

The Annapolis Times

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Celebrate Kwanzaa at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum



Join the Reginald F. Lewis Museum for the annual community Kwanzaa Celebration on Sunday, December 27, 2015 at 1 p.m. Enjoy a showcase of contemporary African fashion, an African musical performance and Sankofa Dance Theater. View a candlelight Kwanzaa ceremony, partake in craft activities and storytelling by Maria Broom and Jali D. Attendees The Reginald F. Lewis Museum is located at 830 East Pratt Street in Baltimore City. For more information about the Kwanzaa celebrations, visit: <http://bit.ly/1j9ysFzcan>. Special \$5 admission available in person. (See schedule on page 14)

Courtesy Photo

Bank of America Nonprofit Grants Help Baltimore's Needy

By Stacy M. Brown

Bank of America has awarded more than \$250,000 in grants to 21 nonprofit organizations to help support their efforts in addressing various needs in the greater Baltimore area.

The grants are part of the bank's broader philanthropic investment in helping individuals and families in Baltimore lead stronger financial lives, officials said in a news release which noted that Baltimore City has one of the lowest median incomes in the country.

"If people can't put food on the table and find an affordable place to live, they can't begin to think about their overall financial security and future," said David Millman, Maryland and Baltimore market president at Bank of America. "Our philanthropic investments are one way that we're working to connect individuals in our community to the resources they need to lead financially stable lives."

One of the roles of grant recipient Strong City Baltimore is to make organizations stronger by providing fiscal sponsorships to its nonprofit business service clients, said Michael Cross-Barnet, the media and communications manager for Strong City Baltimore, which recently changed its name from Greater Homewood Community Corporation.

"We handle the fiscal side of things for organizations doing good work all over Baltimore, and one such organization is the Youth Empowered Society (YES)," Cross-Barnet said. "Although we are technically the recipient of this B of A grant, the money will be used by YES in furtherance of their mission to support youths experiencing homelessness in Baltimore."



More than \$250,000 in grants has been awarded to 21 nonprofit organizations by Bank of America to help support their efforts in addressing various needs in the greater Baltimore area. (Above) David Millman, Maryland and Baltimore market president for Bank of America.

Courtesy Photo/Bank of America

Founded and run by former homeless youth and their allies, YES prevents and eliminates youth homelessness through the synergy of youth and ally partnerships. YES provides urgently-needed direct services to youth experiencing homelessness through trauma-informed peer and ally support; develops the leadership and employment readiness of youth who have experienced homelessness; and partners with youth to advocate for systems change.

"On an average day at the YES Drop-In Center, youth experiencing homelessness ages 14 to 25 come to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, hygiene products, laundry, storage, computer and phone usage," said Lara Law, the program director at YES, which opened its doors three years ago and also provides

a safe place to receive mail, clean up, rest, and plan for the future. "The youth are welcome to, and often do, bring their children. As youth access basic need services at YES, peer and allied staff establish supportive relationships with them, and support them to set goals, break their goals into discrete tasks, and make and sustain connections to long-term resources that help them stabilize." Also, the support of foundations like Bank of America fuels the success of organizations like the Women's Housing Coalition—another grant recipient—and its ability to make a real difference for women and children experiencing homelessness in Baltimore, said the nonprofit's development manager Kristin Danielson.

"The Women's Housing Coalition houses and works with people who were homeless who want to take control of their lives and need help to lead stable lives for the rest of their lives," Danielson said.

Because of the coalition, each year approximately 125 women and 45 children have a safe, affordable place to call home, and are able to experience stability and a better quality of life with safe housing, improved health, and access to education and employment opportunities.

"The skills, confidence and support network our residents gain through The Women's Housing Coalition helps them begin to envision a positive future free from the trauma of homelessness and maintain stability for the rest of their lives," Danielson said.

Bank of America is a vital and valued partner in the Women's Housing Coalition's efforts to provide stability and progress not only for the lives of its residents, but for the communities in which they live throughout the city, according to Danielson.

The grants build on years of philanthropic and employee volunteer support in Baltimore as part of a larger effort to help individuals and families build better money habits and find pathways out of poverty, bank officials said.

"Supporting nonprofit organizations that continue to address Baltimore's most pressing needs is a top priority for Bank of America," Millman said. "The organizations we support have had positive impacts throughout Baltimore and will continue to invigorate our community by helping families and individuals regain and maintain financial stability."

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Leaders provide vision, not division

By Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr.
NNPA News Wire Columnist

Leaders provide vision. They help people understand where they are, how they got there and what they must do to go forward. They help calm nerves and strengthen courage. They are steady in times of trouble, inspiring in times of demoralization.

Donald Trump's reaction to the terrorist acts in Egypt, Lebanon, Paris and San Bernardino, California both divides and weakens us. And for the most part, his rivals for the Republican presidential nomination have allowed him to lead the Republican Party and its run to the White House to ignominy.

Americans are understandably worried. We have been fighting wars in the Middle East for over a decade. We lost thousands of lives and spent literally trillions of dollars in a wrong-headed war of choice in Iraq. We toppled the Taliban in Afghanistan; Saddam Hussein in Iraq; and Muammar Qaddafi in Libya, producing failed states and generating more terrorists. Now we are trying to take out Assad in Syria even as his mortal enemy ISIS takes credit for terrorist horrors in Paris and Beirut. The violence keeps spreading; the terrorists keep reviving and Americans grow more and more worried.

The task of leadership is to provide clarity, and a strategy that quells fears and offers a way out. Trump has chosen instead to foster greater fear, to divide us one from another, while calling on us to abandon our own values.

It is time for people of conscience to once more stand up. We are not in a war with our brothers and sisters of the Muslim faith. They are neighbors and friends. Some volunteer to defend this country. American Muslims despise ISIS and the way the terrorists distort and disgrace their religion. We should not lock our doors or close our hearts to those who are the victims of ISIS and the terror in Syria and Iraq whatever their religion or tribe. The threat to lock out Muslims is harmful, hurtful and divisive.

