

2015 She Rose Awards honors domestic violence survivors



Aisha Watson, LaKita Stewart-Thompson, Deborah Hamlette, Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, LaQuisha Hall, Flora Carter, Pastor Freda Anderson and Bishop Designee Joel Anderson celebrate the second annual She Rose Awards that honored domestic violence survivors on Oct. 24 in Baltimore, Md. Hall founded the awards. Five honorees-- Watson, Stewart-Thompson, Hamlette and Carter shared their journey with event attendees during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Andersons are the overseers of Open Door Fellowship Church located in Randallstown, Maryland. (See article on page 10)

Photo: Andrea Blackstone

Women Military Veterans Holding Expo in Baltimore

By Stacy M. Brown

They are regularly on the front lines, having served in conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. They proudly wear the camouflage of the United States military and many leave their spouses and children behind when they are deployed.

However, unlike the men of the armed forces, women who serve are oftentimes forgotten or, as one organization notes, invisible.

"I am a veteran and personally, this organization means that I am able to reach out to women veterans, active duty, reserve and National Guard to bring them information and develop opportunities to address their issues," said JoAnn Fisher, CEO of Women Veterans United Committee, Inc., which works to ensure needs are met for women veterans.

The organization's mission is to honor the service and sacrifice of female veterans who have served in the military and



JoAnn Fisher,
CEO, Women Veterans United
Committee, Inc.
Courtesy Photo

to form a sisterhood to foster camaraderie that can connect women veterans with others.

The group is hosting a "Women Veterans Invisible No More" Expo at the Baltimore War Memorial on Friday, November 6, 2015 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"This expo will give women an opportunity to be heard," said Fisher, who has served as Chair of the Women Veterans Committee at State level with the Disabled American Veterans service organization in Washington and Maryland.

She is known widely for her work with women veterans.

Originally established in 1995 as The Women Veterans Committee, Inc. under the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Maryland, Inc., the group was reorganized as an independent entity separate from the DAV earlier this year.

"The expo will give women an opportunity to work with other veteran service organizations, the community, political leaders, and other stakeholders to assist with developing ways to help veterans and their families with housing, health issues, finances, and their future," Fisher said. "Homelessness is a major issue for women as well as women with children. This organization gives an opportunity to develop ideas and opportunities to reach out and help women help themselves."

Fisher, who lives in Oxon Hill, does a great deal of work organizing events and opportunities for women veterans to obtain information for jobs, filing claims to receive benefits, as well as, quality assistance for improving their life, according to her bio.

Her goal with the organization is to reach out to more women veterans to encourage them to join veteran service organizations in the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan area.

At the expo, Fisher says attendees can expect networking, job opportunities, housing information, camaraderie, and support. It will also serve as a reminder to women veterans that "there are others like you," Fisher pointed out.

"This organization is strongly focused on homelessness with attention to creating housing for women veterans as well as women with children and other opportunities to improve their lives," Fisher said. "With a very large area dedicated to claims. Most of all come and network as well as enjoy camaraderie with those who truly care about us."

For more information about the organization or the expo, visit: www.wvucinc.org.

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A Non-Traditional Solution for College Dropouts

By Susan Groenwald

Mark Zuckerberg and Bill Gates have some company. Today, more than one in five working-age Americans are college dropouts. Unfortunately, most dropouts aren't billionaires. Many are non-traditional students who leave school because of non-academic issues: a sick family member, a job loss, or just the pure shock of returning to school after a long hiatus.

Colleges must do more to reverse this trend. After all, they bear some responsibility for the fact that 20 percent of their students walk away. They can drive down the dropout rate and get more students to graduate by investing in staffing support and resources for high-risk students.

The United States has the highest college dropout rate of any industrialized nation. Almost half of all students who enroll in a post-secondary program fail to graduate within six years. Dropout rates are even worse for non-traditional students—students who commute from off-campus, are part-time, or enroll later in life. Nearly two in three fail to graduate.

Fortunately, some colleges are bucking the dropout trend. By providing targeted institutional support, they're graduating more students on time and preparing them for the workforce. Consider Mercy College in New York. It's implemented a Personalized Achievement Contract program, which places special emphasis on helping first-generation students from low-income backgrounds. Each freshman in the program is paired with a professional mentor who offers academic, financial and career advice. Since its implementation, Mercy's five-year graduation rate has increased 20 percent.

A student coaching service, known as "InsideTrack" has delivered similar results. "InsideTrack" provides students with personal coaches who regularly contact students to discuss classes, map out academic goals, and recommend appropriate institutional resources.

In a randomized study, InsideTrack coached more than 8,000 first-year students at eight institutions of higher learning. These students were almost nine percent more likely to stay in school after their first year than non-coached students. They were also 13 percent more likely to graduate than non-coached students.

At Chamberlain College of Nursing, we've developed a philosophy called Chamberlain Care, which focuses on taking extraordinary care of students and providing them robust resources.

