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The Urban Oyster Now Operating from Hotel Revival

*A Pearl of a Business
Comes to Mt. Vernon*

By Ursula V. Battle

For nearly two years, customers patronized The Urban Oyster, which served up chargrilled oysters, which came in a variety of unique flavors – “Cheese Louise” (mozzarella, parmesan, lemon garlic, butter), “Teriyaki” (teriyaki sauce, pineapple, scallion), and “Volcano Oy” (garlic sambal butter). Located on Light Street in Locust Point, the restaurant had become a well-known staple for oyster lovers.

According to Jasmine Norton, owner of The Urban Oyster, the COVID-19 pandemic played a large part in the restaurant moving from its former location over the summer. However, patrons will still have an opportunity to enjoy the restaurant’s signature charbroiled oysters and other seafood delicacies.

Starting November 19, 2020, The Urban Oyster began operating from Hotel Revival, a boutique hotel located at 101 West Monument Street in Mt Vernon. Norton is operating The Urban Oyster from the location free of charge.

“I never imagined having an opportunity to work out of a major brand hotel,” said Norton. “Hotel Revival is extremely supportive and have gone above and beyond to help make sure we remain on Baltimore’s food scene. We are happy to keep our business afloat during this time of uncertainty.

Continued on page 8

Jasmine Norton, owner of The Urban Oyster, the first female and Black-owned oyster bar in Maryland. A native of Baltimore, Norton grew up in both East Baltimore and Baltimore County. The 33-year-old is a 2005 graduate of Milford Mill Academy, and received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Bowie State University. The Urban Oyster is now operating from Hotel Revival, a boutique hotel located at 101 West Monument Street in Mt Vernon. The restaurant features charbroiled oysters and other seafood delicacies. (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photos

Instill an attitude of gratitude this Thanksgiving

By Chazz Scott, Nucleus Team Member, Positively Caviar, Inc.

Thanksgiving might look a little different this year for most of us. Many of us will not be traveling to visit family or spending tons of money on big dinners for a house full of guests. With everything that has gone on this year, it may be somewhat difficult to find things that we are grateful for.

2020 has been a stressful year for many of us but don't let the year steal away your joy. We've faced ups-and-downs in the economy; the COVID-19 pandemic; racial unrest across the nation; and even a stressful presidential election.

This year has tested us. It has definitely tested me. As we come into the holidays we are still dealing with the pandemic that has created separation from our loved ones, which has lead to many of us feeling isolated, anxious and stressed. Because of this, I believe thanksgiving this year will be one of the most important we've ever faced. Let me tell you why.

Thanksgiving is supposed to be an opportunity to spend time with family and to enjoy the simple pleasures of life, which is communion with our loved ones. As humans, we naturally thrive from communion and physical contact with the people that we love. It makes us feel better and promotes healthy chemicals in the brain. For many, we may be separated from our family members for the first time which might mean cooking dinner for one this year.



Chazz Scott
Nucleus Team Member
Positively Caviar, Inc.
Courtesy Photo

While this may be the case, technology has made it very convenient for us to adapt and connect. Since we may not be able to see many of our loved ones face-to-face this year, it's even more necessary to connect with family members by picking up the phone or even using the technologies like Zoom or FaceTime. In fact, families across the nation are celebrating thanksgiving dinners right through Zoom! In times of stress we must adapt and find ways to connect with our loved ones even if that

means the pandemic is separating us.

In addition to making the conscious opportunity to connect with loved ones using teleconferencing tools, it's also important you do a self-care check-in with yourself. It's necessary that we instill an attitude of gratitude for the simple pleasures of life. The pandemic has really created an environment that makes us feel like we are "boxed in." Many of us are not experiencing the wide variety of life that we are so used to. This gives rise to the opportunity for many of us to be thankful for the experiences and things that we tend to overlook every day. It's easy for us to focus on what's missing in our lives but it takes a conscious effort to remember just how good we have it.

Over the last few years, I began to realize that true happiness is dependent upon making the conscious decision to steer away from thoughts of what you don't have to what you can be grateful for. In fact, research has confirmed that human beings cannot experience emotions of gratefulness and unhappiness at the same time. Once you begin to think of things that you are grateful for, the more grateful you will become! This Thanksgiving make sure you make a conscious effort to be grateful for the things that make you happy in life.

Here's a quick exercise: Grab a sheet of paper a pencil and start thinking about things that you are grateful for in your life. Write them down and don't stop until you feel satisfied. Wherever focus goes, energy flows— so this exercise forces you to refocus your mindset on all the things that you tend to overlook in your life. Once you start writing things down your mind will begin to consciously find things, relationships, experiences in your life that you tend not to even think twice about. This simple but powerful exercise will guide you towards positive emotions and will help you recognize things you are grateful for throughout the rest of your day. Try this exercise first thing in the morning to really jumpstart your day!

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David N. Dinkins, NYC's first black mayor, dies at 93

By Mell P

The New York Carib News

David N. Dinkins, who became New York City's first Black mayor died on Monday night (Nov. 23, 2020) at his home on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. He was 93.