It is immoral and perversely counterproductive. There are more Muslims than Americans. ISIS may declare war on Western civilization, but that just illustrates their madness. We are not at war with Islam.

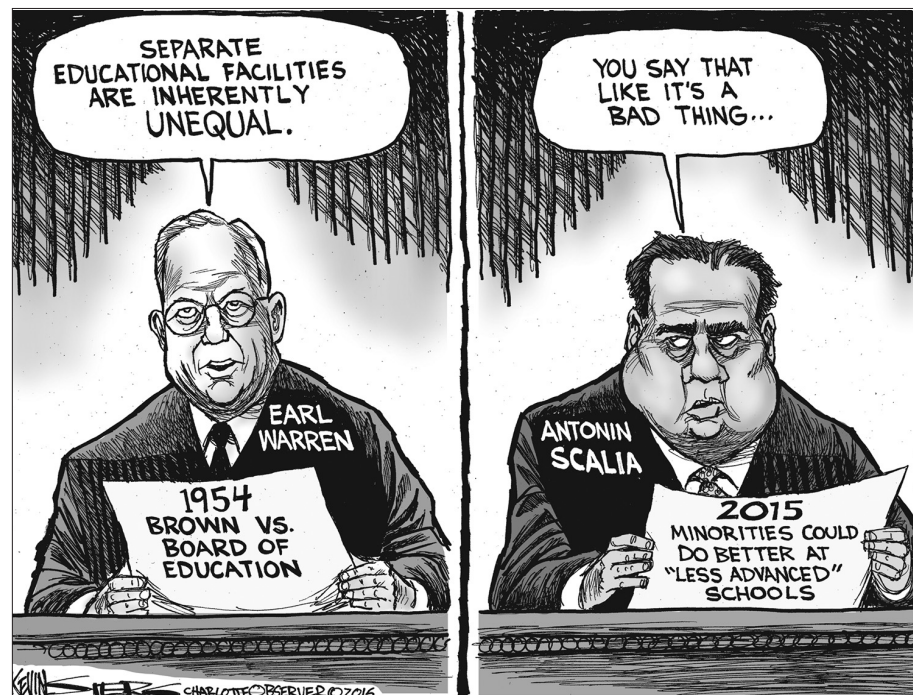
We are at war with terrorists who threaten our people. We want to enlist the overwhelming majority of Muslims to stand with us, not provoke them to stand against us.

In this Christmas season, we should not forget that after his birth in a manger, Taliban was a refugee, fleeing into Egypt with his parents from the threat of Roman violence. He taught us to care for the stranger on the Jericho Road, not spurn and scorn him.

I grew up under segregation, locked out because of the color of my skin. The race test was hurtful because I could never pass it. The same is true of the call to exclude all Muslims. We must speak forcefully against those who would mindlessly impose a religion test for entry into the U.S., and those who would call for closing down Mosques or cracking down on places where Muslims gather peacefully. America will not defeat terrorism by dividing one from another.

Terror is the weapon of the weak. For a people with hope, the hate of ISIS has no attraction. For people who are integrated into a society, ISIS' call to violence goes unanswered. ISIS calls for jihad, arguing that the West is waging war on Islam. We need to isolate the terrorists, not inflate them. We need to give lie to their calumnies, not provide evidence for them.

Anyone who aspires to lead this country ought to demonstrate that they will respect and defend the values on which it has been built. In this time of trouble, Trump and many of his rivals are denigrating the very principles that make America strong.



Commentary

How To Make Christmas

By Glenn Mollette

I received a call from an old friend this morning. I've known him now for over forty years. When I was twenty years old I lived for four months with him and his family in Dayton, Ohio, while I attended Wright State University.

The call was a simple, Merry Christmas call that caught us up on family and life in general. The call began to wind up with him telling me about all the times that he thinks about me, and how much he loves our family. The sentiment is mutual I expressed and we were able to exchange warm Christmas greetings. The call made my day.

I brought my Army son home from the airport Sunday evening. After a long flight home he relaxed in our family room as we caught up on small talk. Just the fact that he was in our home and was safe made my day.

A couple that works with us at our office came by our home last week bringing gifts. The gifts are beautiful but the effort they made to tell us how much they enjoy working with us and that they love their jobs still after seven years meant a lot.

We often make Christmas difficult. We stress ourselves out. We get into fiascos over gifts, travel, money and how to celebrate the holiday.

The first Christmas was about the birth of a baby. People around the world have tried to find all kinds of ways to celebrate his birth for over 2000 years. It's amazing how we sometimes mess up his birthday and the holiday.

This week try focusing on enjoying and loving people. It's often the simple conversations we have along the way that makes Christmas!

Glenn Mollette is an American Syndicated Columnist and the author of eleven books. His column appears all fifty states. For more information, visit: www.keepourfreedom.com.

Review: Ta-Nehisi Coates's 'Between the World and Me'

By Winslow Myers

Toni Morrison calls this book required reading, and it is. Even if it first germinated before the many police murders of unarmed African American boys and men over the last year, it could not have entered the cultural scene at a more fateful moment.

The book takes the form of a letter from Coates to his son, overflowing with mingled anger, despair and love, about the experience of growing up in a country where our foundational heritage is the ongoing freedom of whites to kill blacks with impunity. This injury is complemented by the insult of hundreds of years of rank economic injustices extending back to the origins of our "exceptional" political experiment, conceived, with due respect for their good intentions, by slaveholding white men.

To define whiteness, Coates uses the provocative phrase "people who believe they are white," by which I take him to mean that there is a negative part of some of us that needs to feel superior to,

and therefore also fearful of, some "lower" order. No peak without a valley. The pain caused by this illusory mis-identity is unfathomable.

After the latest mass shooting in San Bernardino, the African-American president of the United States spoke from the Oval Office trying to calm the fears of citizens anxious about the random terror of ISIS. He appealed to our best tendencies: "We were founded upon a belief in

was immediately attacked by presidential candidates of the opposing party with the fear-mongering version of our national identity.

