrent to why we don't pursue something. Often that person isn't ready to grow yet and is afraid of your growth. Sometimes, it comes from those closest to us. That can be very instrumental in making us give up on our dreams.

You have to stay committed and believe in your vision even when others can't fully see it yet. Use that energy to prove them wrong.

Don't wait until 2019 to be a better you. Start now. You'll be glad you did.

To connect with Morgan A. Evans, visit: www.morganaowens.com or follow her on IG at [miss_morgan86](https://www.instagram.com/miss_morgan86).

“When you really think about it, why do we give others control or authority over our self-worth? It's ours. Being fully transparent, you won't find your self-worth in a day, a week or even a year. The journey can be long and is often emotionally painful, but it is necessary!”

missed opportunities and chances you passed up, it really puts things in perspective. Use the same list and pick something on it to go after, right now.

Self-Worth is Key— When you really think about it, why do we give OTHERS control or authority over our self-worth? It's ours. Being fully transparent, you won't find your self-worth in a day, a week or even a year. The journey can be long and is often emotionally painful, but it is necessary! I didn't get the opportunities I wanted until I became a

You can't build a career or business from an empty tank. You just can't. Learn to balance your career duties and your personal time. Easier said than done, right?

If you don't have a schedule or a daily plan, create one now. Career without self-care is a recipe for disaster.

How can you expect to be your best if your mind, body and soul aren't in alignment?

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Seventy-five homes in West Baltimore Community to be renovated while remaining affordable

Baltimore— Enterprise Homes and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) have closed on financing to renovate 75 apartment homes comprising the rental component of the Heritage Crossing community in West Baltimore. All its rental homes will be renovated while remaining affordable.

The Heritage Crossing neighborhood includes 75 rental townhomes and 185 for-sale townhomes. All are organized around a central, landscaped community green with a historic nineteenth-century gazebo, and feature the same architectural standards, styles and quality. It was developed in 2003 under HUD's HOPE VI program as a joint venture between Enterprise Homes and A&R Development Corporation.

Located on a 32-acre site at the western edge of Baltimore's central business district, Heritage Crossing connects its residents to opportunity. It's within walking distance of the University of Maryland graduate schools, University Hospital, University of Maryland BioPark, Lexington Market, as well as a subway station, light rail and other transit.

"Enterprise Homes is proud to continue our work with Heritage Crossing," said Christine Madigan, executive vice



Rendering of The Heritage Crossing neighborhood which will include 75 rental townhomes and 185 for-sale townhomes. Courtesy Photo

president of Enterprise Homes. "The Heritage Crossing community has improved hundreds of lives, as well as the neighborhood, and modernizing these 75 homes and keeping them affordable will enable the community to remain a vibrant part of West Baltimore."

The work will be done under HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, which enables public housing agencies to leverage public and private funds to reinvest in public housing. This approach is critical given the \$26-billion backlog of public housing capital im-

provements across the country. Heritage Crossing is the second RAD development on which HABC and Enterprise have collaborated; the first was The Allendale Apartments in Edmondson Village area of Baltimore City, which reopened last year after a full renovation.

"We are excited to partner with Enterprise Homes on the renovation of Heritage Crossing through HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration Program," said HABC Executive Director Janet Abrahams. "This public-private partnership will enhance the living environment

for 75 families in this West Baltimore community. Converting these affordable units to RAD allows HABC to fulfill its mission of creating and providing quality affordable housing opportunities in sustainable neighborhoods for the people we serve."

Exterior renovations will include new roofing, shutters, entry door repairs, and concrete repairs where necessary. The homes will also become more environmentally friendly and cost-efficient, with Energy Star windows, light fixtures and HVAC systems; new hot water heaters; and improvements to the building envelope and air sealing.

Primary financing for the renovations, which are projected to total \$4.6 million in hard costs, came from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, a federal program that finances most of America's affordable rental homes. Additional financing was provided by SunTrust Bank, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, and HABC.

The development team includes Moseley Architects and Harkins Builders. R Home Communities is the property manager.