A recent Gallup poll revealed that a primary factor in an individual's success in school and the workplace was having a faculty member who "cared about them as a person." Yet only 22 percent of those surveyed reported receiving such support in college.

Through Chamberlain Care, students have access to success seminars and content-specific tutoring, which teach communication, relationship-building, and emotional intelligence. Students are also engaged in experiential learning through simulated hospital environments and clinical work. Since the initiative was implemented two years ago, academic performance has surged. In one key course, the number of students who passed increased from 71 percent to 92 percent.

The program has proved invaluable for high-risk students who have failed at or withdrawn from other nursing schools. Since its inception, 230 such students have enrolled at Chamberlain's Addison, Illinois, campus. Over 90 percent graduated. Ninety-four percent passed the nurse-licensing exam on their first attempt, 10 percentage points higher than the national average.

The evidence is clear: Programs that provide support through a caring approach help at-risk students graduate. Now, colleges must start implementing them.

The vast majority of would-be dropouts aren't trying to be the next Steve Jobs. They're trying to earn a degree to secure a brighter future for themselves and their families. For their sake—and for that of our economy—colleges must do more to get them to graduation.

Susan Groenwald, Ph.D., RN, ANEF, FAAN, is national president of Chamberlain College of Nursing.



Community Affairs

Baltimore Screenwriters Competition now accepting submissions

Entry deadline is January 20, 2016

Baltimore— Calling all screenwriters! The Baltimore Film Office is now accepting entries for the 11th annual Baltimore Screenwriters Competition. Applicants can submit in the feature or shorts categories. The top entries in both categories win cash prizes, feature winners also receive all access passes to the 2016 Maryland Film Festival and passes to local movie theaters.

The deadline for submissions is Wednesday, January 20, 2016 by 5 p.m. The application and guidelines are available online at: www.baltimorefilm.com.

The competition is designed to create awareness of screenplays as a literary art form and to encourage new screenwriters into the entertainment industry. The

Baltimore Screenwriters Competition is a project of the Baltimore Film Office at the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, in conjunction with film programs at Johns Hopkins University and Morgan State University.

Funding is provided by Morgan State University, The Arts Insurance Program, a division of Maury, Donnelly and Parr and Johns Hopkins University. Additional support is courtesy of the Maryland Film Festival, NEXTCAR and Visit Baltimore.

The Baltimore Screenwriters Competition is open to all screenwriters. Submitted scripts receive coverage by local screenwriters and producers with final screenplays judged by film industry professionals. The 2016 judges include producer Nina Noble ("Show Me a Hero," "Treme," "The Wire"), producer Grant Curtis ("Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2," "Spiderman,") and producer and studio executive Larry Kostroff. Winners of the competition are announced during the Maryland Film Festival on Saturday, May 7, 2016.

For more information on the Baltimore Screenwriters Competition, call 410-752-8632 or visit

Watch film on Black Friday, before you spend another dollar!

By James Clingman
NNPA Columnist

When you die, what will you leave behind: bills or benefits? That's the main question posed by the upcoming documentary film by Ric Mathis, a videographer and filmmaker in Atlanta.

The question is applicable both on a personal and collective level—one each of us should answer honestly.

Mathis has captured the essence of that question, as well as the practical solutions to the frivolous black spending phenomenon, in his upcoming film, "Black Friday: What Legacy Will You Leave?" He transposed all the Black Friday rhetoric into appropriate action not only for that day but throughout the entire year and for the rest of our lives.

Topics of discussion in the film include: negative spending habits, introduction of financial literacy to our youth, and the absence of support for African-American owned businesses by black consumers.

Mathis says, "Black Friday is the Noah's Ark of Economics, if you are not up on this you risk drowning in a sea of

debt." After discovering the alarming imbalance of black spending compared to economic growth within the black community, Mathis used his expertise as a videographer to educate and stimulate appropriate behavioral change with his film, "Black Friday." He lays out the deficit-based economic model by which most of our people are living, and then presents an asset-based model for which we must strive.

As I stated on Montoya Smith's radio

"Rather, the film captures the various aspects of a successful economic empowering strategy, beginning with an introspective question each of us can answer, and then building a foundation of information regarding frivolous spending, economic literacy, saving, investing, business development and support, cooperative and collective economics; then Mathis caps it all off with practical solutions to stop the bleeding and reverse our trade deficit with other groups in this country."

show, "Mental Dialogue" (Atlanta, GA.), considering the fact that Black Friday has saturated our mental tablets to the point of becoming just another cute phrase with no substance, writing and even doing a film on the subject of Black Friday is tantamount to trying to find a new angle to sell a bag of ice.

Having written about Black Friday for a decade or so, and even though I heeded the calls for blackouts and staying home on that day, my response has always been that blackouts would not really make a difference unless we implemented a long term strategy that directed the dollars we withdraw back to ourselves and our own businesses. It's not just about what "not" to do; it's more about what "to" do.