The violence of ongoing exceptionalism, built upon so much insufficiently processed history, continues to assume grotesque forms. Sadly, the Senate cannot even pass a bill that forbids people on terrorist watch lists from buying weapons because the National Rifle

Now I have become part of a family where I have four mixed-race adoptive grandchildren. My love for them is just as fierce and fearful as Ta-Nehisi Coates's for his son. Suddenly, it is of more than the academic interest that the oldest of my four is approaching the adolescent moment when he will start to look dangerous to the police.

The knotted heritage of our nation cannot be loosed by the descendants of slaves who endured it and endure it still. Instead, the knot must be newly owned by those who have too long disowned it; can we who think we are white emerge from the dreamy pretension of our effortlessly assumed privilege? Can we admit that our perverted form of exceptionalism has cut a swath of destruction not only through our national history but also through such diverse haunts of otherness as Vietnam and Iraq?

Those who think they are white came to wherever they are now by free migration not by slave ships, out of the common pool of all humans from the savannas of Africa. In that shared origin story may reside some hope of post-racial— or post-religious for that matter— interrelationship among equals. Meanwhile, we have Coates's authentic cry of the heart from which to learn and grow.

Winslow Myers, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of "Living Beyond War: A Citizen's Guide." He also serves on the Advisory Board of the War Preventive Initiative.

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human dignity that no matter who you are or where you come from or what you look like or what religion you practice, you are equal in the eyes of God and equal in the eyes of the law." While acknowledging the reality of terrorism, he cautioned against separating Muslims and non-Muslims into a stereotypical "us and them." Because "us and them" sadly forms a big chunk of our only partly acknowledged heritage, Obama

Association has such a powerful lobby. What are the roots, if not raw fear of the "other," of this white obsession with the Second Amendment?

At my Ivy League college 50 years ago, the hundred or so young white men with whom I shared meals were served by a group of young black men in white coats. Did we speak a friendly word to them? Did we see them as people with the same potentialities as ourselves? We did not.

The Annapolis Times

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Diabetes Prevention Program Launched at UMD

By Stacy M. Brown

From what is known, the numbers are staggering. Statistics revealed in 2014 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that 29.1 million people in the United States have diabetes.

That's 9.3 percent of the country's population and it doesn't consider the 8.1 million—or— 27.8 percent of those who have the disease but don't yet know it.

The unknown is all the more astonishing when considering that an estimated 86 million Americans aged 20 years or older have pre-diabetes, a condition where an individual's blood sugar or glucose level is higher than it should be, but not in the diabetes range.

"The key is to first get screened and tested. If you have a family history, you will have increased your risk of developing diabetes and the test is just a simple finger prick from your primary care doctor or health care provider," said Angela Ginn-Meadow, a certified diabetes educator at the University of Maryland Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology at the school's midtown campus. "If a person is diagnosed, it's okay, it only means that you can do something about it," Ginn-Meadow said. "People often walk around for 10 years without knowing they have developed diabetes."

Some of the symptoms include extreme tiredness, sores and wounds that don't heal well, individuals who are overweight, over 45 years-old, and those who lack regular exercise, Ginn-Meadow said. If a woman has given birth to a baby over nine pounds or anyone who has a family history of diabetes should be sure and get tested, she said.

Ginn-Meadow and others at the University of Maryland Medical Center Midtown Campus are committed to raise awareness and to provide assistance to people with diabetes and pre-diabetes by sponsoring a 16-week lifestyle change and prevention program designed to help reduce the risks associated with the dis-



*Angela Ginn-Meadow
Diabetes Educator*

*University of Maryland Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology
Courtesy Photo*

ease. Participants in the program are encouraged to take charge of their health and will meet twice weekly for four months and then once a month for six months to help them maintain healthy lifestyle changes.

"There have been other programs, but this prevention program was recognized by the CDC and it's part of a statewide initiative," Ginn-Meadow said. "It really is for people who either have pre-diabetes or have actually completed a risk assessment that puts an individual at a high risk of having diabetes."

The diabetes prevention program begins on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at the University of Maryland Medical Center Midtown Campus in the Center

for Diabetes and Endocrinology on the second floor of the hospital located at 827 Linden Avenue in Baltimore.

Classes at University of Maryland Medical Center's downtown campus located at 22 S. Greene Street in Baltimore will begin in early February.

During each session, lifestyle coaches will teach lessons and lead group discussions on various topics such as eating healthy, adding physical activity, managing stress and ways to stay on track when eating out. The coaches will also assist in setting goals, building relationships, working as a team and helping to keep individuals motivated, according to Ginn-Meadow.

"[Participants] in the class who have stayed active and gone beyond 150 minutes of activity each week have the biggest outcome," Ginn-Meadow said. "You can cut years off of developing diabetes if you have prediabetes but your lifestyle really is the key. Education is very important for prevention, for management and treatment and a diabetes education can help people manage living with diabetes."

The classes are free and open to anyone at-risk with pre-diabetes and other lifestyle challenges. Registration is required. To register, call 410-328-8402.

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Girl Scouts' Holidays Made Happier with Gift of a Van

Contribution from the Wheeler Foundation enabled the purchase of new van for Girl Scouts of Central Maryland's Beyond Bars program

Baltimore— Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM), after months of fundraising efforts, received a sizeable contribution from the Wheeler Foundation that has allowed the organization to purchase a new van to provide transportation for members of the council's "Beyond Bars" troop.

The \$25,000 donation covered the majority of the \$33,000 cost of a new 2016 Ford Transit 15-passenger van.

The Girl Scouts' Beyond Bars program links girls with their mothers who are incarcerated at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) in Jessup, Maryland through troop meetings at the prison. The van will be used to transport girls living with guardians in Maryland to MCIW for their twice-monthly troop meetings.

Troop meeting activities at MCIW facilitate bonding so that trust can be re-established as the girls work with their mothers to earn badges and learn Girl Scout traditions. GSCM also takes the girls on field trips, where they can explore and learn teamwork and responsibility.