He was the first and, to date, only African American to hold that office.

His death was confirmed by Mayor Bill de Blasio. It came less than two months after Mr. Dinkins's wife, Joyce passed on.

Before entering politics, Dinkins was among the more than 20,000 Montford Point Marines (trained 1942–1949; Dinkins' service was 1945–1946). He is a recipient of The Congressional Gold Medal for his service as a Montford Point Marine in the United States Marine Corps, during World War II.

He graduated *cum laude* from Howard University in 1950 with a B.S. in mathematics and received his law degree from Brooklyn Law School in 1956. He maintained a private law practice prior to entering public service.

Dinkins began his political career by serving in the New York State Assembly in 1966, eventually advancing to Manhattan borough president before becoming mayor. He was president of the New York City Board of Elections, and served as City Clerk for 10 years before his elections as President of the Borough of Manhattan in 1985 and 106th Mayor of the City of New York in 1989.

On Jan. 1, 1990, Dinkins was sworn in before a jubilant crowd of 12,000 in City Hall Park.

"I stand before you today as the elected leader of the greatest city of a great nation, to which my ancestors were brought, chained and whipped in the hold of a slave ship," he said. "We have not finished the journey toward liberty and justice, but surely we have come a long way."

Mr. Dinkins was the city's most liberal mayor since John V. Lindsay in the 1960s and early '70s. He desired to build housing, improve health care, and respond to the concerns of women, the aged and minorities, people with disabilities, gay men and lesbians.

As Mayor, Dinkins was responsible for the establishment of numerous widely heralded cultural staples such as *Fashion Week*, *Restaurant Week*, and *Broadway on Broadway*.

His administration initiated the revitalization of Times Square and secured an unprecedented deal to keep the U.S. Open Tennis Championships in New York for the next 99 years. This arrangement generates more annual financial benefits to the city than the Yankees, Mets, Knicks, and Rangers combined.



David N. Dinkins
1927 — 2020

Mayor Dinkins also instituted "*Safe Streets, Safe City: Cops and Kids*," a comprehensive criminal justice plan that expanded opportunities for the children of New York and continued to reduce crime in the years that followed his term.

He became a quiet elder statesman in later years, teaching at Columbia University.

Mayor David N. Dinkins joined Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) as a Professor in the Practice of Public Policy in 1994. He serves on SIPA's Advisory Board, and has hosted the annual David N. Dinkins Leadership & Public Policy Forum for over two decades.

The inaugural David N. Dinkins Professorship Chair in the Practice of Urban & Public Affairs at SIPA, Michael A. Nutter, 98th Mayor of Philadelphia was selected in 2015. 2015 also welcomed the opening of the David N. Dinkins Archives and Oral History Project at the Columbia University Libraries.

In 2013, Dinkins published his memoir *A Mayor's Life: Governing New York's Gorgeous Mosaic*, chronicling his career as a devoted public servant and New Yorker in love with his city.

In the book, he acknowledged missteps during his

term, including a failure to contain race riots in Crown Heights in 1991, for which he largely blamed his police commissioner, and his refusal to break a prolonged Black boycott of a Korean-owned grocery store in Brooklyn in 1990.

But he attributed the narrowness of his victory in the 1989 mayoral election, and his defeat four years later, to the fact that he was Black, not to missteps.

This former mayor has received numerous awards and accolades throughout his long career. Among them, and most notably, the renaming of the *David N. Dinkins Municipal Building* on October 15, 2015.

In July of 2017, Dinkins celebrated his 90th birthday and stepped down from teaching his popular course at SIPA the following year.

He continued to play an active role at Columbia University and served a variety of civic and charitable organizations and Boards that assist young people including the Association to Benefit Children; Children's Health Fund; Coalition for the Homeless; Jazz Foundation of America; The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund; and Posse Foundation to name a few.

David N. Dinkins is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the National Advisory Board of the International African American Museum; serves on the steering committee of the Association for a Better New York and the Advisory Council of New York Urban League.

He is a founding member of the Black & Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus of New York State and The One Hundred Black Men; a former vice president of the United States Conference of Mayors; Member-at-Large of the Black Leadership Forum; chairman emeritus of the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS; Honorary Life Trustee of the Community Service Society of New York; Honorary Trustee of the Friends of Harlem Hospital; and Lifetime Member of the NAACP.

Dinkins married Joyce (Burrows) Dinkins, the daughter of Daniel L. Burrows, in August 1953 after meeting at Howard University. They had two children—David Jr. and Donna Dinkins Hoggard; and two grandchildren—Jamal Hoggard and Kalila Dinkins Hoggard.

When Dinkins became mayor of New York City, Joyce retired from her position at the State Department of Taxation and Finance. She died on October 11, 2020, at the age of 89.

Dinkins was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha and Sigma Pi Phi ("the Boule"), the oldest collegiate and first professional Greek-letter fraternities, respectively, established for African Americans.

Guest Editorials/Commentary

For the first time in NFL history, an all Black crew officiated an NFL Game

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

In 1965, after beginning his officiating career working college games in the San Francisco Bay Area, the NFL hired Burl Toler as a head linesman— making him the first Black official in any major professional sports league.