Morgan Associate Professor, Coordinator of Theatre Arts nominated for two distinguished awards

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Dr. Dunlap also received a nomination for Best Director from this year's Broadway World Regional Awards for the play "Red Velvet," produced by the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company. "Red Velvet" is a 'bioplay' based on the life of Ira Aldridge, an African American Shakespearean actor.

Broadway World is an online news service, based in New York City, which provides daily coverage of Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional and international theatre productions.

Dr. Dunlap will direct the Spring 2019 Morgan State Fine and Performing Arts musical production of "Dream Girls."



At the opening night of "Red Velvet" at the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, Director Basfield Dunlap (far right), poses with Kimberly Moffitt, Moffitt's family, and Christian Gibbs (center), an actor performing the lead role of Ira Aldridge.

Courtesy Photo/UMBC

First HBCU-focused Opportunity Zone Fund Launches

By Stacy M. Brown

Opportunity Zones have become an attractive economic development tool to states.

In response, the HBCU Community Development Action Coalition (CDAC) has launched the first HBCU-focused Opportunity Fund to ignite reinvestment in and around Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

The Renaissance HBCU Opportunity Fund seeks to attract investment capital to help fund development of mixed-use projects on or near HBCU campuses in federally designated Opportunity Zones, according to a news release.

The Fund has also been selected to receive support from the Kresge and Rockefeller Foundations through the Opportunity Zones Incubator, which will provide technical assistance to help bring the Fund to market.

“With nearly 50 percent of HBCUs located in Opportunity Zones, the HBCU-CDAC sees this is an opportunity to position HBCU communities as investment hubs that will ultimately create jobs, stimulate small business activity, and create better economic opportunities within these communities,” said Ron Butler, the CEO of the HBCU-CDAC.



Ron Butler, CEO of the HBCU-CDAC
Courtesy Photo

“With the support of the Kresge and Rockefeller Foundations and in partnership with Renaissance Equity Partners, the Fund will be in a position to actively seek investment opportunities on or around HBCU campuses.”

The partnership between the HBCU-CDAC and Renaissance Equity Partners will pursue mixed-use projects that will attract business and create workforce, housing opportunities targeted to junior

faculty, staff, graduate students, and military veterans with GI Bill benefits.

The Fund is particularly interested in mixed use projects that will attract supermarkets to food deserts designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as health care facilities to Medically Underserved Communities designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, according to Butler.

The Fund also intends to structure each investment transaction in such a way that will allow the neighboring HBCU to share in the financial success of the project.

“The recently enacted Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 provides significant federal tax incentives to investors who infuse cash in federally designated Opportunity Funds that reinvest the invested capital in enterprises located in federally designated Opportunity Zones,” Butler said.

Two Maryland HBCUs, Coppin State University in Baltimore and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in Princess Anne, are located in federally designated Opportunity Zones and a Renaissance HBCU Opportunity Fund was organized to attract private sector investment capital to help finance the development of quality mixed use projects on or near HBCU campuses.

“We would welcome the opportunity to brainstorm with Coppin State and Maryland Eastern shore officials about potential mixed-use projects near their campuses,” Butler said.

Butler called the alliance between HBCU-CDAC and Renaissance Equity Partners a win-win because they share a successful track record of assisting HBCUs to access economic finance initiatives to attract investment capital to HBCU Communities.

“For example, Renaissance Equity Partners is presently assisting a Dallas, Texas HBCU access the New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) program to help finance the development of a mixed-use project with student housing and an adjacent community facility featuring a state of the art competition gymnasium,” Butler said. “We believe our participation in the Opportunity Zone program to be an appropriate extension of our successes with the NMTC program. Like our work with the NMTC program, our operation of the Renaissance HBCU Opportunity Fund will enable us help HBCU attract much needed private sector investment capital.”

Butler says HBCU-CDAC is “deeply appreciative of the support we are receiving from the Kresge and Rockefeller Foundations and the professional advice and counsel we are receiving from Calvert Impact Capital.”

“Their assistance and support have been invaluable,” he said.

Further, the Renaissance HBCU Opportunity Fund will facilitate the development of quality, mixed-use, projects near HBCU campuses with each project containing a residential and commercial component.