The van will also be used to take the girls on these educational field trips. The previous vehicle used for these purposes was beyond repair.

There are currently 35 girls participating in the Beyond Bars program. On any given troop meeting day, between six and 12 girls are picked up from their



Violet M. Apple, Chief Executive Officer of Girl Scouts of Central Maryland; and Valerie Montague, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, Beyond Bars Coordinator, with the new 2016 Ford Transit 15-passenger van that will be used to transport girls in the Beyond Bars troop to the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women in Jessup, as well as field trips. The Beyond Bars program links girls with their mothers who are incarcerated at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women through troop meetings at the prison. Currently, there are 35 girls participating in the Beyond Bars program.

Courtesy Photo/Girl Scouts of Central Maryland

homes or from Girl Scouts headquarters on Seton Drive for the trip to MCIW.

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program began in Central Maryland in 1992 and has been replicated by dozens of Girl Scout councils across the nation.

Research conducted by the National Girl Scouts Research Institute shows

that the girls in the Beyond Bars program fare better in school and with relationships than girls who lose connection with their incarcerated mothers.

"We are extremely thankful to the Wheeler Foundation for this gift," said Violet M. Apple, Chief Executive Officer of Girl Scouts of Central Maryland.

"We are very proud of the programming we are able to offer girls who are often forgotten by society. The Girl Scouts program can make a difference in every girl's life. Acquisition of this new van ensures that we can continue to serve girls and help them to build relationships with their mothers."

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Gregory Wm. Branch, M.D., MBA, CPE - Director, Health and Human Services
Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz and the Baltimore County Council
Supported by the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Behavioral Health Administration
and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Ravens Lardarius Webb spreads holiday cheer with toy drive

By Turren Davenport

The Baltimore Ravens strongly believe in giving back to the community. The team is deeply involved in various community outreach programs.

Ravens cornerback Lardarius Webb is one player who is firmly entrenched in the Baltimore area community because of the many things he does to help out less privileged youth and their families.

Webb's community work has rubbed off on his teammates as well.

The Lardarius Webb Foundation hosted the Sixth Annual Toy Drive this week. Webb was joined by fellow Ravens defensive back Anthony Levine as they collected toys at the Webster Kendrick Boys and Girls Club in Baltimore.

The goal was to collect as many toys as possible to give to some of the less fortunate families in Baltimore. Webb was happy to be able to help provide Christmas cheer to so many families. The fact that some of his teammates have joined him in giving back makes it even better.

"It means a lot to me personally because



Ravens cornerback Lardarius Webb celebrates after a play during the 2015 season at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, Maryland.

Courtesy Photo/NFLPA.com

I can give back to the kids," Webb said. It's good for us to connect as fans and teammates. Giving back to the community

together as a team is the best." The toy drive is a continuation of a

project that Webb put on through his foundation last month. They held a toy drive just before Thanksgiving at the Greene Turtle restaurant and bar in Owings Mills.

Webb does a lot of work with the United Way in Baltimore. He is truly a man of the community. His foundation hosts a variety of year round events that benefit the Baltimore area.

Bringing smiles to the faces of many area children is one of the many things Webb does through his foundation.

According to their website, "The Lardarius Webb Foundation was formed to raise and distribute funds to provide aid to underprivileged children and their families." Their goal is to encourage young men and women to stay off the streets and out of the trouble that lurks in the shadows.

Members of the foundation further help youth by motivating them to build confidence and to set positive goals.

For more information about The Lardarius Webb Foundation, visit www.lardariuswebb21.com

Red Cross seeks volunteer drivers

Baltimore— The American Red Cross Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Blood Services Region is seeking volunteer drivers to transport blood products and volunteers from area blood drives to its Mt. Hope Drive facility and to deliver blood products to Central Maryland hospitals.

The positions are open to people with daytime/weekday availability for at least six hours during the week. There is an application to complete, a training to attend and a background check to pass in order to become a registered volunteer. The minimum time of commitment is for six months.

Volunteers must have a valid Maryland Drivers license with a clear driving record, be at least 21 years old with two years of driving experience in the United States, and be familiar with the Central Maryland area.

If you enjoy working as a valued team member, have weekday/daytime availability, and want to support efforts to help save lives, the Red Cross needs you!

For more information, please contact Terry Ann Karloff at 410-764-4602 or email TerryAnn.Karloff@redcross.org.

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Best-selling author's true rags to riches story

By Stacy M. Brown

She went from Welfare to Wall Street and from failing grades to running a successful publicly traded business and now Lisa Nichols is sharing her life story and the secrets to creating a life that is rich in every possible way.

