



## South Baltimore entrepreneur is winning in the beauty industry

By Stacy M. Brown

Simply put, Takia Ross is a winner. She is a go-getter by the very definition of the phrase, a survivor by nature, and a provider by obligation and love.

The South Baltimore native wouldn't let an old family narrative of merely being content with a government job get in the way of success, nor would she allow debt and other obstacles stop her from giving her and her three children the kind of life she knows they deserve.

"I had done what the world told us, what my mamma told us, which is I had gone to school and earned degrees, and then got a good government job with benefits," Ross asserted. "I needed to take care of my family, and with student loan debt and other bills, I was hardly making ends meet."

In 2013, Ross started Accessmatized LLC and Pretty Mobile Baltimore, where she uses her immense skills as a makeup artist.

It has worked out for the former Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) teacher whose work has earned features in Fortune and Essence magazines.

*Continued on page 9*

**Takia Ross, make-up artist, owner and CEO of Accessmatized LLC and Pretty Mobile Baltimore.**  
**Photo Credit: ASGarlandPhotography**



# Preventing falls can save lives

By Jason Custer, MD

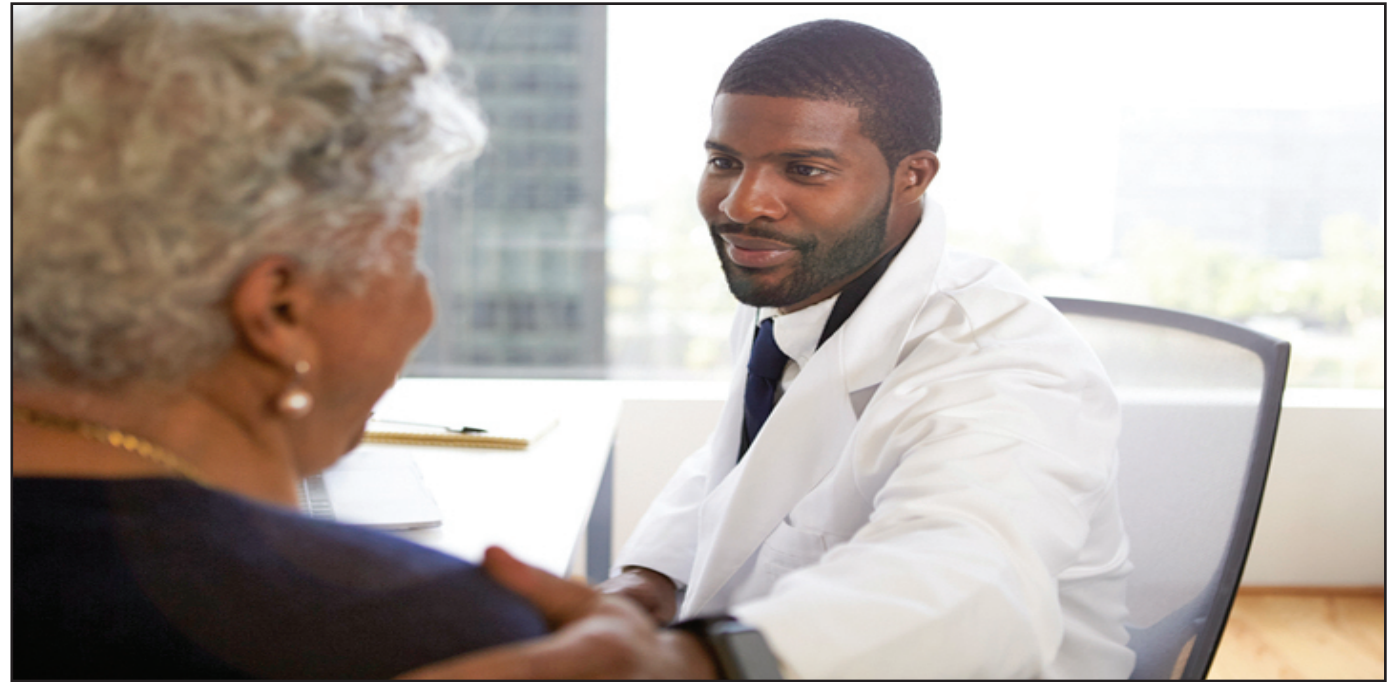
Falls are the leading cause of accidental injury, admission to the hospital, and death. One out of five falls cause serious injury such as broken bones and even traumatic brain injury. And while falls are more prevalent in older adults, anyone suffering a fall can experience long-term health effects that impact their overall quality of life. In recent years, deaths from falls are on the rise.

A number of risk factors contribute to falling, including chronic conditions such as diabetes, stroke or arthritis; difficulty with walking and problems with balance; use of medicines; vision problems; and foot pain. Even home hazards—like broken or uneven steps, throw rugs, and a lack of handrails along the stairs or in the bathroom—can cause falls.

Luckily, there are many steps we can take to help prevent falls. To reduce your risk, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest following these tips:

**Ask your doctor questions—** If you've fallen before, provide your doctor with details, including when, where and how you fell. With this information, your doctor can identify specific fall-prevention strategies. Proactively talking to your doctor about problems and asking the right questions is part of being your own health care advocate, which will help you get the most out of your relationship with your doctor.

**Keep your doctor updated—** Notify your doctor of all the medications you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Your doctor can



review for side effects that may increase your risk of falling.