Toler, who died in 2009 at the age of 81, almost certainly would be proud of what those who followed in his footsteps accomplished on November 23, 2020 during Monday Night Football.

For the first time in NFL history, an all-Black crew officiated an NFL game. The historic occasion happened when the Los Angeles Rams visited the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the nationally televised ESPN game.

Jerome Boger, 17-year veteran referee, led the seven-person crew, which included:

- *Barry Anderson – Umpire – 14-year NFL official
- *Anthony Jeffries – Side Judge – 3-year NFL official
- *Carl Johnson – Line Judge – 17-year NFL official
- *Julian Mapp – Down Judge – 12-year NFL official
- *Dale Shaw – Field Judge – 8-year NFL official
- *Greg Steed – Back Judge – 18-year NFL official

Previously, five Black officials worked Super Bowl LIV in 2019, including Anderson, Johnson, and Steed. At that time, it marked the most minority officials ever on a Super Bowl officiating crew.

Boger was the referee for Super Bowl XLVII to conclude the 2012 season.

“This historic Week 11 crew is a testament to the countless and immeasurable contributions of Black officials to the game, their exemplary performance, and to the power of inclusion that is the hallmark of this great game,” said Troy Vincent, NFL Executive Vice President of Football Operations.

Five of the officials work together regularly, with Anderson, Mapp, Shaw, and Jeffries part of Boger’s crew. Johnson and Steed joined the group for the Monday night game.

In 2020, the NFL assigned crews based on geography in an effort to limit travel. Crew assignment guidelines have also been relaxed in the current environment to assign officials to games closer to their homes whenever feasible.

Boger became just the third Black referee in NFL history when he earned a promotion from his position as a line judge in 2006, with Johnny Grier being the first at the start of the 1988 NFL season.

“I am proud of my heritage and excited about my participation in this historic game,” Boger said. “The opportunity to work with a great group of Black officials and exhibit our proficiency in executing our assignment is something I am really looking forward to.”



Community Affairs

Enrollment for State Health Insurance Marketplace open through December 15 for 2021 plans

Baltimore— Maryland Health Connection, the state’s health insurance marketplace is open for the enrollment season. The online marketplace, MarylandHealthConnection.gov, will provide a one-stop shop for Marylanders to compare and select private health plans through December 15, 2020 for coverage that starts January 1, 2021.

Last year, nine out of 10 who enrolled got financial help to lower the cost of their coverage.

Health plan rates have dropped by an average of 31 percent since 2018. Also, in addition to CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente, a third health insurer, UnitedHealthcare, returns to the marketplace, with plans in 14 counties.

Value Plans, a popular choice unveiled last year, offer lower deductibles and increased access to primary care, mental

health care, and generic drugs before deductibles apply. All health plans include important benefits, like COVID-19 testing and treatment, substance use disorder treatment, doctor visits and more.

“During this challenging time, we are hopeful that because most people will benefit from decreased plan prices for the third year in a row, we can provide accessible, affordable coverage to even more Marylanders,” said Michele Eberle, executive director of Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. It’s more important than ever to make sure you and your family have access to health care.”

Consumers can enroll online at MarylandHealthConnection.gov, through the free “Enroll MHC” mobile app, or by calling 1-855-642-8572. Also, more than 700 trained brokers and navigators are available to help by phone and virtually.

This open enrollment period is for private health and dental plans only. People who have coverage through Medicaid will receive a notice when it’s time to renew. Those who qualify for Medicaid may enroll any time of year.

Want to comment on the editorials or any other story?

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The Power of Trust and Truth: Getting and sharing facts about COVID-19, trusting science can help turn tide for pandemic-strapped communities of color

By Gary H. Gibbons, M.D. and
Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, M.D

COVID-19 has killed more than 230,000 people in the United States, and the death toll continues to rise at a rate of about 1,000 per day. We know, however, that families and communities don't count their losses in thousands or hundreds; they count them one-by-one—a father, a teacher, a sister, a friend, a nurse, a son, a tribal elder, a church member. And these losses hurt.

But some communities feel the impact of COVID-19 more than others. Latinos, along with African Americans and American Indians, account for more than half of all COVID-related cases, even though they represent just a third of the population. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these groups require hospitalization at a rate about five times higher than whites, due to the severity of their illnesses or lack of early access to health care. And the mortality outcomes reflect this as well: Latinos and American Indians die at

1.5 times the rate of whites, and African Americans, at 2.4 times the rate.

As scientists and NIH colleagues with more than 60 years of combined research experience in health disparities, we are not surprised by the discouraging statistics. But these awful numbers also feel deeply personal: they represent our friends, our family, our loved ones, too, as our roots are in these very communities—Philadelphia's African American neighborhoods, Miami's Cuban immigrant diaspora.

COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, has simply shone a spotlight on health disparities that have long affected underrepresented communities like ours. We know, for example, that obesity, diabetes, and heart disease are more prevalent among people of color. If you have any of these conditions and contract COVID-19 you run a much higher risk for severe complications and death.