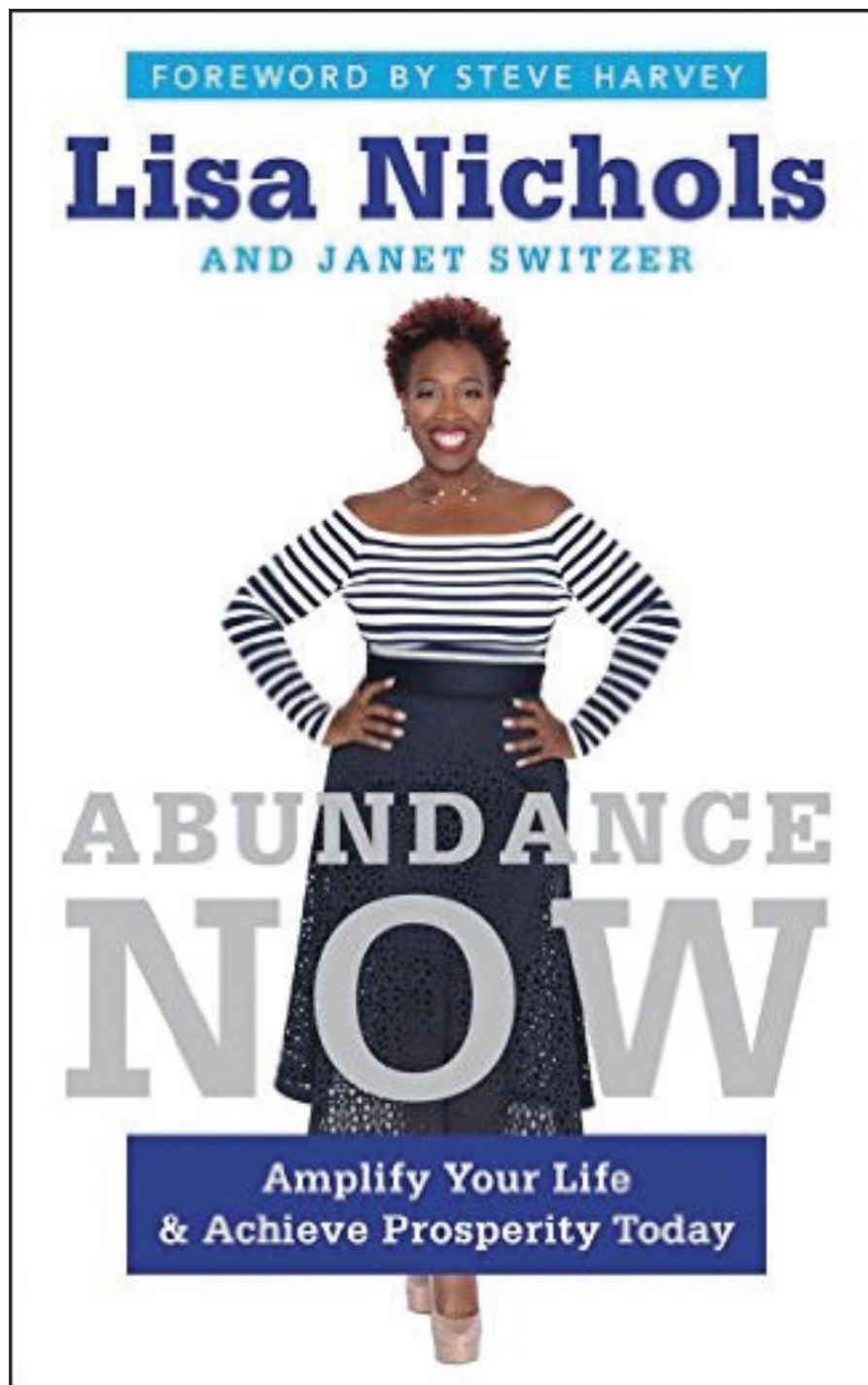
Nichols, the founder and CEO of the training and development company "Motivating the Masses," is releasing her latest book "Abundance Now: Amplify Your Life & Achieve Prosperity Today."

"I was so determined to write this book and I wrote it between November [2014] and March," Nichols said. "I wrote it by the moonlight and the crack of dawn because I didn't have time during the day."

Unlike many writers and authors, Nichols says she didn't have that internal tug of war with her thoughts. She had been interviewed many times and questions about her journey from welfare to the boardroom usually dominated the discussion so it was easy to chronicle that story and even easier to weave in helpful information to help others get on the path to a life of abundance.

The 336-page tome published by Dey Street Books focuses on the areas of life that must be refined to bring true abundance, including enrichment, engagement and endowment, according to Nichols.

Readers are presented the framework upon which a fulfilled life is built and "Abundance Now" contains thought-provoking lessons, actionable plans, real-life stories, and makes clear what must be done each day to open the door to a life of richness. Nichols also writes candidly about her experience and notes how the course of her life changed forever after taking a long look into the



eyes of her son, Jelani.

"When my son was born and even before he was born I was standing in the public assistance line on Century Boulevard in Los Angeles with tears streaming down my face recognizing that I literally couldn't take care of my baby," Nichols said.

"That level of pain, humiliation and shame was only beat out by the time when Jelani was eight months old and I didn't have money to buy Pampers," she said. "I went to the ATM to get \$20 and I only had \$11 in the bank and I had to wrap my son in a towel."

That was her turning point, according to Nichols.

"That's when I said 'I'm done with being here,'" she said. "That was in 1995 and I looked at my son and told him that he didn't have to worry about mommy being broke again."

Nichols says she began to hunt for information because she knew that wealth isn't necessarily limited to just a few, but is available to all who pursue it the right way.

"I wanted to go to the education places, I borrowed books and begged my way into conferences," Nichols said. "I realized that my human spirit, my tenacity wasn't measured by the balance in my bank account."

Now available at Amazon.com and other sellers, the book arrives in stores on January 5, 2016. With its release, Nichols says she is committed to motivational speaking and other tours and engagements to promote the message that everyone can live a life of abundance.

"I'm committed to helping to transform one million lives over the next three years," she said. "I'll do live events, free retreats, abundant life commercials and even an abundant life movie."



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High school girls surprised with new coats

By Andrea Blackstone

Christmas Angel Girlfriends paid a visit to Laurel High School, Bladensburg High School and Charles Herbert Flowers High School in Prince George's County to deliver 45 new coats to young ladies in need on December 16, 2015. An Annual New Classy Coat Drive was created by Barbara Holt Streeter (MrsPRProtocol)— a highly experienced public relations and etiquette expert who provides professional services and training to individuals, businesses and faith-based organizations. This year marked the second new coat drive.

"Today, you get a new coat, you get a new coat, you get a new coat and yooouu get a new coat!" Streeter cheerfully informed students at Charles Herbert Flowers High School, while explaining to students who initially were unaware they were about to be surprised.

Streeter, who is a well-respected business and community leader, lives in Prince George's County, Maryland. She says that her mother taught her to give back and make a difference in the lives of others. The philanthropist remains guided by the messages that were provided in her youth. Streeter's heartwarming holiday idea started when she noticed girls without coats walking to school. And now, giving new coats away from a rolling coat rack that is wheeled into schools has become a Christmas tradition for Streeter and her "girlfriends."