**Receive an annual eye exam—** Maintain your vision and use an up-to-date eyeglasses prescription.

**Stay active—** Remaining active will boost your overall strength and balance. Walking and water workouts improve coordination and flexibility. Light weight-bearing exercises can also increase bone density, making falls less devastating as you age.

**Remove hazards from your home—** Get rid of trip and fall hazards in your home. You can do this by removing items from walkways, moving furniture from high-traffic areas, repairing floorboards and carpeting, and using non-stick mats in your bathtub or shower.

**Be a partner with the healthcare team to prevent falls—** If you or a loved one is in the hospital, talk to the doctor, nurse and other care team member to learn how to prevent falling while at the hospital and when you come home. After a hospital stay, people are often not as strong as they were before they were hospitalized. Extra care and attention must be taken to make sure they do not fall when returning home and that fall hazards in the home are removed.

**In this together!** It's everyone's responsibility to be sure those most susceptible to falls are kept safe.

Healthcare professionals, family members and those in the community can each play an important role in limiting fall risk in their environments.

*Jason Custer, MD is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Medical Director of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the University of Maryland Medical Center Downtown Campus. He also leads efforts in patient safety and quality for UMMC. To learn more visit [www.umm.edu](http://www.umm.edu)*

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## The Annapolis Times

(USPS 5840) is published every Friday by *The Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore*, 2513 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. Subscriptions by mail \$60 per year. Standard bulk postage paid at Baltimore, MD 21233.

Postmaster send address changes to:

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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## Death of Chadwick Boseman Puts Focus on Colon Cancer and African Americans

By Lauren Victoria Burke  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The death of actor Chadwick Boseman from colon cancer at age 43 has brought new attention on the disease and how it disproportionately impacts African Americans.

Boseman was diagnosed with stage 3, colon cancer at 38. It later advanced to stage 4. Boseman was filming movies that included completing his own stunts while undergoing cancer treatment that included chemotherapy. The actor died on August 30. His death caught many who worked closely with him by surprise.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in both men and women in America. It is the second most common cause of death related to the disease. African Americans are disproportionately impacted with a 20 percent greater rate than whites and an even greater degree of mortality.

Every year, on average 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colon cancer with about 50,000 succumbing to the disease. For African Americans the death rates are higher. Diets high in animal fat and low in fiber are associated with the development of colon cancer. Cigarette smoking, obesity, lack of exercise, and vitamins C and E deficiency are also contributing factors tied to colon cancer.

Dr. Wayne Frederick, who is the President of Howard University and a medical doctor, where Boseman graduated in 2000, commented on Boseman's trip to Howard University's commencement in 2018 as the featured graduation speaker. Frederick focused on the importance of knowing what one's family history is and knowing what close relatives died of. He instructed that if you're unclear how a close relative died you should investigate and find out.

"When I was in medical school, we got screening guidelines that it should start at 50. What we are seeing now is individuals getting colon cancer now is much younger. It is something for us to watch," said Dr. Frederick on Roland Martin Unfiltered on August 31, 2020. Martin broadcast a two-hour tribute in honor of Boseman on his daily show.

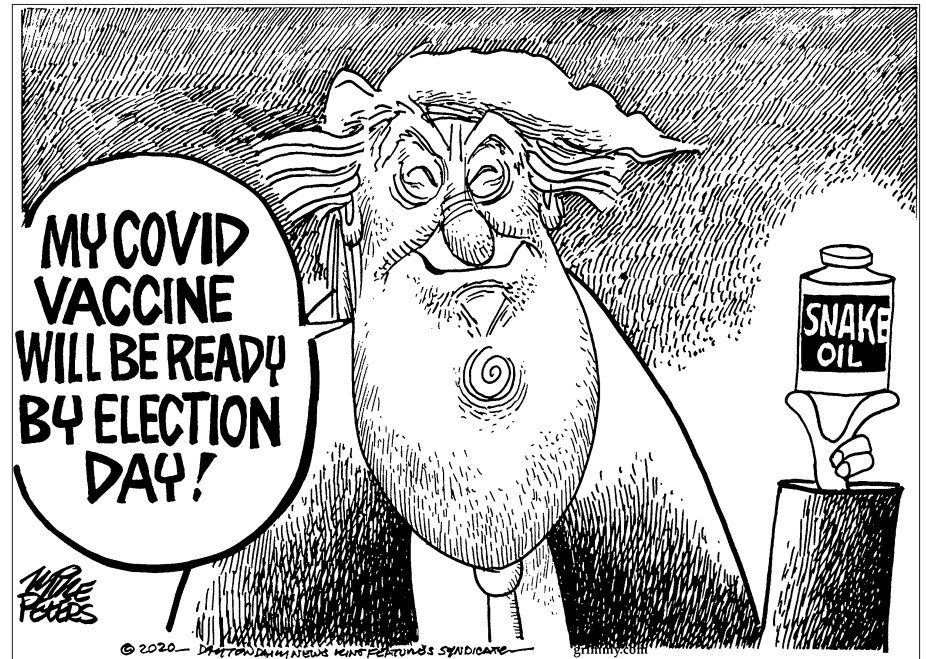
"African Americans are much less likely to get the generic screening," he added. Dr. Frederick also mentioned that popular historian Dr. Ibram X. Kendi was diagnosed with colon cancer at 36.