But biology and behavior are just part of the picture. Where we work, whether we have access to quality health care, what we eat, and other socio-economic conditions also drive health disparities.

As we grapple with the effects of these health inequities on our daily lives, we can take simple public health measures to help prevent the immediate spread of this disease, starting with wearing a mask, washing our hands, and maintaining six feet of distance from others. But that won't be enough to end the pandemic in communities of color.

As the leaders of two public health research agencies, we know we can't just devise solutions from Washington, D.C. We must also work with those who are most trusted, respected, and closest to these hard-hit communities. Through joint local efforts, we believe we can ensure that the best, most accurate information reaches these communities; and that they are informed about, and included in, diverse research studies essential for developing safe, effective treatments, and vaccines for all. That is why the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued a \$12 million

award to support teams in 11 states to establish the Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19 Disparities.

This Alliance has already brought together community- and faith-based organizations, doctors, patients, researchers, community advocates and minority-serving educational institutions. For weeks, from Sacramento, California to Jackson, Mississippi, we have been listening carefully—to concerns, fears, very practical questions, and ideas. Our sincere hope is that, working together, we will find ways to overcome COVID-19 in a manner that takes into account the history, cultural differences, and unique input and needs of the people it affects most.

How do we do this? We start by offering reliable and easily understood information based on science, by dispelling myths, and by explaining the importance of research. CEAL is working with trusted members in communities like yours to ensure access to information that can be shared through virtual town halls, infographics, animated videos, and in many other ways—like social media posts.

Importantly, we also will be encouraging participation in research studies designed to stamp out COVID-19 in high-risk communities. That's because clinical trials, the fundamental part of the scientific process, show whether new medicines and vaccines are effective at protecting you against disease. When a drug gets approved and your doctor prescribes it for you, you are not wrong to wonder whether it has been tested and shown to work—and especially shown to work for people like you.

This is why it is so important for research studies to include people from all races, genders, ages, socio-economic classes and more. We simply need to learn who is likely to benefit the most from any given treatment. In other words, we can't develop effective drugs and vaccines to conquer COVID-19 in communities of color without the active participation of the people who live there.

We strongly believe that when done right, inclusive research leads to solutions that get us where we need to be. We already have safeguards in place to ensure historic wrongs are not repeated, and that safe and ethical standards are practiced consistently. The Food and Drug Administration, review boards, and expert panels at the NIH—indeed, each institution and company conducting medical research—rigorously review every phase of a clinical trial, from before it begins until after it ends. These review boards include not just scientists, doctors, and experts, but also community advocates who keep a watchful eye on the process.

While these factors are critical to ending this public health emergency, we must keep our eyes on an even bigger prize—a nation without the disturbing health inequities that compromise the health of our whole society. As clinicians who have cared for countless patients of color, as mentors who have supported underrepresented groups, and as members of communities where each one teaches one, we fully understand the power of community to make a difference in the long fight against this conquerable problem.

We firmly believe that by traveling this journey together—by sharing sound information, by squashing misinformation, by being responsible citizens and building trust in science—we can push this deadly pandemic into retreat. Hopefully when that happens, we can embark on a path of inclusion that gives everyone in America a fighting chance for a long and healthy life.

Gary H. Gibbons, M.D. is Director of National Heart, Lung, Blood Institute; and Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, M.D., is the Director of National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities

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REVIEW

Small Axe: Steve McQueen's Five Part Anthology Centers Black British History

By Nadine Matthews

Mixed-race British academic, author, and documentarian David Olusoga wrote in "Black and British: A Forgotten History," "Almost every black or mixed-race person of my generation has a story of racial violence to tell... They are raw, visceral, highly personal and rarely shared beyond family circles."

"12 Years A Slave" director Steve McQueen though, is changing that with "Small Axe," a five episode anthology set in an intricately wrought seventies and eighties era England, premiering November 20, 2020 on Amazon Prime Video.

Centering Black British characters, *Small Axe* unravels the ways that racism in Britain mimics racism in America, and undoubtedly elsewhere in the Black diaspora. *The Baltimore Times* was afforded the first three episodes for preview.

Music is perhaps the most easily portable cultural manifestation, transported as memory across oceans. McQueen keys into this, making music the common thread of the various stories, using it to sharpen sketches of British West Indian culture. For the characters, it provides the comfort of familiarity, a means of smoothing the rough edges of daily struggles, and provides the war chants for their ubiquitous battles against enforcers of white supremacy.

Ripped straight from the annals of history (as most of the stories seem to be), the subject of the first episode is the so-called "Mangrove Nine" court case, which came just two years after the infamous Chicago Eight case in the US. Both involve Black Panthers members and activist allies.

Tensions reach explosive temperatures at constant police harassment, brutality, and baseless raids on Notting Hill neighborhood Caribbean eatery The Mangrove. Finally, in August 1970, a fed up community, led by members of the British Black Panthers, marched on the local police station.

Violence broke out, resulting in the arrests of what became known as the Mangrove Nine, including The Mangrove



John Boyega as Leroy Logan in "Red, White, and Blue."