Mathis deals with my contention in a positive manner by covering the short-

term and the long-term repercussions of our withdrawal and recycling of black dollars in his film. It's not just about Black Friday itself or the few days, preceding and following Black Friday. Rather, the film captures the various aspects of a successful economic empowering strategy, beginning with an introspective question each of us can answer, and then building a foundation of information regarding frivolous spending, economic literacy, saving, investing, business

development and support, cooperative and collective economics; then Mathis caps it all off with practical solutions to stop the bleeding and reverse our trade deficit with other groups in this country.

The term Black Friday did not emanate from black people. After several iterations of the term as far back as 1961, it has been promoted as a positive reality of businesses reaping huge profits not only from black consumers but from all consumers. Although quite apropos when it comes to the black consumer, vis-à-vis our penchant for spending our money on everything anyone else makes, the term "Black Friday" does not have to be our reality, which is the basic message from the film. We deserve what we accept, and we must stop accepting the self-deprecating images and self-defeating characterizations attributed to black peo-

ple as it pertains to our economic interests. Our economic imperative must be rooted in the reality of our relative economic position in this country.

Many of the stories we read in mainstream and social media are centered on black athletes and entertainers who spend tremendous sums of money on material things and/or waste it in clubs on liquor and strippers. We read about robberies and murders by young people who want a certain pair of shoes or a jacket—and the latest craze: young girls are stealing hair!

Except for Black Enterprise Magazine and a few other black-owned print media entities, not counting black newspapers, the stories about black entrepreneurs and others who are doing great things in the economic arena are buried, if they are in print at all. So who bears the responsibility of changing that reality? A long time ago I wrote, "The answer to media bias is 'media by us.'"

Ric Mathis has answered that call of responsibility, and I dare say obligation, to produce a video that will not only enlighten us but also move us to action—move us to take responsibility for the financial resources with which we have been blessed.

As we reflect on our answers to Black Friday's questions, let us also ponder our economic condition and then commit to making appropriate changes toward true economic empowerment for black people. For more information about the film, visit: www.TheFilmBlackFriday.com.

James Clingman, founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce, is the nation's most prolific writer on economic empowerment for black people. He can be reached through his website: www.blackon.com.

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Have a Happy and Safe Halloween!

Charlie Brown, Snoopy, rest of 'The Peanuts Movie' Gang encourage kids to trick-or-treat for UNICEF

(Family Features) As kids set out with friends and neighbors on a quest for sweet treats and goodwill this Halloween, they can bring along a new gang – “The Peanuts Movie” gang, that is. This year, the iconic Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaign will celebrate its 65th anniversary by joining forces with another American favorite, Peanuts, which is also turning 65 this year.



“The Peanuts Movie” characters will encourage children to support Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF this Halloween by going door-to-door to collect donations for UNICEF’s lifesaving programs while they celebrate the spooky season.

Since 1950, American kids who Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF have raised more than \$175 million for UNICEF to provide children around the world with medicine, nutrition, clean water, emergency relief and education.

Tools for schools: In addition to children’s efforts to raise funds, teachers of grade K-12 students can participate in the Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF School Challenge. This fall, teachers can enter a short essay (200-500 words) contest about encouraging global citizenship in the classroom and community. The top 15 entrants will receive \$500 worth of Scholastic books. Entries must be submitted at trickortreatforunicef.org by December 1, 2015 to be considered; teachers can also access lesson plans and other resources to engage their students on the website.

To learn more or participate in the Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaign, visit trickortreatforunicef.org.

Keep your trick-or-treaters safe and seen on halloween!

(Family Features) Few holidays delight kids more than Halloween. At the same time,

Halloween generates significant worry in parents and with sound reason. Halloween is the deadliest day of the year for young pedestrians. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than twice as many children are killed in pedestrian/vehicle incidents on Halloween between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. compared to the same hours on the other days of the year.

Why are Halloween pedestrian fatalities so high? For more than 70 percent of kids who trick-or-treat door to door, it’s due to a dangerous combination of reduced daylight, preoccupied and unaccompanied kids in the streets, and bulky costumes that often make it difficult for oncoming drivers to see them.

The child safety experts at Safe Kids Worldwide urge parents to add adhesive reflective tape to Halloween costumes, but this material is expensive and often of low quality. Without sufficient time and distance to react, many drivers may see a pedestrian too late to avoid them.

“Most self-adhesive reflective material on the market is not only difficult to find, it is also of the cosmetic or low-brightness variety, which is only effective at very short distances and only if used in sufficient quantities,” said Chuck Gruber, CEO and founder of ReflectYourGear. “We want to make reflective material affordable and easy to use, in order to reduce preventable injuries by helping people increase their visibility to oncoming drivers. If you want to be seen in low light or darkness, our high-brightness reflective— visible at 300 to 500 feet— is the best option.”

Made with high-brightness 3M Scotchlite Reflective Material, ReflectYourGear do-it-yourself self-adhesive



stickers are available for less than \$10. For a limited time, visit ReflectYourGear.com and enter the code “BeSeenHalloween” to receive a free eight-piece pack of self-adhesive reflective material to ensure your young ghosts and goblins are seen and safe this Halloween.