“The residential component will consist of rental housing units targeted to junior facility, graduate students and returning military veterans,” Butler said. “Space in the commercial components will be targeted to grocery stores, sit down restaurants with wait service, health care facilities, and coffee shops and we’re particularly interested in attracting health care providers to designated medically underserved communities and supermarkets to USDA designated Food Deserts.”

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High School Journalist of the Year

Morgan State Partners in New National High School Engineering Education Pilot Program

By Stacy M. Brown

Morgan State University (MSU) will participate as one of the lead institutions in a groundbreaking pilot program in engineering education, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), according to school officials in a news release.

The program titled, "Engineering for US All – E4USA: A National Pilot High School Engineering Course and Database," counts as a three-year, \$4-million initiative.

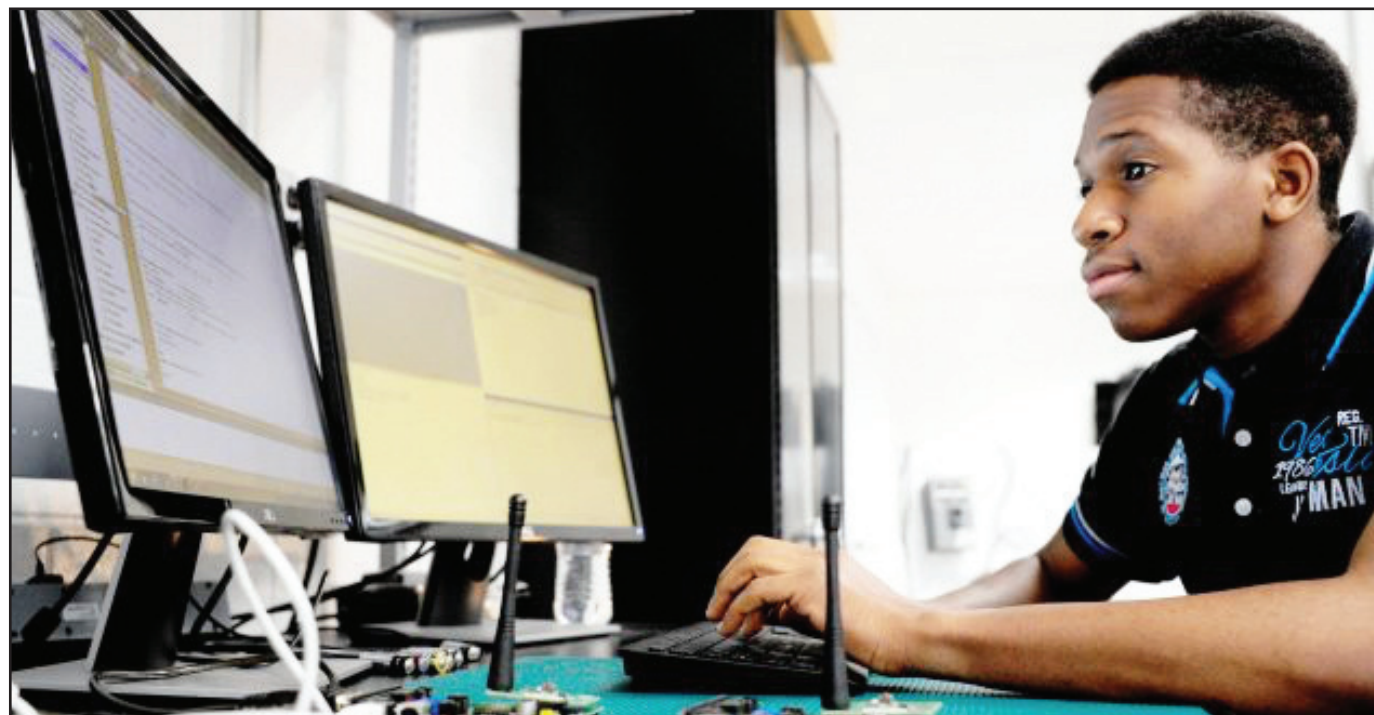
It marks an important milestone in the creation of a standardized, nationally recognized high school engineering course through which pre-college students can earn transferable course credits at the college level, said Dr. Jumoke Ladeji-Osias, the co-principal investigator for the program and an associate professor of electrical and computer engineering at MSU.