Photo Credit: Will Robson Scott/Amazon Prime Video



Malachi Kirby as Darcus Howe (left, light blue jacket), Letitia Wright as Altheia Jones-LeCointe (center left, orange top), Shaun Parkes as Frank Crichlow (center right, black jacket), Rochenda Sandall as Barbara Beese (right, black sweater), Richie Campbell as Rothwell Kentish, Gershwyn Eustache, Jr. as Eddie LeCointe (second row center), Nathaniel Martello White as Rhodan Gordon in "Mangrove." Photo Credit: Kieran McCarron / Amazon Prime Video

owner Frank Chrichlow (Shaun Parkes), research scientist and Panther Party leader Altheia Jones-LeCointe (Letitia Wright), Panther Party member Darcus Howe (Malachi Kirby), and others under charges of inciting riot. The slow burn of events leading to the case, and riveting courtroom denouement, are dramatized. Though the acting is at times overwrought, what is plainly communicated is the Black community's sense of frustration and damaged pride.

In the seventies, Jamaicans in British neighborhoods like Notting Hill were transforming the way people partied there, at the same time that Jamaican born DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell) brought the Jamaican brand of DJ'ing to a community center in the South Bronx, birthing what we now come to know as hip hop. "Lovers Rock," the title of the second episode, references the genre of reggae that flourished in Britain at that time. Stressing romantic themes and

dominated by female vocalists, it was the soundtrack of British Caribbean households.

Showcasing some of the best party scenes perhaps ever captured on film, *Lovers Rock* is right up there with the Hudlin Brothers' classic 1990 comedy "House Party" and Camus' *Black Orpheus* (1959). McQueen likes us to tally with the characters and this works in *Lovers Rock* where handsome boy (*Top Boy*'s Michael Ward as Franklyn) meets beautiful girl (Amarah-Jae St. Aubyn as Martha) at a seventies house party. Because his very smooth shot is successful, the audience gets to bump, grind, wine, fight, and flirt right along with Franklyn and Martha. McQueen's direction squeezes the viewer into the wall to wall packed, modest sized suburban living room. This reggae soaked romantic fantasy is an imperfect, almost plotless adventure but an enchanting symbol of cultural resilience and youthful hope.

The state sanctioned violence circumscribing Black British lives that plays out in the other stories, plays a minor role in "Lovers Rock." There are hints though, of the conflicts starting to arise from discomfort with encroaching Black culture, and the rising Black population in once all-white neighborhoods, as the first generation of Black immigrants move into adulthood.

Finally, in "Red, White, and Blue," megastar John Boyega plays Leroy Logan, who stayed committed to leaving his career as a scientist to become a police officer and try to change the system from the inside. The real Leroy Logan recalled in a recent interview with *The Guardian*, his father was so unrecognizable he walked straight past him at the hospital after his father was brutally beaten by police. Still he remained committed to joining the force. Channeling the same type of righteous intensity as a young Denzel Washington, Boyega's Logan is a cop stuck between the rock of a racist police force, and the hard place of his community (and father) that see him as a traitor.

One of Britain's hottest young actors, Malachi Kirby, stars in '12 Years A Slave' director's anthology