In January 2018, Kendi learned he had colon cancer after a colonoscopy. Though the cancer spread to his liver, further tests revealed that Kendi was cancer free after six months of chemotherapy and surgery.

In January 2019, Kendi wrote "What I Learned From Cancer," in The Atlantic. Kendi was trying to complete another epic work "How to Be an Antiracist," as he was being treated for colon cancer.

"In the hours of each day when I managed to submerge myself inside the writing zone, the metastatic cancer was an afterthought. The symptoms from the six months of chemotherapy, from January to June last year, were an afterthought: my marathons of tiredness, the bubbling nausea, my hands and feet tingling and darkening and drying and blistering, making them unusable at times," Kendi wrote regarding this cancer battle.

*Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist for NNPA and the host of the podcast BURKEFILE. She is also a political strategist as Principal of Win Digital Media LLC. She may be contacted at [LBurke007@gmail.com](mailto:LBurke007@gmail.com) and on twitter at @LVBurke*



## Letters to the Editor:

### Editor:

I was pleased to learn the National Science Foundation recently awarded a \$3.5-million grant to researchers studying cultured meat at the University of California, Davis.

In case you don't know, cultured meat is grown from cells, without slaughtering animals. Senators Ben Cardin Chris Van Hollen should support more funding to help develop this nascent industry, which has the potential to benefit animal welfare, the environment, and human health.

Cultured meat saves our fellow creatures from unimaginable

deprivation and torture on factory farms. It requires a fraction of the greenhouse-gas emissions to produce that raising livestock does.

Further, since animals are removed from production, cultured meat reduces the risk of spread of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19.

We need greater federal funding for development of this revolutionary protein, in order to bring it to market faster and make it cost-competitive.

Jon Hochschartner  
Granby, CT

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## One huge lie crystallized

**By Roger Caldwell**  
*NNPA Newswire Contributor*

You may have decided not to look at the recent Republican National Convention on television, and many Americans think President Trump broke the law by abusing the Hatch Act. But our president is smiling, because he got away with it.

The president needed a convention bounce and, according to polls, White voters have increased their support of his policies. By comparison, following the Democratic National Convention, held a week earlier, nothing changed statically in terms of support.

A recent Morning Consult poll that asked 4,035 likely voters which candidate they would pick, found Biden leading Trump by six percentage points— 50 percent to 44 percent. It marked a four-point improvement for Trump from his standing going into the convention on August 23, 2020, when

Biden led 52 percent to 42 percent. “The poll had a two-point margin of error,” according to Morning Consult’s by Eli Yokley.

After the Republican Convention, President Trump has cut into Biden’s lead, and it appears that our president is a man of character. Trump supporters

The Democrats have cast the President as a failed leader, but Trump’s supporters painted him as a success and the last line of defense against radical socialism. Black Lives Matter is trying to de-fund the police Departments and when you need a policeman, there will be a busy signal. Many of the mayors in

It is so easy to lie and give half of the story or picture. During the last night, a supporter kept telling the country that the president created the strongest economy in American history and strengthened Medicare and Social Security.

However, Obama’s last three years were stronger than Trump’s first three years, and the present economy is close to a depression. Ending payroll taxes would deplete the Social Security fund in two years.

It is obvious that the majority of the Republican National Convention was one continuous lie but squeezing 1,500 people on the South lawn of the White House was irresponsible during a coronavirus pandemic. This was the wrong message to send Americans, and President Trump does not care.

“He once again claimed to have done more for the African American community than any president since Abraham Lincoln— ignoring Harry Truman’s integration of the military; Lyndon Johnson’s passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act; and many other accomplishments. One might wonder, if this is true, why polls show just five percent of Black voters supporting him, says Fred Kaplan of the Slate, an online magazine.

As Republicans and President Trump build a campaign on lies the numbers are still in the Democrats favor. It is time for the Democrats to expose the lies and speak truth to power. The major key to Biden winning this election is getting support from 18-to-30-year old voters; Black voters; and the women voters.

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***“After the Republican Convention, President Trump has cut into Biden’s lead, and it appears that our president is a man of character. Trump supporters made it appear that he was working for all Americans and that there are thousands of Black men who believe he is the best candidate for our community. The president made it appear that he was working for the soul of America, and he was a huge supporter of voting.”***

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made it appear that he was working for all Americans and that there are thousands of Black men who believe he is the best candidate for our community. The president made it appear that he was working for the soul of America, and he was a huge supporter of voting.

Even though there are 198 judges appointed by the president to the different courts in three and a half years, not one has been Black. This has solidified conservative thinking and created and supported racism. These appointments are not about the next four years, but this will impact the positions and decisions that the judges will make for the next 40 years.

many cities are finding out that Trump administration is paying people to create violence during peaceful protests.

Even though the Republican Convention was one huge lie, many of Biden’s supporters are having second thoughts about supporting the Democrats. As the race gets closer, all of the Republicans will be lying, and it is very hard to know what a lie is and where the truth starts.

On the last night of the convention Giuliani said, progressive Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York is the reason crime has elevated in the city. But when Giuliani was mayor in 2000 the yearly murder rate was 673, compared to 318 in 2019.

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# Inner City Suburban Youth Foundation provides school supplies and tablets for Baltimore youth

By Stacy M. Brown

The nonprofit Inner City Suburban Youth Foundation Inc. is providing tablets, school supplies, and other materials to underserved Baltimore City students between the ages of six and 16 for the 2020-21 school year.