The program also includes professional development for teachers to support the course.

The E4USA team leaders anticipate that five Baltimore area high schools and 15 in Maryland will participate in the program beginning in the 2019–20 academic year.

"Morgan's School of Engineering has a long history of involvement in pre-college engineering, and I am grateful to Dean Pines and the NSF for this opportunity to extend that successful track record," said Dr. Ladeji-Osias. "My work with E4USA is the culmination of the work I've done for Morgan at the pre-college level since 2015, partnering with Baltimore area teachers to enhance their skills in teaching engineering-related topics."

Dr. Ladeji-Osias and Morgan's School



Morgan State University (MSU) is among the lead institutions chosen to participate in a groundbreaking pilot program in engineering education that will be funded by the National Science Foundation. It is estimated that five Baltimore area high schools and 15 in Maryland will participate in the E4USA program beginning in the 2019–20 academic year.

Courtesy Photo/Morgan State University

of Engineering will be involved in developing the E4USA syllabus and curriculum, developing standard rubrics for teachers to use in evaluating the students' progress with the program's hands-on engineering design products and distance-learning technologies, and working with the professional development team to customize the teacher training, according to school officials.

Through the pilot program, the E4USA investigators will seek to help "demystify" and "democratize" engineering and determine whether a broader diversity of students will become interested in careers in engineering education or practice. Their research will also explore whether professional development can

certify teachers who are highly qualified in engineering and help them train students to tackle and solve problems.

As a result of the NSF E4USA grant, more than a 1,000 students, at approximately 40 high schools nationwide, are expected to complete the pilot program during its three-year span. An additional 30 schools will participate indirectly with other funding.

The University of Maryland, College Park will lead the pilot in partnership with Arizona State University, Virginia Tech and MSU. Vanderbilt University will evaluate the curriculum, student learning and teacher training, and NASA Goddard Space Flight Center will collaborate on dissemination of program

information. Dean Darryll J. Pines of the University of Maryland's A. James Clark School of Engineering will also be a principal investigator for the program.

"With STEM and related fields leading the pathway toward the jobs of the future, it has become extremely important to fully prepare the next generations of workers and to begin expanding the talent pool before they even step foot on a college campus, and with innovative programs like E4USA we are placed in a better position to meet this need," said MSU President David Wilson. "I applaud this collaboration made possible by the National Science Foundation and look forward to the knowledge we all will gain from the research it produces."



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Feel Nobody: Butch Dawson & Friends Show Review

By Jourdan Taylor

There is always something to be said for originality. When it comes to creativity, there are many things one can do outside of society's perceived boxes and the best thing one can do is to create something brand-new from the depths of their very own imagination. To craft something original, is to take one's uniqueness and package it for others.

This may sound like a simple feat but it takes a combination of skill, talent, passion, perseverance, dedication and determination to be able to create something out of nothing. It may take years of practice in the face of countless obstacles and failures, and it may still never be enough.

It may not be enough to be an individual with a good idea. You have to be committed to that idea with every fiber of your being. The personal roadblock that many face on the "path to success" is belief in oneself—confidence. Backing your own uniqueness and trusting yourself that you are destined for the best that life has to offer, even though many may never fully grasp your vision, and that's okay. Making a conscious decision to be an individual may lead to feelings of loneliness and doubt.

I would wager that not many people on the planet understand this notion better than Baltimore's very own rapper, Butch Dawson. His 2018 absolute smash hit-single, "Feel Nobody," has rocketed to over 400,000 plays between Spotify and Soundcloud since May.

A grungy, gritty, grimy track with grating 808 drums threatening your speakers, over which Dawson spits angry verses about the struggles of growing up in West Baltimore doing whatever he felt necessary to survive. ("Laurens and Division Bred! | Got it tatted on me!")