Proper placement of reflective material can also have an impact on safety. Gruber recommends 360-degree (front, back and sides, including limbs) coverage for Halloween costumes, with reflective material placed at biomotion points, such as wrists, ankles, hands, feet and shoulders.

“The brain is hard-wired to distinguish human motion quickly, so when a driver sees reflective in the shape of a human, there is less time spent wondering what he’s seeing and more time to react and avoid a collision,” Gruber said.

Parents can’t remove all potential dangers from their kids’ lives, but they can take steps to ensure that the only scary part about Halloween is seeing vampires— and maybe the dentist.

An advertisement for the KidsPeace 6th Annual Trick-or-Trot 5K/1-Mile Walk. It features the Orioles logo and a photo of a man and a woman in Orioles uniforms. The text reads: "KidsPeace, in partnership with the Baltimore Orioles and Angela and Buck Showalter, invite you to run or walk for kids in foster care." "6th Annual KidsPeace Trick-or-Trot 5K/1-Mile Walk Held in partnership with the Baltimore Orioles" "Saturday, October 31, 2015 Oriole Park at Camden Yards Register at kidspeace5K.org 410-964-9329"

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Taking a closer look at the Chris Canty Foundation

Many Baltimore Ravens players are very involved in helping out in the community. Defensive lineman Chris Canty is no exception—he has his own charitable foundation.

The Chris Canty Foundation mission statement says, “The programs and initiatives we implement are structured to ‘empower youth’ to grow academically, physically and socially so they can realize their true potential.”

The programs include youth leadership conferences; fitness camps; holiday giveaways; cleanup programs and reading programs.

The youth leadership conferences are held twice a year. The conferences address many of the issues that affect young people on a daily basis. The goal is to develop leadership qualities within high school students that will extend beyond graduation.

Students are given the opportunity to take part in question and answer discussions that help identify healthy relationships, conflict resolution, mental/physical abuse, healthy eating and social media safety.

The Reading Buddies program was established to give young people an opportunity to interact with positive role models in the community. They participate in various activities that show them the strength of teamwork. The program helps them learn how to develop healthy relationships and improve their self-esteem.

The Chris Canty Camp of Champions was founded in 2007. It is a non-contact football camp that teaches kids the basic fundamentals of football, as well as life skills such as teamwork, communication and sportsmanship. The camp has a



Baltimore Ravens defensive lineman Chris Canty with a football camp participant and two volunteers with The Chris Canty Foundation. Founded in 2007, The Chris Canty Camp of Champions is a non-contact football camp that teaches kids the basic fundamentals of football, as well as life skills such as teamwork, communication and sportsmanship.

Courtesy Photo/www.chriscantyfoundation.org

number of activities that give the youth a chance to compete.

The foundation also runs a program called Cleanup for Change that gives youth an opportunity to serve their community. They learn about the importance of recycling and having a green community. The program reinforces the responsibility that we all have to preserve and protect our environment. Young people are invited to take part in volunteer experiences that develop self-esteem and a positive self-image. They work with adult mentors and learn that taking pride in the community uplifts everyone.

The holiday giveaways provided by

the foundation take time to feed families that are in need during Christmas and Thanksgiving. Canty’s foundation gave away 53 turkey dinners at last year’s Thanksgiving giveaway. They also hosted a number of families for a full dinner in Baltimore. Canty and his teammates served the food to the families.

The Christmas giveaway program provides children who are less fortunate with gifts for the holidays. This allows them to experience the joy of Christmas by receiving gifts that many may not have been able to receive otherwise. Youth volunteers are encouraged to take part in the giveaways. This shows them that there is more to Christmas than receiving gifts. They learn that there is plenty of joy in giving as well.

Chris Canty has been with the Ravens for three years and is one of the team’s most impactful players within the community. His foundation is active in Charlotte and New York as well as Baltimore. More information about the foundation is available at: <http://www.chriscantyfoundation.org/>.

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AACC Receives Third National Award for Equity

Anne Arundel Community College received the 2015 Charles Kennedy Equity Award from the Association of Community College Trustees at the ACCT Awards Gala October 16, 2015 in San Diego. This award is the third national recognition the college has received this year for its focus on diversity and inclusiveness in its policies, programs and procedures.

AACC President Dr. Dawn Lindsay and Board of Trustees Vice Chair the Rev. Dr. Diane Dixon-Proctor accepted the award on behalf of the college.

"When inclusivity and diversity are part of a college's core values, everyone benefits, especially our students," said Dr. Lindsay. "We have made equity a priority. Having this recognition strengthens our belief that we are on the right path."