Through the foundation's Technology Project, students are chosen by a financial need for school supplies.

"So far, we have provided 30 tablets and school supplies to students between the ages of six and 15," said William Newman, the founder of the Inner City Suburban Youth Foundation. "Our goal is to provide as many as 60 tablets and school supplies to students, and with adequate funding it could be as many as 100."

The organization does receive donations from the WBAL Kids Campaign; the Mitzvah Fund for Good Deeds; the Macht Fund of The Associated; Safeway; Wegmans; Pepsi Cola; Network for Good; Sol Levinson & Bro's.; the Baltimore Orioles; and the Baltimore Ravens.

Newman says students qualify for the materials by writing a letter to the foundation, which includes their name, age, school and financial need. Once students are approved, parents are required to attend with the student to pick up the material.

"Tablets will not be given to an adult without their student," he declared because the program advocates for parental involvement.

The Inner City Suburban Youth Foundation offers a wide range of mentoring and tutoring for students and is a "refuge to keep students off the streets, out of trouble, and clean of drugs," according to Newman.

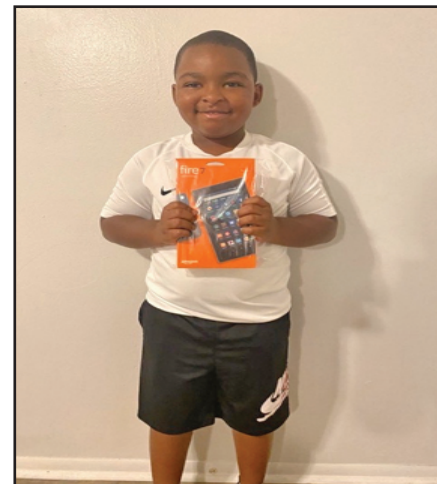
Newman has previously said that the idea for creating an organization, which includes excursions for youth to sporting and entertainment events, began years ago when the son of a friend expressed



*Ten-year-old Ariel is all smiles with her new tablet*  
Courtesy Photo/ICSYF



*Eight-year-old Diamond is all smiles with her new tablet*  
Courtesy Photo/ICSYF



*Leonard Drake is all smiles with his new tablet*  
Courtesy Photo/ICSYF

an interest in going to a wrestling match.

"I was working at a radio station at the time, and I took him to the event, and we sat in the front row," Newman said. "I later spoke to the promoter who invited us back again, and [he] told me that whenever I wanted to come to let him know. A friend of mine told me that this is something that I should do."

Newman secures donations for tickets to sporting and entertainment events and then makes them available to local schools. The principal or school administrator selects students for trips based on good grades, good conduct, and maintaining a B average.

Upon the trip's conclusion, all of the students are required to write about their first airplane ride and their travel experience.

When tickets aren't donated, Newman purchases them himself.

He said this year's school supply giveaway is different because the pandemic has limited the foundation's resources and has forced officials to become more creative.

"We also are planning to collaborate with Dreambuilders, [a Maryland-based nonprofit interfaith community of teens

and adults who build homes for those in need], to provide desks to every student we have accepted in the Technology Project," Newman said.

The Charm City native graduated from Baltimore City College and attended Morgan State University. He has a background in broadcast journalism and

has worked at WJZ-TV (CBS-Baltimore) Channel 13.

"Our ultimate goal is to make these youth productive," Newman added.

For more information about the foundation or find out how you may help, contact William Newman at 443-742-2974.



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# Are you or a loved one mixing alcohol with diet-related behaviors? It May Be Drunkorexia

By Ursula V. Battle

Lindsey Hall recalled her “drinking” days as a college student at the University of Arkansas.

“I feel there are two different types of drinking you witness when you are in college,” said Hall. “I had an eating disorder, and tried to restrict my eating not to gain weight. In my case, it showed itself in drinking calories instead of eating them. I also drank alcohol to dull my hunger. Then there are those who choose not to eat to get drunk faster.”

What Lindsey described has been labeled as ‘Drunkorexia.’ While not a medical term, Drunkorexia is defined as mixing alcohol abuse with unhealthy, diet-related behaviors such as self-imposed starvation or calorie restriction, excessive exercising and/or bingeing and purging.

Dr. Kim Anderson is the Clinical Director at the Eating Recovery Center Baltimore, Maryland, which provides comprehensive eating disorder treatment programs for adults, children, and adolescents in the mid-Atlantic region.

“Under-age drinking is very common for college students, young adults and high school kids,” said Dr. Anderson. “One of my patients said, ‘I don’t have money and I have to choose between eating and drinking.’ The patient went on to say, ‘I am going to drink because I don’t want to waste calories.’”

“Some have anxiety and want to drink. Others want to be accepted. Some want to be in shape and are trying to figure out a way to party and not gain weight. Some find this behavior to be socially acceptable.”



*Lindsay Hall struggled with Drunkorexia as a college student.*  
Courtesy Photos

A licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Anderson has focused her career on treatment for individuals with eating disorders.

“Drunkorexia is drinking a lot and doing something to compensate for the calories,” she said. “There is not a lot of research on this, but research shows males tend to do this more. One may say, ‘If I don’t eat, I can get drunk off three beers as opposed to six.’”

Dr. Anderson has been treating patients with eating disorders in the Baltimore area for over 25 years.