"I was doing some errands every day, driving past Largo Senior High [School] on [Route] 202, and I just kept noticing these girls shivering and just walking across the street with no coat. And I said, 'Okay, there must be a problem here. Either they're just fashionable, and just don't want to wear a coat, or do they really not have a coat?'"

After reaching out to her county council person, Streeter began contacting high schools directly and connected her mission to give to her annual Girlfriend's Gratitude Tea that she launched in 2012, after one of her girlfriends was killed in a car accident. Also known as "the Girlfriend CEO," women attend Streeter's summer tea or winter tea in the D.C. area. During both events, registered attendees reconnect with their girlfriends and meet new ones. They are also invited to show gratitude and support a community initiative to give back to others.

"Every tea, we decided on a group that we want to give to," Streeter said to students. "In the winter we do an annual coat drive. This is the second annual coat drive, and we decided to give back to high school girls and give them new coats."

A portion of the proceeds from a recent tea event attended by approximately 140 women helped to buy new coats this year. Volunteers who lend support to Streeter are comprised of women in the Girlfriend's Gratitude Tea circle. They have been getting together



A student who attends Charles Flowers High School in Prince George's County hugs Barbara Holt Streeter after she surprised the young lady with a new coat. The Annual New Classy Coat Drive was created by Streeter, who resides in Prince George's County, Md.

Photos: Andrea Blackstone

through Streeter's teas for nearly three years.

"We've given back to entrepreneur programs, breast cancer awareness, health awareness, but what is true to my heart are girls, young girls, to help build their self-esteem, and to help keep them warm, so that's how we started it," Streeter said.

The cheerful giver recently turned 50 years old and is proud to share her milestone with the world. Streeter shows no signs of slowing down. Along with her "Girlfriends," she wants to reach every high school in Prince George's County to expand the new coat program within five years, although Streeter predicts that the goal can be accomplished sooner.

After girls at Streeter's last stop tried on new coats, some smiled and hugged her a second time. People like Streeter, her "girlfriends" and sponsors can remind others that not everyone has forgotten what the holiday season is truly about.

"Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart. It means so much that someone is willing to step outside



Barbara Holt Streeter, middle, her "girlfriends," a volunteer and staff at Charles Herbert Flowers High School celebrate a successful new coat giveaway before the Christmas holiday begins.

of their family to help with somebody else that they don't even know," counseling department chair at Charles Herbert Flowers High School, Heidi King said. "It takes a community to come together to do something... and so from the bottom of my heart, and from the Jaguars at Charles Herbert Flowers High School, thank you."

Celebrity Stylist Successful Career is ‘Rooted’ in Hair Care

By Ursula V. Battle

Celebrity Hair Stylist Cynthia Alvarez’s clientele includes the likes of singer/actress KeKe Palmer and singer, model and actress Tatyana Ali. Her workmanship has graced the red carpet world stages of The Emmys and MTV Video Music Awards. Most recently, the native New Yorker joined Dove as a hair curl expert and celebrity hair stylist.

“I am a free spirit,” said Alvarez. “I have to be creative and mobile. “I feel like hair trends come and go and you have to capitalize on each one. I am also a wig expert. I like to say I am well-rounded. I still pinch myself when I think about this opportunity with Dove.”

As a celebrity hair curl expert and hair stylist for Dove, Alvarez responsibilities include television appearances, and traveling to beauty salons all over the country to use Dove’s Quench Absolute Hair Care Series during their ‘Salon Days’ events.

“Everyone knows Dove for their skin care products,” said Alvarez. “But their hair care products are also great, and I really believe in them. There are a lot of gels, cremes, mousses, and other products out there. However, once your hair is moisturized and hydrated, you don’t need all those products. They become counter-productive. We support styling products, but we also want people to nourish their hair and get control of their curls.”

The Dove brand started in the U.S. in 1957 with the revolutionary new beauty cleansing bar. According to Dove, its iconic cleansing bar is the number one dermatologist recommended brand in the U.S., Canada and France. Today, Dove offers a range of products, which include body washes and hair care products.

Dove’s Quench Absolute Hair Care Series is geared toward naturally curly hair. According to Dove, naturally curly hair is physically different compared to other hair types and requires a higher degree of nourishment, prompting them to create the Quench Absolute series. The series consists of Quench Absolute Shampoo, Quench Absolute Conditioner, Quench Absolute Crème Serum, and Quench Absolute Restoration Mask.

“I feel like with curly hair, people get frustrated and they give up,” said Alvarez. “I encourage women not to give up on their hair. We are beautiful the natural way we are. We have to work with what we’ve got, and not against it.”

Alvarez’s beauty tips and work can be read in *Seventeen* and other publications. The native New Yorker talked about the growth of her successful hair career.

“I was born and raised in the Bronx, New York,” she said. “I was planning on going into the Air Force after high school. But one night, I ran into a friend who was a celebrity wardrobe stylist. He told me he really loved the way I did my own make-up and hair, and that I had



*Alvarez styles a client’s hair during a Dove ‘Salon Day’ event.
Courtesy Photo*

no idea of the bigger picture. That’s how I got started. He was working with rapper 50 Cent and other celebrities. I started assisting, and that’s how it all began.”

She added, “After finishing beauty school, I began working in a hair salon. I eventually got a call from a hairstylist I was assisting. She said singer Alicia Keys was going on tour, and needed a stylist. She couldn’t do it, and asked if I was interested. I said I was interested, and Alicia Keys gave me a test run. She called and offered to take me on tour with her. I left the salon and went on tour with Alicia when I was just 20 years old. All of this has been a dream come true.”

According to Alvarez, her interest in hair care was ‘rooted’ in her at a young age.

“When I was growing up, I was always doing hair,” recalled Alvarez. “I was the neighborhood hair braider. I was doing Allen Iverson braids, and would experiment on my cousins’ hair.”

Alvarez, who said she would like to start her own hair care product line one day, shared this advice for aspiring stylists.