On Friday, December 28, 2018, Butch Dawson performed at the Second Annual Butch Dawson & Friends show at the Wind Up Space on North Avenue along with popular local acts such as James P and Al Rogers. Photo Credit: Gustavo Marinho

Now, that he seems to be "making it," he wants all the people who didn't support him to know, they have no chance coming around just because he is achieving his dreams. He "feels nobody," because nobody was there to "feel him." He believed in himself when not many did and now his hard work and persistence is beginning to pay off.

On Friday, December 28, 2018, Butch performed at his very own Second Annual Butch Dawson & Friends show at the Wind Up Space on North Avenue. Free to the public, featuring popular local acts such as James P and Al Rogers, it was no surprise to see a venue filled wall-to-wall with people near show time. And perform, they did. Butch Dawson and his friends also brought up and coming artists to the stage to do a song or two.

Meant to be a medley of rappers and DJ's, performing their premier tracks to gain as much exposure at possible, about 40 minutes was blocked off for various musicians to open for Butch. It was interesting to see the thought process in allowing multiple artists to perform who in turn invited a broader circle of people to maximize exposure—potentially increasing ticket sales is the type of thinking that will propel him to the top of the rap game.

By the time Butch got to the stage the energy was peaking, the sweat was pouring and it felt much more like an evening in July than three days before New Year's Eve. It seemed like everyone came out to see him. He played his hottest tracks of the year, mostly from his eight-track album, "Swamp Boy," released at the end of August and the place was an absolute riot.

Then, suddenly things changed. A beat dropped. Phones started to come out of pockets with flashlights on to indicate they were recording. This was Butch Dawson's moment. He owned the crowd and he leapt into "Feel Nobody" with the full force of dozens of people shouting the words that he penned about being alone.

By bringing together various acts from the area, Butch Dawson and his friends were able to do more than simply get booked to perform a concert. It showed that the local music community is able to come together to support each other. Everyone came together to get behind these guys and their talents. Even for the lesser known, the excitement was clear to see.

Baltimore support local talent and let's see just how far they will go with just a little bit of belief in themselves.

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1174	Reed-Adams, Tabathia E.
2014	Hunt, Alfred C.
2153	Jadama, Ebrahim S.
2203	KAPRAUN JR, EDWARD DANIEL
3040	Satchell, Yolanda R.
3076	Hunt Jr, Larry D.
3100	Johnson, Loreen
3110	Davis, AveMaria
4029	Willis, Angelo F.
4030	Witherspoon, Lindell Anthony
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Male caregivers need more support

By Joshua Garner
Men's Health Network

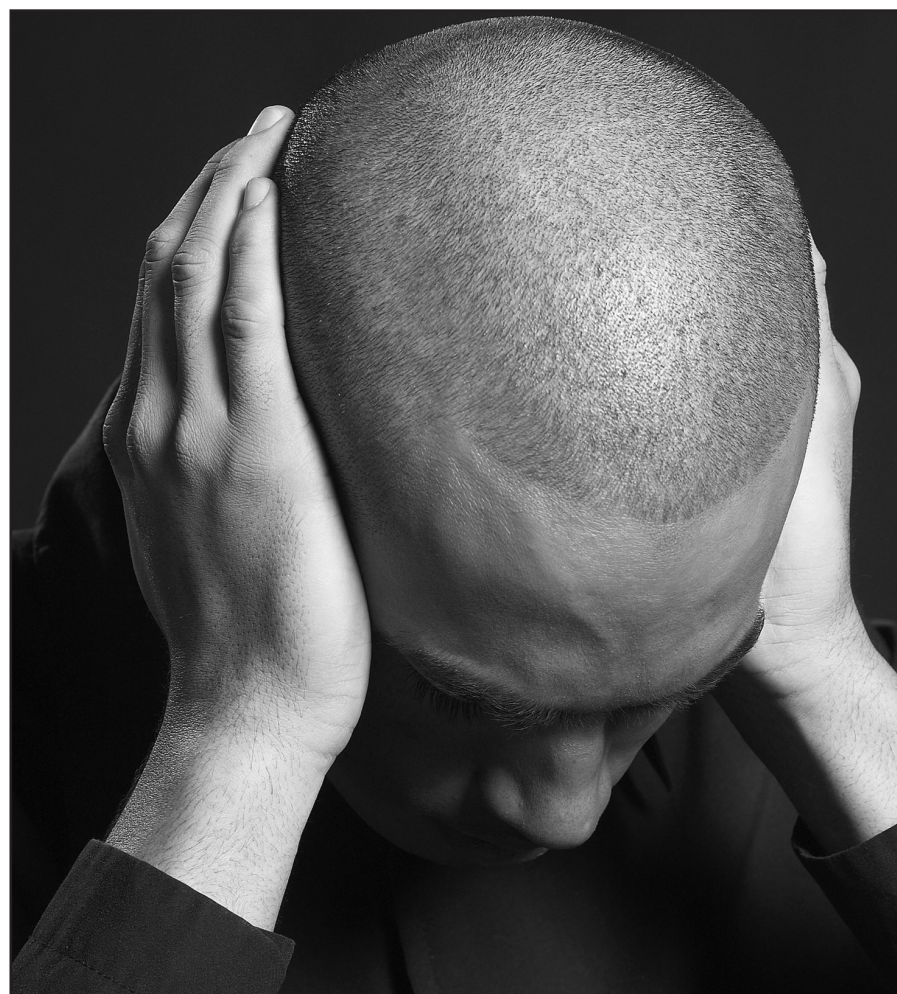
It's an interesting time to be a man in America. While the progressive and evolving tone of gender equity has focused on women's rights and empowerment in recent years, lost among the headlines about the Me Too Movement, women's equity, and rights are the realities facing men in this country who are increasingly taking on more responsibilities within the family structure.