“In the 1980s, I was a college student,” she said. “Bulimia was just coined in 1979, and I was hearing about girls in the dorms throwing up. They did it in the open together. It was not the secretive stuff we think about. It was something looked at as being normative.”

With kids heading to college, Dr. Anderson is encouraging parents to talk to their children.

“We want people to learn there are severe risks involved with drinking and not eating,” she said. “If you are not eating all day, the effects are enhanced for alcohol poisoning which can include death.”

“As soon as you start drinking too much you are at risk for those problems. You might think it’s no big deal, but that behavior needs an assessment.”

Hall said she sought treatment through The Renfrew Center, the nation’s first residential eating disorder facility.

“I struggled with my eating disorder for eight years,” said Hall. “I never liked being drunk, but I drank to avoid dinner time eating. I went for treatment when I was 24. I started talking about using alcohol in order not to eat. They said it fell under alcohol abuse because I depended on alcohol not to eat. I had to change my relationship with alcohol.”

Now 31, Hall is a freelance writer for Eating Recovery



*Dr. Kim Anderson, Clinical Director of the Eating Recovery Center Baltimore, Maryland.*

Center, and also has a blog called, “I Haven’t Shaved In 6 Weeks.” She said the blog’s purpose includes serving as a resource for those wanting to know what going into an eating disorder facility is like—beforehand.

“I vowed to share the nitty gritty, including the fact that I couldn’t shave for 6 weeks due to the fear that patients will self-harm if given a razor,” Hall writes on her blog. “(Would’ve been nice to have known that prior, I grumbled – handing my razor to the nurse.)”

“Treatment does not promise you will come out and be a different person,” said Hall who was in recovery for six weeks. “It gives you the tools. I was at an unmanageable point of my life. What treatment gave me were the tools to start trusting myself and to start moving on with my life.”

Hall has discussed her Drunkorexia journey on the “Today Show,” and has been

featured in numerous publications including *Cosmopolitan*. A native of Texas, she resides in Colorado. She says she has 17,000 followers on Instagram, and posts messages every day.

“This generation has a way of binge drinking especially in terms of how they eat,” said Hall. “I want people to take a step back and ask themselves, ‘Is my relationship with alcohol healthy?’ Many think that just because they don’t drink alcohol every day, they are not abusing it. However, eating disorders show up in many different ways. It shows up in various aspects of your life and people need to look at the various aspects it affects.”

You can follow Hall on Instagram at [lindseyhallwrites](https://www.instagram.com/lindseyhallwrites).

For more information about Eating Recovery Center Baltimore, Maryland visit <https://www.eatingrecoverycenter.com/recovery-centers/baltimore>.



## South Baltimore entrepreneur is winning in the beauty industry

*Continued from page 1*

She has received recognition as one of the top women to watch in Baltimore.

Ross earned a \$1,000 grant in a CCBC pitch competition that promised to provide small business owners with startup cash, as well as access to experienced mentors who could help them craft business and marketing plans and learn to manage their finances.

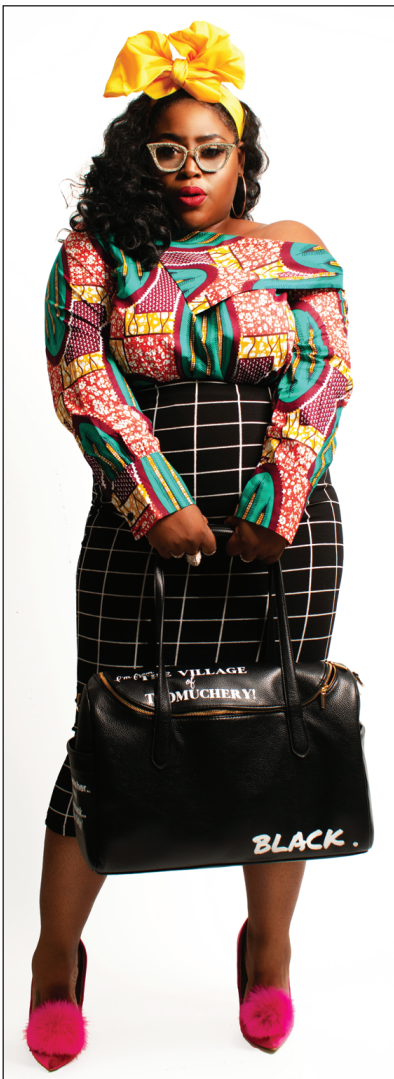
"It's something all of our small businesses need, and I tell everyone that the money is out there, and what was great about this is that it really helped my business, and I didn't have to pay it back," Ross declared.

After winning the initial \$1,000, Ross entered other competitions and won an additional \$65,000 for her business. It was cash that she couldn't access any other way.

"Small and minority-owned businesses start out mostly by accident, by necessity. Most of us didn't start our businesses because we wanted to be entrepreneurs," Ross commented. "We wanted to take better care of our families, and we know we have to go to non-traditional funding sources for our businesses."

Despite the many accolades she has earned and the success that has arrived, Ross observed that it hasn't been easy—not by a longshot.

As the coronavirus pandemic devastated the world and the U.S. economy, Ross lost a hard-to-swallow 85



**Takia Ross, CEO and owner of Accessmatized LLC and Pretty Mobile Baltimore.**

**Photo: ASGarlandPhotography**

percent of her business revenue as businesses were forced to shut down.

That meant that performing makeup and other beauty tasks for events like proms, graduations, and weddings were out.