According to the ACCT website, the winner of the Charles Kennedy Equity Award shows "leadership in setting policies, championing an environment of inclusivity and ensuring results for the



Association of Community College Trustees President and CEO J. Noah Brown (left), and immediate Past Chair Robin Smith (far right), present the Charles Kennedy Equity Award to Anne Arundel Community College Board of Trustees Vice Chair, the Rev. Dr. Diane Dixon-Proctor (left center), and AACC President Dr. Dawn Lindsay at a recent ceremony. Courtesy Photo

success and enhancement and expansion of opportunities for women, underrepre-

sented and underserved communities." Only the five regional equity winners

were considered for the national award.

In addition to this award, AACC received the INSIGHT Into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award and was honored as a 2015 National Role Model by the Minority Access Inc. as an institution committed to diversity.

"The ACCT Association Awards are among the most prestigious awards any community college, its trustees, presidents, faculty or staff member can receive," said 2015-16 ACCT Chair and Alamo Colleges (Texas) Trustee Roberto Zarate. "In addition to these individual recognitions, ACCT annually recognizes an outstanding community college initiative whose purpose is to achieve equity in the college's education programs and service, reflecting the association's commitment to equity and diversity in higher education."

For information about diversity at AACC, visit <http://www.aacc.edu/aboutaacc/diversity.cfm>

Nine AACC Students Recognized for Art and Literature

Annapolis— Anne Arundel Community College held a "Meet the Artists" reception October 19, 2015, for the nine students who competed in the League for Innovation in the Community College's annual arts and literature national competition.

The five visual arts competitors are Alicia Jennifer Beckwith of Pasadena, "The Dragon," sculpting; Paul W. Graves of Stevensville, "Leave," photography; Alicia M. Martinez of Millersville, "Typewriter," graphic arts mixed media using ink, alcohol ink, graphite, acrylic, watercolor and color pencil; Melinda R. Myers of Severna Park, "Inside Out," black-and-white photography; and Chris Leeland Ruston of Washington, D.C., "Waterproof," painting. Donna Hepner, associate professor of visual arts, coordinated the on-campus visual arts competition.

The four literary entries are Sarah A. Gummo of Crofton, "Cricket Tankas," poetry; Richard A. Hartford of Pasadena, "Bully," one-act play; Ellie Lewis of Severna Park, "Believe,"



Alicia M. Martinez of Millersville points out an aspect of her mixed media graphic, "Typewriter."

essay; and Eric Scott Rustine of Crofton, "The Final Benediction," fiction. Susan A. Cohen, Ph.D., professor of English and communications, coordinated the literary competition.

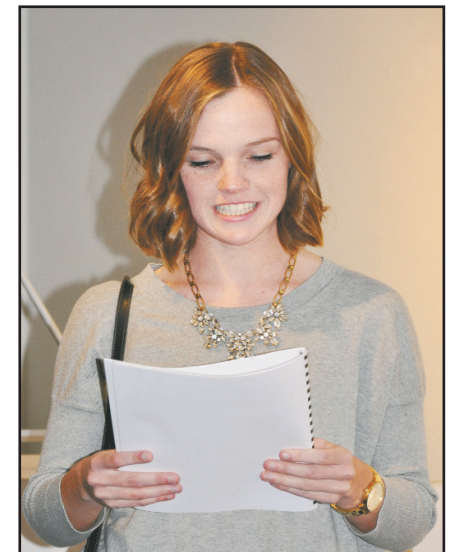
AACC offers robust credit programs, as well as extracurricular opportunities, in visual arts and creative writing. Visit <http://www.aacc.edu/visualarts> and <http://www.aacc.edu/english> for information.



Alicia Jennifer Beckwith of Pasadena shows off her sculpture, "The Dragon."



Melinda R. Myers of Severna Park stands near her black-and-white photography, "Inside Out."



Ellie Lewis of Severna Park reads from her essay, "Believe."

Courtesy Photos

2015 She Rose Awards honors domestic violence survivors

By Andrea Blackstone

Marilyn Mosby, Baltimore City State's Attorney, helped to honor survivors of domestic violence, during the 2015 She Rose Awards at The Double Tree Hilton in Pikesville, Maryland on Saturday, October 24, 2015. This year's honorees Flora Carter; Katina Renee Dolford; Deborah Hamlette; and Aisha Watson publicly broke their silence as domestic violence survivors for the first time.

Lakita Stewart-Thompson, founder of National Association of Mothers and Daughters United Worldwide, Inc. (NAMADUW, Inc.) was honored as an unsung organization founder. Through NAMADUW, Inc. the advocate creates better situations for women and girls who are suffering from crisis or tragedy. Fostering better bonds between mothers and daughters is also a part of the organization's mission.

"I thank God for lives being changed," said Stewart-Thompson. "I just want to encourage somebody today to deal with your issues, because when you don't deal with your issues, it affects everything and everybody around you."

Along with prayer, spoken word and a performance by award-winning singer Carrone Jones, Mosby set the tone for the honorees to honestly recount their personal experiences as victims of domestic violence. Each honoree spoke in front of the sold out crowd of 87 after Mosby delivered her inspiring message that intertwined sisterhood, her own uphill battle achievements and faith-filled lessons.