By Nadine Matthews

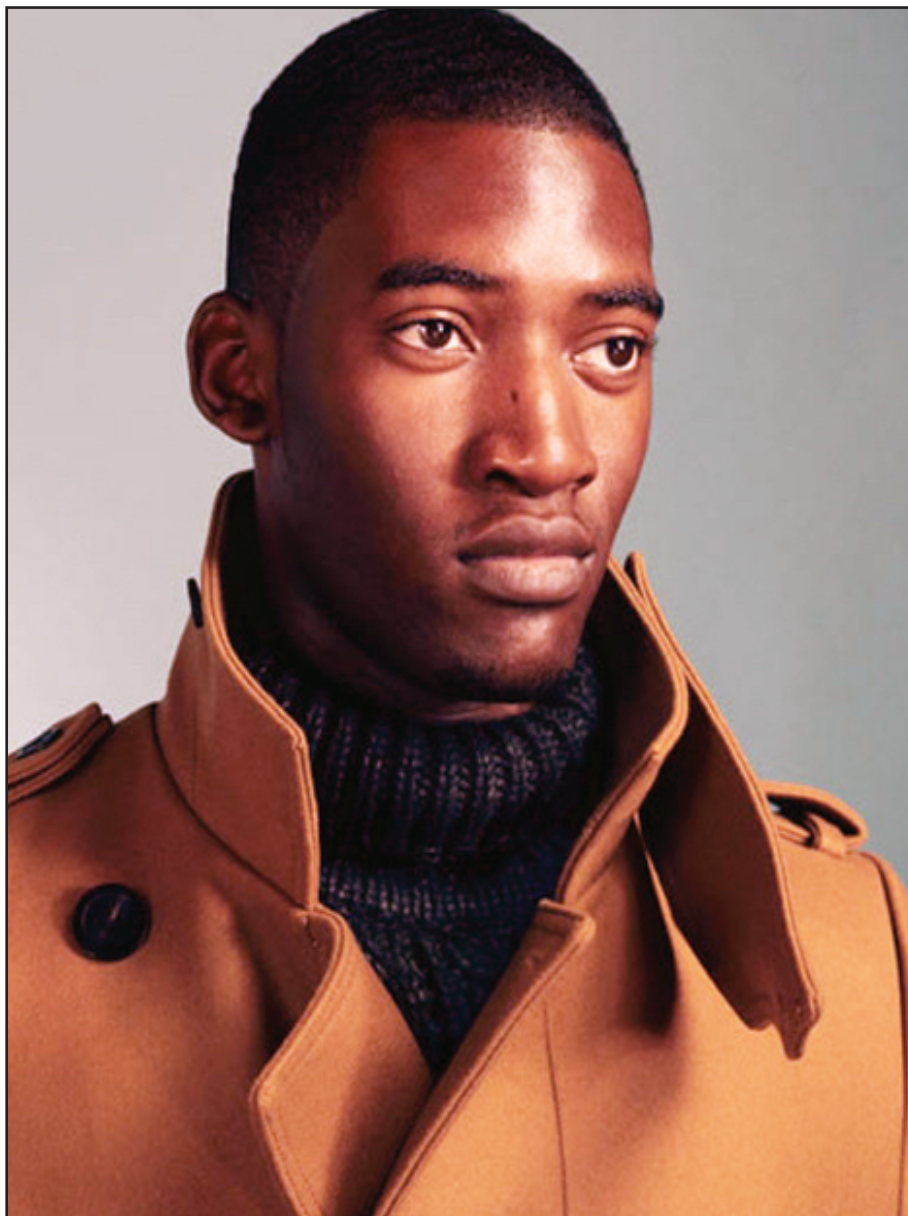
British actor Malachi Kirby famously flubbed his audition for the role that brought him to the attention of TV watchers world wide. In a 2016 interview, Kirby revealed that just about everything that could go wrong in an audition, went wrong when he tried out for the role of Kunta Kinte in the *Roots* remake.

Kirby's experience auditioning for "12 Years A Slave" director Steve McQueen's new five-part anthology "Small Axe" was, fortunately, different. Kirby explained to *The Baltimore Times*, "Every now and then I get an audition that feels like the beginning of a journey, whether I got the part or not." He elaborates that getting to know Steve at the audition made a huge impression on him. "I learned so much from him just through the audition room, not just about me as an artist, but about me as a person."

Kirby stars, along with Letitia Wright (*Black Panther*), Michael Ward (*Top Boy*), John Boyega (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*), and others in the five-part anthology *Small Axe*, chronicling the experiences of Blacks in Britain as they emerged as a major minority group in the seventies, and eighties.

Most of the stories are pulled directly from history, as is the case for Kirby's installment, "Mangrove." It explores the events surrounding the historic Mangrove Nine court case where activists and members of Britain's Black Panthers were charged with inciting a riot after a bout of protesting police harassment in the community and especially the Caribbean restaurant, The Mangrove.

Kirby's parents (his father passed away when he was six) both hail from Jamaica, and settled in the Battersea area. Kirby recalls the feeling he had returning to his hometown, after forging what has been a successful career, full of travel and new experiences. "I grew up on a council estate," he explains, using the British term for public housing. "When I saw what it was, it wasn't a



Malachi Kirby as Darcus Howe in "Mangrove."

Photo Credit: Des Willie / Amazon Prime Video

place that was encouraging. I also noticed that we were surrounded by mansions. It was this weird pocket in this otherwise posh area; this dark side to it that was home to me."

Though he's been steadily acting for years, Kirby's voice betrays incredulity, as if he still doesn't believe it himself. Soft-spoken and deliberate in manner, he says the acting profession chose him rather than the other way around.

"Acting wasn't something I was seeking. It just kept presenting itself to me."

Kirby's mother enrolled her shy and introverted only child in drama class when he was a teen. His peers, seeing something special in him, begged him to be in their productions. "Bear in mind, I was a total introvert and I ended up being the lead in their musicals. Then they suggested that I try for drama school, and I got in.

Kirby plays real life activist and British Black Panther Darcus Howe in "Mangrove". "Out of all the Mangrove Nine there was probably the most documentation on Howe," he explains. "He wasn't just an activist, he was out there. He was such a public figure. He even had his own TV show."

The actor reveals he didn't have much time to prepare and decided to sharpen his focus. "I was trying to understand the person who wanted to become an activist in the first place. He was someone who cared about the lives of Black people, not because they were Black, but because they were less cared about."

Discussing Howe's approach to social justice, he says. "He understood that injustice wasn't just about being Black. It was about education, it was about housing. It was about a bunch of things in the environment that affect who someone becomes. He didn't have a filter, he would just speak the truth."

In development since 2014, the timeliness of the "Small Axe" release is consummate. "I would say it's the first time this subject matter in the UK has had this kind of platform," he states. "I'm so glad it's happening now after the marches and after there has been this awakening across the world where everyone is starting to understand their accountability."