“Before I went on tour with Alicia Keys, I assisted,” she said. “Assisting is how I started my career, so you have to be open to being an assistant. You also have to have a foundation. There are always new trends and techniques. You have to be willing to learn new things, and be a student of your craft. You also have to be humble, and connect with the right people,”

The talented stylist talked about one of the most gratifying “parts” of her career.

“I love what I do, because I believe that women are accepting who they are,” said Alvarez. “Everyone is beautiful in their own unique way. By wearing their own natural curly styles, women are embracing their culture and destroying stereotypes.”

Jesse Jackson Sr. delivers Morgan's December Commencement Address

University Commemorates 50th Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965

Baltimore— Noted civil rights leader and human rights activist, Reverend Jesse L. Jackson Sr., served as keynote speaker as 365 individuals celebrated their graduation at Morgan State University's third December commencement on Friday, December 18, 2015. Additionally, the graduation exercises in the Hill Field House marked the University's 50th anniversary commemoration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

"Fifty years ago, this important legislation made it possible for all people in this country, particularly African Americans, to exercise their right to vote, many for the first time," said Dr. Wilson. "And as we pause to celebrate the 50 years since enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, we are fortunate that our students were able to share in this milestone with one of the nation's longtime champions of civil rights. Rev. Jackson's messages of hope and inspiration are appropriate at this time in America's history and for these young people who are celebrating the start of a new chapter in their lives."

The Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson Sr. has long advocated for social justice and economic empowerment, the principles on which he established Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity) in 1971. PUSH was organized to work for the economic improvement of African-American communities in the U.S. The organization later expanded its mission to be more inclusive, when it merged with Jackson's newly formed National Rainbow Coalition, working for civil rights, peace and justice around the world. He has been called the "conscience of the nation" and "the great unifier." Among his many honors is the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, presented by President Bill Clinton.

Atherine Lucy Foster, another civil rights pioneer, was the recipient of the honorary Doctor of Public Service degree from Morgan for her role in helping to desegregate the University of Alabama. Foster enrolled in the University in 1952 and after being expelled when it was learned she was African American, spent several years in court battles, finally graduating 40 years later. Morgan State's civil rights pioneers were also honored in today's ceremony, receiving the university's highest recognition, the honorary Doctor of Laws degree, for helping launch what would become the nation's first peaceful protest movement to achieve desegregation using mass sit-in demonstrations. These pioneers, Morgan students from 1947-1963, were responsible for desegregating theaters

and lunch counters in Baltimore, including at the Northwood Shopping Center, across the street from the Morgan campus.



Reverend Jesse Jackson, MSU Chairman Kweisi Mfume and MSU President David Wilson present Atherine Lucy Foster with the honorary Doctor of Public Service degree. Courtesy Photo/Morgan State University

"Rev. Jackson's messages of hope and inspiration are appropriate at this time in America's history and for these young people who are celebrating the start of a new chapter in their lives." —MSU President David Wilson

In all, a total of 365 undergraduate and graduate students received degrees during Morgan's December 2015 commencement. A posthumous degree was awarded to Stacy L. Lockhart, who died earlier this year after meeting all of her requirements for graduation. Lockhart's 12-year-old son accepted the degree on her behalf.

Morgan State University, founded in 1867, is a Carnegie-classified doctoral research institution offering more than 60 academic programs leading to bachelor's degrees as well as programs at the master's and doctoral levels. As Maryland's public urban research university, Morgan serves a multi-ethnic and multiracial student body and seeks to ensure that the doors of higher education are opened as wide as possible to as many as possible. For more information about Morgan State University, visit www.morgan.edu.



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Obituary Howard Gordon “Gelo” Hall



April 3, 1927 - December 10, 2015

Howard Gordon Hall, best known as “Gelo,” was born in Baltimore, Maryland to Howard Hull and Evelyn Sheridan on April 3, 1927. He was educated in the Baltimore City Public School system. He served in the United States Army and was honorably discharged in 1946.

He married his high school sweetheart, Lillian Stewart, on October 22, 1946. From this union, two beautiful daughters, Janis and Judy Hall were

born.

His father was a jockey’s valet and introduced Gelo and his brother, Angelo to the racing industry at very early ages. While working at the racetrack, his brother was known as “Big Gelo” and he was known as “Little Gelo.” Howard later became the one and only “Gelo.”

At 14, he was employed by H.L. Straus to break yearlings at Cherry Hill Farm in Reisterstown. He fol-

lowed the horses to Pimlico, and went to work for Frank “Downey” Bonsal. Over the years, his career included positions as an exercise rider, licensed trainer, jockey’s agent, and patrol judge. He was a graduate of the Jockey Club School for Racing Officials.

Gelo was a remarkable part of Maryland’s Thoroughbred history and was fortunate to see some of the best horses and races the sport has ever produced. He was at Pimlico in 1938 to witness the match between Seabiscuit and War Admiral, perhaps the most famous race of all-time.

Over his stellar career, Gelo was featured in numerous news articles and documentaries, and received several commendations. Gelo was highly regarded for his institutional memory of the racing industry. For his lifetime achievements in the racing industry, Gelo was given the Joe Kelly Maryland Million Unsung Hero Award on October 18, 2014. The award “celebrates important characteristics that are valuable, but often unrewarded. This award recognizes honesty, hard work and humility- qualities which serve as inspiration to others.” This accurately describes the essence of Gelo.

Gelo’s faith in God guided his life. His mother raised him in the Episcopal faith. He was a member of The Church of St. Katherine of Alexandria Episcopal Church to which he stayed faithful until his passing. He worked with the Race Track Chaplaincy from its infancy and watched it grow into a strong presence on American tracks. He influenced and guided many people to a better path. He always left with the parting words “May the peace of the Lord be always with you.”

His beloved wife of 68 years, Lillian, and his daughter Judy preceded him in death. Gelo leaves cherished memories to his daughter, Janis Hall and a host of relatives and friends.