"When I look around this room at all of these beautiful survivors, I see power not pain. I see triumph not suffering. I see pride not pity. I see courage not fear," Mosby said, during her keynote speech. "You all have turned tragedy into testimonies. It's nights like these and movements like the She Rose Awards that are shining a bright light on the survivors who are not victims. When you share your stories and your testimonies with the rest of the world, when you provide proof that there is life worth living after emerging from your own personal hell, you're doing God's work."

Founded by LaQuisha Hall in 2014, the first She Rose Awards honored survivors of sexual assault. Since it's inception, Open Door Fellowship Church in Radall-



Marilyn Mosby, Baltimore City State's Attorney, delivers a keynote speech to help honor domestic violence survivors at The Double Tree Hilton in Pikesville, Maryland. Photos: By Andrea Blackstone

ston has partnered with the awards. This year, 21 volunteers helped to uplift domestic violence survivors, while assisting Hall. By day, Hall works as a teacher in Baltimore. The author, beauty queen, inspirational speaker and mentor also empowers young ladies through Queen- dom T.E.A. (The Etiquette Academy).

"I started She Rose Awards because I know the power of someone sharing their testimony and how it can help them to progress in life. I had that experience years ago. I told my story of surviving incest for the first time on a pageant stage but of course not everyone is going to be in a pageant, so I had to create that stage for other people to come forward. Beginning last year, we looked for people who have survived sexual assault and domestic violence, but haven't exposed it yet. So that's the goal," Hall said.

Hall further remarked that she uncovered her own confidence during her marriage. Mardis Hall, her husband of 10



Carrone Jones sings a moving song during the event.



LaQuisha Hall founded the She Rose Awards to honor unsung survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. This year, Hall held the event to honor domestic violence victims during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



Attendees pray for those facing domestic violence during the event.

years, supports LaQuisha's passion to advocate for other sexual abuse and domestic violence survivors.

"This is a grassroots movement, not unlike some across the country that is about putting a voice to a people, and then promoting a 'we're not going to stand for it attitude,'" said Mardis while welcoming attendees to the 2015 She Rose Awards.

Mosby's message underscored the belief that domestic violence survivors should not be ashamed to share their success stories with others.

"All too often in our communities we deal with these issues [in silence]—

whether its sexual abuse or domestic violence. We're ashamed to share our testimonies but sharing our testimonies can save somebody's life," Mosby said. "It's very important to do that to change the trajectory of young people coming behind us, so we've got to cast our fear, our anxiety, our guilt, our shame aside and make sure that we're getting to these young people and making sure that they're not going down the same path that we did."

To learn more about the She Rose Awards, visit: www.sheroseawards.com.

Marylanders recognized for volunteerism at 2015 Governor's Service Awards

By Andrea Blackstone

Adam Jones is the well-known All Star center fielder for the Baltimore Orioles. However, his outstanding volunteer work is often done on his personal time when the media is not present. During the 32nd Annual Governor's Service Awards held at the House Office Building in Annapolis on Monday, October 26, 2015, Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan joined the Maryland Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, and the Office of Community Initiatives, to publicly recognize volunteer groups and individual volunteers like Jones who are making measurable differences in Maryland.

Jones, an alumnus of the Boys and Girls Club, was a special guest and honoree and was recognized for his volunteerism at the event. The athlete is a sponsor of OriolesREACH, which provides complimentary tickets for underprivileged youth to attend Orioles games. Jones and OriolesREACH donated \$75,000 to help build a teen center for Boys and Girls Clubs of Baltimore. By the end of this year, Jones will have helped to refurbish three Boys and Girls Clubs locations. He also serves as honorary chairman of the Y of Central Maryland's Send a Child to Camp campaign.

"Everyone's here for one reason, and that's to give opportunity, to help our youth, which obviously are our legacies. I have a son now, and another one on the way, so I am trying to understand the real meaning of a legacy," Jones said at the program. "I want my kids, nieces and nephews to grow up and know that I was a person of change, of impact."

Numerous 2015 award recipients who represented 12 different categories made significant contributions in Baltimore.

Jones, Michael Hebb—a youth basketball, soccer, football and softball coach—and Jason Butler were three special honorees. Butler's sister, Monica Mitchell said that her brother was the very first person who began helping to clean up Pennsylvania and North Avenue in Baltimore, after riots occurred in Baltimore last April, following Freddie Gray's death. Award attendees stood to applaud Butler for helping to inspire others to show pride in Baltimore.

"I saw the story that was being told and it was not our story. It wasn't the Balti-



The First Lady of Maryland, Yumi Hogan (middle) joined the Maryland Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, along with the Maryland Governor's Office of Community Initiatives to publicly recognize volunteer groups and individual volunteers around the state who are making measurable differences in Maryland. Photos: By Andrea Blackstone



Tavares Evans (left), and all-star center fielder for the Baltimore Orioles Adam Jones (right), greet each other during the 2015 Governor's Service Awards. Both men were recognized for volunteering in Baltimore. Volunteers were honored in 12 categories.

more that I knew. I knew it was only one side to the story. It was a lot of ugliness that the world was seeing but, there was more to everything that was kind of happening," Butler later said. "I told my sister I can't let this be the backdrop the story."