The question as to whether Black history is taught in British schools elicits an involuntary chuckle from the normally reticent actor. "We definitely don't learn much Black history. I didn't know we had Black Panthers in Britain. It's why this series is important. There's a wealth of history which just hasn't been told. They fought for rights that actively affect how we live. That we don't know who they are is crazy."

A Pearl of a Business Comes to Mt. Vernon

The Urban Oyster Now Operating from Hotel Revival

Continued from page 1

“I am excited to work with their team, and they are excited to work with ours. We plan to offer specials to help bring excitement and momentum to this partnership.”

Jason Bass is the Director of Culture and Impact at Hotel Revival.

“It’s our goal to emerge with strength on the other side of this crisis and to support our community along the way,” said Bass. “One way we can do this is by offering resources including physical space and marketing support to The Urban Oyster and other establishments.”

According to Norton, The Urban Oyster will offer pick-up. The restaurant will be in residence at Hotel Revival on Thursdays and Fridays from 3-8 p.m.; Saturdays from 12-8 p.m.; and Sundays from 1-6 p.m.

“Being in Mt. Vernon makes us more accessible,” said Norton. “It also puts us in an area where we can reach more people through delivery services such as Toasttab, Xk Courier, Grubhub, Doordash, and Uber Eats.”

The Urban Oyster is the first female and Black-owned oyster bar in Maryland. A native of Baltimore, Norton said she grew up in both East Baltimore and Baltimore County. The 33-year-old is a 2005 graduate of Milford Mill Academy, and received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Bowie State University.

“I had to learn how to cook in college, and developed a love for cooking,” she said. “From that point on, I started experimenting with food. I decided that cooking was more in-line with what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.”

While her love for cooking dates back to college, Norton’s love for oysters dates back to childhood.

“It started with my dad,” said Norton. “My first experience at seven was in the house eating them on paper plates. He would shuck them in the house along with clams. He also taught me how to shuck oysters.”

Norton said that while some people are squeamish about eating oysters, her



The Seafood Stack – crab cakes, grilled shrimp, lettuce, tomato, bacon, remoulade, and special sauce on toasted bread.



The Urban Oyster’s Hook, Line & Sinker Sandwich. Created by Norton’s father, the sandwich is comprised of fried cod, shrimp and oysters with lettuce, tomato, bacon, and special sauce.

restaurant’s unique way of serving them has “opened up” their willingness to try them.

“I found that oysters were not something that was preferred in my culture and amongst people my age,” she said. “They had textural reservations and did not like the way oysters looked. Through the restaurant, I opened people up to expanding their palates from a culinary perspective by presenting oysters to them differently.

“Charbroiled oysters addressed their concerns about them being slimy. People are more willing to try them because



The Urban Oyster’s famous chargrilled oysters include Cheese Louise, Teriyaki, and Volcano Oy. Courtesy Photos



The Urban Oyster is now operating from Hotel Revival.

they are cooked with things they are familiar with such as garlic and butter.”

Norton said prior to the pandemic, The Urban Oyster had “pop-ups” at R. Haus on W. 39th Street, farmer’s markets, and festivals including AFRAM, and hopes to resume them. She also plans to open a burger stall at Whitehall Food Market in Hampden.

“Once I took the whole idea of the New Orleans style concept behind charbroiled oysters, I wanted to make it my own as well,” she said. “Working in the hospitality industry, I have been driven by experience and memorable components. My goal is to make a lasting imprint from customer service to the food.”



The Urban Oyster’s former location in Locust Point.

For more information about The Urban Oyster visit www.theurbanoyster.com.

Ravens facing COVID-19 scare once again

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens are facing another Covid-19 scare this week. The organization learned late Sunday night that multiple players tested positive for COVID-19. The news came hours after Baltimore's 30-26 loss to the Tennessee Titans.

Running backs J.K. Dobbins and Mark Ingram were the players that tested positive.

The Ravens released the following statement on Monday: "Late last night, we were informed that multiple members of the Baltimore Ravens organization tested positive for Covid-19, and those individuals immediately began to self-quarantine. We have started the process of contact tracing, and during this time, the Under Armour Performance Center will be closed, with all team activities conducted virtually. We will continue to work closely with and follow guidance from the NFL, team doctors and our medical trainers."

Both Dobbins and Ingram were immediately placed into protocol and missed Thursday's Thanksgiving clash with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Dobbins and Ingram will likely be available for Baltimore's Week 13 game against the



M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore where the Ravens play their home games. The next home game takes place on Thursday, December 3, 2020 when the Baltimore Ravens host the Dallas Cowboys. Photo Credit: Patrick Smith/Getty Images

Dallas Cowboys but that depends on if they're symptomatic or asymptomatic.

When a player tests positive and is showing symptoms, he can return 10 days from the time symptoms first appeared and if 24 hours have passed

since last experiencing symptoms.

The Ravens also placed defensive tackle Brandon Williams on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Williams was determined to have been a close contact to another person that tested positive. The defensive tackle had to self-quarantine for five days after determined to have been a close contact.