Ross didn't qualify for the federal Paycheck Protection Program loans that were part of the more than \$3 trillion CARES Act passed by Congress and signed into law earlier this year.

"We had cancelations for the rest of the year," Ross revealed.

Also, she noted that there remain internal struggles for small business owners, along with the pandemic and other challenges.

"There is discouragement and disappointment to deal with all the time," Ross proclaimed. "I quit my business every other day because of

discouragement and disappointment. That's part of being an entrepreneur. For someone to tell you otherwise, they are lying."

Still, Ross is encouraged that business is on the upswing, and she still has lots to accomplish. "I used to feel [negative], but I don't want to feel like that again.

"I think all of the time about what I can do to better myself. I know that there are always lessons to be learned. You can come back from anything. You can change your narrative. Every day is a new day to get it right."

## Five-year-old boy authors first published picture book 'I'm Hungry!'



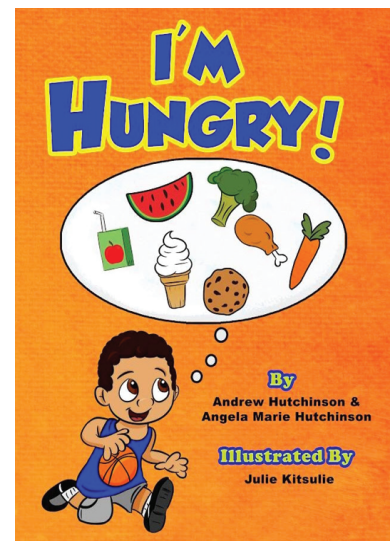
**Andrew, author and his mother, Angela Marie Hutchinson.**  
Courtesy Photos

Los Angeles, Calif.— The children's picture book, "I'm Hungry!" was recently released on Amazon and written by a five-year-old boy, Andrew Hutchinson based in California. Kindergartner Andrew is a first-time published author.

The vibrant pictures are illustrated by Julie Kitsule, who has illustrated several of Angela's other picture books. "I'm Hungry!" evolves around food with a theme of gratitude, which is certainly universal among parents, especially during the Covid-19 Coronavirus times. "It's as if my three kids never stop eating...they always claim to be so hungry!" shares Hutchinson.

Andrew's co-author is his mother, Angela Marie Hutchinson, who has written several published books. Angela shares the backstory behind their first creative collaboration. "My youngest son is always hungry even after eating full meals. Andrew's book was inspired by his big appetite and love for snacks." Excited to follow in his mother's footsteps, Andrew joins his older siblings in self-publishing a picture book.

To support this five-year-old's creative endeavors, you can purchase a copy of "I'm Hungry!" on Amazon .



### About the Authors

Andrew Hutchinson is a 5-year-old boy who loves to play basketball and video games. Angela Marie Hutchinson is film producer, social media professor and founder of an artistic non-profit organization. She is also the author of Create Your Yes! , which is a book deal she landed from her TEDx Talk.



# Actor in New Tyler Perry Series ‘Redefines Black Male Friendships on Screen’

By Stacy M. Brown

When referring to actor Mahdi Cocci, BET exclaimed that the television star redefines Black male friendships on screen.

The network boasted that, “a lot of people will be able to relate and connect” to Cocci’s latest character and that of others on the Tyler Perry series, “Bruh.”

It’s the first lead role for Cocci, who plays Tom, a medical doctor who finds himself as part of the drama when playing the field at work and as one of four “ride-or-die” friends on the 30-minute comedy series.

“Bruh” celebrates Black male brotherhood, with new episodes beginning this week (Sept. 10), and airing each Thursday.

The series includes Barry Brewer as Jonathan, Phillip Mullings Jr as Mike, and Monti Washington as Bill – four friends with a strong bond that navigates work and home life.

“I like to think that I am the most conscious of the bruhs,” Cocci said. “I



Actor Mahdi Cocci plays Tom, a medical doctor in the new Tyler Perry series “Bruh” on BET+  
Courtesy Photo/Tyler Perry Studios

absolutely identify with that. I don’t really think there can be such a thing as too understanding.”

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was raised by his mother, Stephanie, Cocci said education was always emphasized in his home. He earned a full Navy ROTC scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh, and the aspiring model served as an officer in the Navy upon graduation.

He first appeared on the TV series, Dynasty, in 2018, and then Gifted, The Resident, and MacGyver. His appearance on Bruh happened after meeting Perry, whom Cocci admitted being in awe.

“He’s like this A-list celebrity, and he’s got this big presence,” Cocci stated in an earlier interview about Perry. “He’s super kind and humble, but he’s all business, and my initial thought was, ‘just don’t mess up.’”

Cocci received an invitation to read for three of the lead roles in Bruh— John, Bill and Tom.

“I initially thought that Tom was kind

of right up my alley, and then my good friend Derek that I worked with thought that Bill was kind of right up my alley, and lastly, I felt John was a little bit of a stretch. I thought to myself, ‘I’m gonna give it my best,’” Cocci said.

After wrapping the audition, Cocci took a trip to Puerto Rico and, while flying back, he received a text message from his agent informing him he was wanted back in Los Angeles for the role of Bill.

He was summoned to Los Angeles a second time to meet with Perry and read for the part of Tom.