Michaela Smith, 14, who serves Baltimore through volunteerism, was a 2015 youth award recipient. After her mother was diagnosed with cancer, she started Hairbands for Hope. She made and sold hair bands, then donated the proceeds to Susan G. Komen Maryland. Michaela later donated 22 bags of school supplies to children whose parents are undergoing cancer treatment.

Tavares Evans, who volunteers in Balti-



Jason Butler (middle), was the very first person to begin to help clean up Pennsylvania and North Avenue in West Baltimore after the unrest in the city last April. First Lady of Maryland, Yumi Hogan (right), claps as a standing crowd recognizes the Baltimorean for his community leadership and volunteerism. Steve McAdams (left) is executive director of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives.

more City, was recognized for volunteering to teach students the value of entrepreneurship and academic excellence. Samaritan Women Residence Volunteers serving Baltimore County were recognized for providing long-term residential recovery services to adult female survivors of human trafficking. Morgan State University alumnus and AmeriCorps alum, Chis Gleason-Smuck was honored for continuing to volunteer extensively in the community.

An award was presented to Lockheed Martin. Their STEM Ambassadors show dedication to STEM education in Baltimore. The Johns Hopkins Community Impact Internship Program— class of

2014, Tammy Ficca, Sandy Miller, the Town of Berlin Ambassador Program, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Prince George's County, Leigh Alvey and Caroline Gaver also received awards.

Steven McAdams, executive director of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, told awardees that they are helping to improve Maryland.

"You're touching lives," McAdams said. "You're addressing a need, and it is so important that we honor you today, because most people who are giving, they are not takers, so most people do not want the recognition. But we want to let you know that Governor [Larry] Hogan knows you're here."

Breast cancer survivor starts nonprofit to help others

By Stacy M. Brown

The pain nagged at Kiesha Harris. Then, the lump in her armpit swelled more. At 34, the Baltimore born Harris seemed to know something that her doctors dismissed as nothing to worry about. Harris had breast cancer.

Because she was young—doctors typically believe breast cancer symptoms don't develop until years later—and had no family history of the disease, it was assumed that the lump would prove nothing more than uncomfortable aggravation.

"I was shocked when I was finally told it was cancer," Harris said. "I just wanted to know what steps were needed and of course I wanted to know about chemotherapy and radiation."

Harris joined the 12 percent of women in the United States who develop breast cancer over the course of their lifetime, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Experts predict that an estimated 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer along with 60,290 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in 2015. Also, while white women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than African-American women, those diagnosed under the age of 45 are typically black women.

"Two years prior to getting a second opinion, I'd tell my doctors about the lump under my arm and they'd say because of my age and no direct family history I shouldn't worry," Harris said. "It got bigger and I knew something wasn't right and when they finally diagnosed me I was fortunate because it was still fairly early in that I was at Stage 2 A."

In January, Harris completed her chemotherapy treatments and three months later, she underwent the last of radiation treatment. Now, she is focused on helping others.

"My mother asked me what was I going to do now and I told her I needed some time to process everything, but that I knew I wanted to help others," Harris said. "You'd be amazed at how many young women have the same story that I have and this is clearly an issue. So, if we can have some sort of support to make sure young women get treatment and get the assistance



Kiesha Harris was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 34. After completing chemotherapy and radiation treatment, Harris started the non-profit "New Pink Inc." an organization committed to helping recently-diagnosed young women get through treatment by pairing them up with a 'pink sister' breast cancer survivor.

Courtesy Photo

they need, that's what I want to do."

Harris has put her words into action, starting a new nonprofit with a goal of assisting cancer patients.

"I started the New Pink Inc., an organization committed to helping recently-diagnosed young women get through treatment by pairing them up with a 'pink sister' breast cancer survivor," Harris said. "At the end of this month, the organization will be hosting its first black tie gala event at Morgan State University and we'll have music, hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction and lots of fun."

The event is scheduled for Friday, October 30, 2015 from 8 p.m. to midnight in the James E. Lewis Museum of Art at Morgan State University located at 2201 Argonne Drive in Baltimore.

New Pink Inc. has already hosted free health and wellness boot camps and, in December, the organization plans a breast screening holiday party. Future plans also include a mobile screening unit.

"I have two younger sisters and I get choked up when I think of them," Harris said. "The support system makes a world of a difference and that's what I want my organization to be, a support for those who may not have someone. I can't imagine not having anyone there for chemo or radiation or any appointments. My mom and uncle never left my side and through the New Pink Inc., we want people to know we'll be there for them."