The NFL was already under intense protocols due to the heightened number

of COVID-19 cases in multiple league cities. However, there were some modifications to their protocols that were sent out in a memo earlier this week.

Here are some notable changes:

*Beginning Week 12, the maximum number of players able to travel to road games will be reduced to 62. To ensure equity, teams must submit a list of players designated as eligible to attend and/or play by 4 p.m. ET the day before game day to the league office.

*Play-callers will not be required to wear a face mask or double-layered gaiter in addition to a face shield to be consistent with all other coaches who choose to wear face shields.

*Postgame interactions between players and/or staff will be limited.

*Starting on Monday, November 30, access to club facilities will be limited to those designated as "Essential Football, Essential Support or Other Medical/Special Services." All others must now work remotely or in a separate facility.

*Beginning with Week 13 games, all members of teams' traveling parties must wear N95 or KN95 masks on the team plane and on the team bus.

The Ravens next game will be at home against the Cowboys on Thursday, December 3. The team did not host fans at their last home game and will likely not have fans at their next one.



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Make plans for Midnight Madness shopping in Annapolis

Annapolis— Downtown Annapolis and the holidays have a deep and nearly timeless relationship. It is where we have traditionally congregated to celebrate, take our families out to eat and to shop.

This year will be no different as the Downtown Annapolis Partnership hosts Annapolis' favorite shopping nights for locals, Midnight Madness. This year Midnight Madness will be held on December 3 and 10 until midnight and on December 17 until the Eleventh Hour (11 p.m.).

The downtown Annapolis, including West Street, Maryland Avenue, Main Street, and the City Dock area will be filled with traditional holiday decorations including beautiful storefront windows, garland, wreaths, holiday lights, a snowflake alley, light canopies, a large Christmas tree, and a menorah.

"You will love strolling outdoors, shopping, and dining in the historic district of Annapolis this holiday season," said Erik Evans, the Executive Director of the Downtown Annapolis Partnership.

Annapolis has been named as one of the best Christmas towns to visit for the holidays by Country Living and one of the most festive Christmas cities in the USA by 24/7 Wall Street. This is in strong part due to events like the Light Parade and Midnight Madness.

Critical to the success of this year's holiday events is keeping everyone safe. So, in addition to the standard COVID safety protocols of requiring a mask while shopping, limiting the number of people in a store, encouraging frequent



In addition to the late-night shopping on Thursdays during Midnight Madness, many of the stores in downtown Annapolis will be adding later shopping hours. Be on the lookout for the new "Open Late for Safe Shopping" flags that merchants will put up on evenings they are open late.

Courtesy Photo/Downtown Annapolis Partnership

hand washing, and telling people if they are sick to stay home, other safety protocols will be added to the list. Both Main Street and Maryland Avenue will be closed to cars during Midnight Madness nights to allow more space for pedestrians to socially distance, this space will also be used for tents for outdoor dining, some outdoor retail space, as a place to queue customers

waiting to get inside a store, and to move some small-scale entertainment away from the sidewalks.

The event shopping hours will also start two hours earlier this year at 4 p.m. This provides another opportunity for people to spread out arrival times and reduce crowding. By shopping either the first two hours or the final two hours of Midnight Madness, shoppers can avoid

the typical primetime hours. The city has extended the hours restaurants can operate outdoors and in heated tents to give hungry shoppers more time to support local businesses. For those unable to enjoy these shopping events in person the Downtown Annapolis Partnership has made it easy to shop your favorite downtown Annapolis businesses online at www.midnightmadnessannapolis.com

In addition to the late-night shopping on Thursdays during Midnight Madness, many of the stores in downtown Annapolis will be adding later shopping hours— until 9 p.m.— in December, especially on Friday and Saturday evenings. Be on the lookout for the new "Open Late for Safe Shopping" flags that merchants can put up on evenings they are open late. Additional outdoor holiday events scheduled include Small Business Saturday in downtown Annapolis on November 28; Artist Sunday throughout Annapolis on November 29; the First Sunday Arts Holiday Market on West Street on December 6; and the Eastport Yacht Club Light Parade along Spa Creek on December 12.

Free garage parking for the holidays will be more plentiful than ever in downtown Annapolis with four parking garages offering longterm free holiday parking.

For additional information about Midnight Madness and other downtown Annapolis holiday events, visit: the Downtown Annapolis Partnership's website at www.DowntownAnnapolisPartnership.org

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GiGi's Playhouse is currently seeking volunteers to lead and assist in fun, educational, and therapeutic-based programs for individuals with Down syndrome. Volunteers with a background in social work, special education, music, drama, speech language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, or behavioral therapy are needed. Volunteers will be trained to lead or assist with GiGi's Playhouse programs or as one-on-one literacy or math tutors. Volunteers can choose from a range of program days and times. Complete the online at <https://gigisplayhouse.tfaforms.net/> to get started. Email GiGi's Playhouse Annapolis' Site Coordinator Judy Co Annapolis@gigisplayhouse.org or call 410-517-7474 with questions or for more information.



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