This fall recognizes National Family Caregivers Month, an annual observance honoring family caregivers. This year's awareness period is a potent one for young men like myself—a 30-something male who has found myself a caregiver for an elderly parent while also in the prime of my life. And I'm not alone.

Recent statistics on caregivers are quickly becoming out of sync with the image of caregiving. While current numbers suggest 65 percent of caregivers are female, with an average age of 69.2, younger caregivers are more likely to be male; 45 percent of them fall between 18-45, according to 2015 figures from the National Alliance For Caregiving. 2017 figures from AARP suggested an even greater pendulum shift toward males with 40 percent, roughly 40 million, of caregivers being men.

And shifting currents in the U.S. population suggest the number of young male caregivers will only increase. By 2030, Baby Boomers will all be over the age of 65 and, for the first time in U.S. history, older people will outnumber children, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. And by 2060, adults over the age of 65 will make up nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population.

All of the above might seem far and away but for some men, it is very much in the here and now. I remember countless conversations with my male gym trainers about our fathers—both over the age of 65 that we care for who are dealing with a deluge of health issues: Parkinson's disease, diabetes, dementia, and heart disease to name a few. Our confessions to each other were always met with exhaustion and fear—not only



for our fathers but for ourselves: who would take care of us when we're of a certain age?

But the troubles facing most male caregivers extend beyond just fear and exhaustion. Unlike myself, most caregivers don't share responsibilities with a team of family members and nurses. And for many caregivers, caring for a loved one comes with a financial burden as well. Unlike women, men are less likely to alter their work lives and take less demanding jobs while caregiving, according to the AARP. For those that do alter their work schedule and leave their job, they'll lose, on average, \$304,000 in wages over their lifetime.

In a society that places great value on intellect, performance, and self-sufficiency, the gradual loss of one's physical and mental faculties is unsettling, particularly for the loved ones of the individual in decline. My experiences echo what many male caregiver face: watch-

ing a loved one's slow and gradual decline.

Men are already less likely to seek medical and mental health than women—the same is true when it comes to emotional support, particularly the kind of support that isn't easy to talk about but can weigh heavy on one's emotional and mental health. This fall and year-round it's important to support all us who are caregivers for loved ones and acknowledge the changing face of caregiving in the U.S.

Joshua Garner is the Director of Communications for Men's Health Network, a Washington, D.C.-based international nonprofit organization that advocates for the health and wellness of men, boys, and families. Men can learn more about their health through MHN's online resource center: www.MensHealthResourceCenter.com

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