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Mt. Olive AME Church of Annapolis Celebrates First Responders

Annapolis— On Thursday, October 22, 2015, Mount Olive African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church sponsored the “First Responders Appreciation Dinner” at the Mount Olive Community Life Center in Annapolis.

The purpose of the night was to raise awareness and recognize the hard work of first responders in the Greater Annapolis and Anne Arundel County communities.

Master of Ceremonies Reverend Johnny R. Calhoun, pastor of Mount Olive AME Church, said despite some high profile negative stories in the news lately, it’s important to recognize the important work of first responders.

“In every family, there are persons who do things that cause pain and harm to those we love. However, we do not charge the family for that individual’s behavior. It’s the same way with our first responders. In as much as there are many incidents where we have witnessed wayward police possibly cause tragic circumstances, we cannot overlook the role first responders play in the life of our communities. It’s right and proper to give honor to whom honor is due,” said Reverend Johnny R. Calhoun.

The church recognized traditional law enforcement, fire and emergency medical technicians as well as unsung heroes like public officials, churches, and nonprofits.

The Annapolis Police Department honorees included: Chief Michael Pristoop, Detective Tom Pyles, Officer 1st Class Joseph Ridley, Bill Sachs, Diane Baltins and Dixie Doyle. The Anne Arundel County Police Department honorees were: Chief Timothy Altomare, Corporal Frederick Bethea, Corporal Kam Cooke, and Corporal Dominic Scali.

The Annapolis Fire Department honorees were Chief David Stokes, Deputy Chief Kevin Simmons, and Deputy Chief Douglas Remaley. The Anne Arundel County Fire Department Honorees were: Chief Allan Graves, Captain Russ Davies, and Lieutenant Eric Hammack.

The community first responders included: Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson, City of Annapolis Public Safety Committee; Derek Matthews, Gemini Security Consulting LLC; Suzanne Etgen,



Reverend Johnny R. Calhoun, pastor of Mount Olive AME Church.
Courtesy Photos



Honoree, Chief Michael Pristoop, Annapolis Police Dept.

Anne Arundel Watershed Stewards Academy; Sherry Medley, Hands of Hope, Pastor Sheryl Menendez, Restoration Community Development Corporation; Sascha Lipczenko, Annapolis Youth Services Bureau; Aris T. Allen, Jr., Har-Pearl Spruill Foundation; Apostle Larry Thomas, Smoke Free Holy Ground; and Archie Trader, City of Annapolis Stanton Center.

The program included a welcome by co-chair of the event Dr. Leon Washington, a member of Mount Olive AME Church and an employee of the Annapolis Youth Services Bureau, and a soul-

stirring prayer by Reverend Patricia R. Calhoun. The program also consisted of a video montage of first responders at work.

The program also included singing from Mount Olive’s Melvin Pindell Male Chorus under the direction of Harold Sims, as well as soloist Candace Boston. The food was catered by The Smoke Shack of Ft. Washington, Md.



Honoree Sascha Lipczenko, Annapolis Youth Services Bureau with Dr. Leon Washington, co-chair of the event



The night concluded with a toast by former Annapolis City Mayor Josh Cohen.

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Stay Safe This Halloween:

“Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery”

Columbia, Md.— Autumn is a season full of changes, and the Howard County Department of Fire & Rescue Services (HCD-FRS) would like to remind residents as they prepare for the Halloween holiday to also remember to “Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery.”

“All too often our firefighters and paramedics respond to fires in homes that do not have a working smoke detector,” said Fire Chief William Goddard. “In 2011,

a Howard County resident also died as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning; the carbon monoxide detector in his home had dead batteries. These tragedies can be reduced if everyone remembers to ‘Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery.’”

HCDFRS would like to advise citizens to change the batteries in their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors as daylight savings time ends this Sunday, November 3rd. Also, be sure to remember these important safety tips over the next week:

- Use flashlights as alternatives to candles or torch-lights when decorating walkways and yards. They are much safer for trick-or-treaters, whose costumes may brush against the lighting. Instead of a candle, use a flashlight or battery-operated candle in a jack-o-lantern.
- Wear costumes that are short, snug and flame retardant. Flowing sleeves, capes and skirts or billowing or trailing fabric can cause children to trip and can catch fire if they brush against candles.
- Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper are highly flammable. Keep these away from all open flames and heat sources.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout your home so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Encourage children to trick-or-treat before dark. After dark, an adult chaperone should carry a flashlight and choose well-lighted streets. Children should NEVER go into a stranger’s home or car.
- Replace the entire alarm if it's more than 10 years old or doesn't work properly when tested. Remember the new state law requires a 10-year lifespan smoke alarm which contains a 10-year, sealed-in battery.
- When planning a party or haunted house, remember to keep exits clear of decorations so nothing blocks escape routes.
- Dust or vacuum alarms when you change the batteries.
- Push the test button and test all alarms once a month using the test button.
- Prepare and practice two escape plans so that you and your loved ones can get out of your home safely in the event of a fire. Meet in a place a safe distance from the fire and where first responders can easily see you.



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