“I was definitely very happy and pleased,” Cocci exclaimed. “I’m just so super thankful for this opportunity where we can share an experience with everyone. [The cast] are so thankful that Tyler Perry gave us all the opportunity to lead a show. It’s the first time for all of us getting to do that. We’re all riding this wave together. Yet, no matter where things go from here out, we’re always going to be linked, planted, and connected.”

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# Free Money Meister Aims to Eliminate Student Loan Debt, Close Wealth Gap

By Stacy M. Brown

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, which forced tens of millions to seek unemployment compensation benefits, financial experts said the nation's student loan balance was projected to swell to \$2 trillion by 2022, with approximately 25 percent of borrowers already behind on payments.

One local company is seeking to combat the student loan debt crisis by teaching high school students about financial literacy and showing them tactics to win scholarships.

After winning a \$30,000 student loan pay down in 2017, Kiara Jones says she understands what it means to alleviate such a financial burden.

She founded Free Money Meister, where she says she uses her talents and strategies for student loan minimization. With Free Money Meister, the Notre Dame of Maryland University and University of Maryland Baltimore County alum has set her sights on being a pivotal player in diminishing the student loan debt crisis in an effort to combat the country's wealth gap.

The company plans to host several workshops to help aspiring college students become more knowledgeable about loans and debt.



*Kiara Jones founded Free Money Meister where she says she uses her talents and strategies for student loan minimization. Courtesy Photo*

"In our workshops, we have exercises where the students determine how much college will cost, review scholarship amounts and scholarship databases, and then assess the impacts to their proposed financial aid packages," Jones said. "By completing these exercises and providing the students with this knowledge before they even apply to college, they are more likely to pursue scholarships, complete the FASFA more strategically and earlier to receive more

federal aid, minimize financial aid package fees that do not apply to them, and more," she declared. "All of which will result in these students lowering their proposed student loan debt and combatting the national average."

Jones promises that the company would remain in contact with the students to keep metrics on their progress.

She says combatting the national average is one way to fight the overall student loan debt crisis.

"We currently provide personal consultations for individuals that already have student loan debt and individuals that want us to find the scholarships and create a strategic plan for them," Jones said. "We prefer to highlight our workshops instead of the consultations because at the moment we are in the process of revamping the consultations to be more technology-based, but these appointments directly combat the crisis by minimizing the amount of student loan debt in America one person at a time."

"We hope to start automating these processes even further to reach larger audiences and have a larger impact."

The first workshop on Saturday, October 10, 2020 will benefit students applying for early admissions.

The workshops are open to all high school grade levels, and students are encouraged to attend as early as 9th grade, according to Jones, who noted that the workshops are both fun and interactive.

"At our workshops, we use demographics related to student loans to call out that Black Americans traditionally take out more student loans," Jones exclaimed. "We also discuss an article that states that the 'median wealth of Black Americans will fall to zero by 2053. We reflect on this item during the workshops when talking about that scholarship money can be used to not only minimize debt but to get refund checks to then save and invest."

"Even the act of minimizing student loan debt will put the average Black person in a better position to minimize the wealth diversity gap. We collaborate with local non-profits and banks to do community outreach to spread this information in underprivileged communities and communities with a high minority population."

For more information about Free Money Meister or register for the workshops, visit: [www.freemoneymeister.com](http://www.freemoneymeister.com).

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**Where:** Trials are being conducted on-site at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis—as well as locations in key markets across the country.

**Will I be compensated?** Yes. More details are available once you have contacted the investigators via the website or phone number below.

**When:** Enrolling now. If you think you've been exposed, or are newly diagnosed and have symptoms, contact

Johns Hopkins at 888-506-1199 or [www.covidplasmatrial.org](http://www.covidplasmatrial.org) – if too many days pass, you may not qualify to participate.

**Why does this trial matter?** This is the first U.S. multi-center, double blind, randomized clinical trial to assess the effectiveness of convalescent blood plasma as an outpatient therapy. Antibodies are one of the best options being tested for treatment and prevention. The technology won the Nobel Prize in 1901, was employed in the last great pandemic of 1918, and has been used on over 70,000 patients who have already been given plasma in the U.S. If this option is deemed effective, it would be one of the most viable options for treating and/or preventing coronavirus illness worldwide, compared to vaccines, which might be too costly for some countries.

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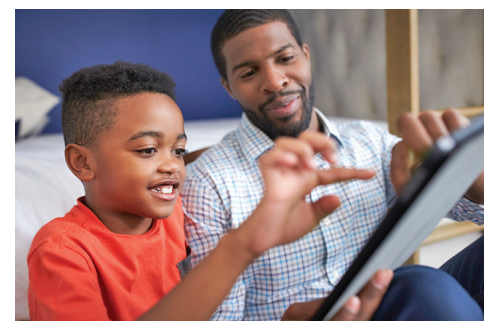
### Pratt Library provides resources for students and parents during virtual learning

Baltimore— The Enoch Pratt Free Library will provide resources and educational support for students as many return to classes virtually. The Library is currently lending hotspots and tablets to help bridge the digital divide for households that don't have Internet or require more connectivity. Students and parents can access free live online tutoring services through the Library's Help Now service. The Pratt has also purchased several online databases to support all levels of education from early literacy through high school and college.

"I know the challenges of virtual learning firsthand with my own two children," said Pratt Library President and CEO Heidi Daniel. "Thanks to the generosity of our private donors the Pratt is able to provide additional support to help with connectivity issues, and to assist the work going on in virtual classrooms."

All services are free to students and parents with a Pratt Library card. Those without library cards can sign up for a Pratt eCard at [prattlibrary.org](http://prattlibrary.org). Storytimes, book clubs, author talks and programs for all ages are now available on the Pratt social media platforms. The Pratt is also providing Live Chat with a Librarian for students who need research or reference assistance. Fourteen Pratt locations have Sidewalk Service, a contact-free way to pick up books, audiobooks, DVDS, and other materials. Free Drive-In Wi-Fi is available at 8 library locations.

More information on student resources can be found at [prattlibrary.org](http://prattlibrary.org).





# Ravens Lamar Jackson shows he can win from the pocket

By Tyler Hamilton

Lamar Jackson's passing ability was criticized before the 2017 NFL Draft despite throwing for 9,043 yards, 69 touchdowns and finishing with a 142.9 quarterback rating at Louisville. Jackson won the Heisman trophy in 2016.

As a rookie, Jackson's explosive running, style was showcased by the Baltimore Ravens during their improbable run to an AFC North title. Critics challenged Jackson's passing ability once again after his rookie season.

Jackson answered by throwing for an NFL best 31 touchdown passes last season while leading the Ravens to a franchise high 14-2 record. In only his second season, Jackson was named the NFL Most Valuable Player, becoming the second player to receive a unanimous selection for the award.

No quarterback besides Jackson has ever finished with 3,000 or more passing yards while rushing for over 1,000 yards. Jackson was virtually unstoppable.

His video game like highlights and countless big plays were still not good enough. To critics, the next requirement for Jackson was to win from the pocket.

Jackson completed 20 of his 25 pass attempts for 275 yards and three touchdowns in Baltimore's 38-6 win over the Cleveland Browns to start the season. His three touchdown passes in the game was the ninth time he has done so since the start of the 2019 season. That's more than Drew Brees (7), Patrick Mahomes (6), and Dak Prescott (6).

If Jackson's performance in the season opener is any indication, critics will need to find a new obstacle for him.

"I thought he just showed great poise in the pocket the whole game. He had a good awareness of the rush. They were bringing it. They have really good pass rushers. They mixed up their coverage—man, zone, different types of zone coverage—and he had just a great feel for it," Ravens head coach John Harbaugh said on Monday, September 14, 2020. "All those things were just really indicative of a well-played quarterback game. Lamar played an



**Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson completed 20 of his 25 pass attempts for 275 yards and three touchdowns in Baltimore's 38-6 win over the Cleveland Browns to start the season on Sunday, September 13, 2020. Photo Credit: AP/Nick Wass**

excellent game, and the passing game—the drop-back passing game—was really the main part of that. I thought he just did a great job."

Jackson worked hard during the offseason to improve as a passer. The effort carried over to training camp "I do. [It's] just dedication" Jackson said when asked if he feels he has improved. "Coach 'Urb [Quarterbacks coach James Urban] is doing a great job—the QB drills, being consistent, even though sometimes, we might just repeat it, just to keep that dialed in, in our heads and keep my body dialed in."

Jackson's favorite target Mark Andrews caught two of his touchdown passes on Sunday. The Ravens wisely paired Jackson with Andrews when they selected him in the third round after trading back into the first round to take Jackson. Jackson always tells Andrews his job is easier because of the top-level pass catching tight end.

"The guys is incredible; he was incredible last year. To me, he's, obviously, the best player in the world, and his arm reflects that. It reflected that

last year; it's this year as well. He's going to continue to grow, and he has. It's just a blessing to be able to play with him. He says I make his job easy, but it's the other way around for sure," Andrews said.

Andrews isn't the only teammate who noticed an improvement in Jackson's game. Jackson connected with Marquise Brown five times for 101 yards on Sunday. Brown also shared a positive review of Jackson's upgraded game.

"You can tell he's a lot more comfortable, and he's a lot more pinpoint with it. It's now our job to be at the spot, because that's where he's putting it. He's doing a good job of throwing it away from defenders and throwing it to where you can catch and run. So, he's been doing a good job of just improving his game," Brown said.

After losing at home in the last two divisional round playoff games, Jackson's goal is to lead Baltimore to their third Super Bowl title. His improved play could be a reason they make it over the hump.

## City of Annapolis resumes charging for parking

Annapolis—The City of Annapolis resumed charging for parking at City metered parking spaces. Alongside the hourly fees, the City also resumed ticketing for expired meters. The City currently issues tickets for parking longer than the two-hour limit.

The parking fees and fines were suspended when the COVID-19 pandemic began and the State of Emergency was issued in March of 2020. At the time, businesses and retail establishments were hit hard by the closures. When the City began operating Recovery Zones and local businesses were beginning to ramp up operations, the parking fees and fine suspensions were continued in order to help lure patrons back to the downtown shopping district. "The lots are filling up and, without the normal turnover of the spaces since



they are free, people are unable to park," said City Manager David Jarrell. "The City is spending a lot to maintain infrastructure and provide support to businesses. The parking fees are a main revenue stream that needs to be restored."

The City does not anticipate a loss of traffic to businesses in the downtown area with the return of meter parking fees.

As an incentive for downtown to reorient to the parking garages, parking passes were distributed to downtown businesses. In addition, nearby garages remain free during Recovery Zone events (Gotts garage after 5 p.m. Wednesday to Sundays; Hillman Garage after 5 p.m. Thursday to Sunday).



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