Kwanzaa Schedule at Reginald Lewis Museum

Date and Time:

Sunday, December 27, 1:00 pm

12:30 to 5:30pm - African Market Place

1 to 5pm - Kwanzaa Crafts with Sallah Jenkins +

Book Art Workshop with Martha Edgerton

1pm - African Drum Call

1:30 - Storytelling with Maria Broom

2:30 - African Fashion Show (Lenoche, Keepee-kee and Sankofa Dance Theater)

3:30 - Talk by Dr. Jeffrey Menzise on Kwanzaa Principle Kujichagulia (“Self-Determination”) entitled “Ensuring Black Lives Matter: Self Determination and the Quest for Justice”

4:30 - Sankofa Dance Theater Performance + Kwanzaa Candlelighting Ceremony

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa

Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the following principles:

Umoja (Unity): To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

Kujichagulia (Self-Determination): To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.

Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility): To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers’ and sisters’ problems our problems, and to solve them together.

Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

Nia (Purpose): To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

Kuumba (Creativity): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

Imani (Faith): To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

For more information on Kwanzaa visit <http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/index.shtml>

Local Author Wins National Literary Awards

Christian Author, Margaret D. Pagan wins two awards for "The Fulani Girls"

Baltimore— Baltimore Christian Author Margaret D. Pagan's book, "The Fulani Girls," was announced the winner of the Henri and Readers' Choice Awards (Youth & Young Adult category), earlier this month at the 2015 Christian Literary Awards in Frisco, Texas. Set in pre-revolutionary New York City, The Fulani Girls tells the story of teenage sisters, taken from their home in Nigeria, by slavers in 1778, who were separated upon their arrival in America. The book follows their individual struggles from slavery to freedom and their quest to find each other and rebuild their lives together in America.

"I am ecstatic that my story of two enslaved teenagers who found their way to freedom resonated with readers," said Pagan. "It's rewarding to know that stories of African-American history are being appreciated by young adults."

Joy A. Lewis, President of Joy & Company, along with Rosemary Legrand began a book club in 2002, which eventually led to book reviews on radio and TV, and ultimately this year's 5th annual Christian Literary Awards. Through this and other events, they honor authors and individuals who have contributed to the literary community.

"Margaret D. Pagan's book is a wonderful example of a great story that combines an important historical story with a strong Christian message," says Lewis. "The judges clearly selected The Fulani Girls over other competitors for the Henri Award. In addition she won



Margaret D. Pagan
Courtesy Photo

the most votes in the Youth and Young Adult category."

Margaret D. Pagan began her writing career submitting commentaries to the Baltimore Sun during the 1980s. She also wrote freelance articles for a variety of genealogical journals, and had a brief stint with the then Metropolitan and Travis Winkey magazines.

Her interest in African American history began after she learned that her father, who had served in WWII, fought in a segregated army. When she became a Christian, she combined her faith and her love of African American history in her two novels, More Than A Slave: The Life of Katherine Ferguson (2003), and The Fulani Girls (2007). Pagan is a graduate of Morgan State University, an adjunct professor at Baltimore City Community College where she taught business writing, and the immediate past-President of The Black Writers' Guild of Maryland.

To learn more about Margaret D. Pagan and The Fulani Girls, visit: www.margaretpagan.com.

Glen Burnie Navy Petty Officer recognized for holiday volunteer work



Commander of Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Rear Admiral Rick Williamson (left), congratulates Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Brendy Carter, a Glen Burnie, Maryland native, assigned to Fleet Weather Center, Norfolk, Virginia, for her holiday season volunteer work and participation in the command's Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) chapter and the command's Junior Sailor's Association.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ted Green

Norfolk, Va.— Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Brendy Carter assigned to Fleet Weather Center (FWC), Norfolk, Virginia, was recognized by the Commander of Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Rear Admiral Rick Williamson, for her holiday season volunteer work and participation in the command's Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) chapter and the command's Junior Sailor's Association (JSA).

"It was awesome that we were recognized for our hard work," she said. "It was an honor to receive a command coin from the admiral. Hard work, team work, and dedication do pay off!"

Carter, along with several other members of FWC, and the command's CSADD chapter and JSA, put up

decorations to help raise the holiday spirit and bring joy and cheer to their fellow Sailors.

Carter, who has been in the Navy for 16 years, is a native of Glen Burnie, Maryland. Her father, Louis Moore, resides in Glen Burnie and her mother, Betty Todd, resides in Edgewood, Maryland.

The Coalition of Sailors against Destructive Decisions and the Junior Sailor's Association was established to bond Fleet Weather Center Norfolk junior Sailors and to create a culture in which shipmate's help shipmates maintain a course of success through good decision making. Along with this, the chapter provides training material and the promotion of a good work environment for all Sailors to follow.



Kwanzaa Celebrations

Join the Howard County Center of African American Culture, Inc for Kwanzaa Celebrations on Tuesday, December 29, 2015 from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at St. John Baptist Church located at 9055 Tamar Drive in Columbia, Maryland. Come for the food, festivities and fun— Admission is free!

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First Day Hikes in America's State Parks Offer Invigorating Start to New Year



Washington, D.C.— Make a New Year's resolution to your health and happiness by kicking off 2016 with an invigorating "First Day Hike" at a state park near you. On January 1, 2016, all 50 states will participate in the fifth annual national event that encourages everyone to celebrate the New Year with a guided outdoor exploration.

"First Day Hikes offer families the opportunity to rejuvenate and reconnect with nature on guided outdoor adventures," National Association of State Park Directors President Domenic Bravo said. There are shorter options for families with young children, to longer treks for adventure seekers. State parks offer stunning views, unique cultural and historical experiences, and wintering wildlife for everyone to enjoy."

Through the event, park rangers, naturalists and volunteers will share their knowledge of each state's unique natural and cultural features. Adventures include a trek along a rail trail in Arkansas' Delta Heritage Trail State Park, an

expansive mountain view from atop the renovated fire tower in Georgia's Fort Mountain State Park, and a Missouri hike amongst sinkholes, a geologic fault and serene woodlands in Ha Ha Tonka State Park. This year, many locations are including pet-friendly hikes, such as Greenbrier and Patapsco Valley state parks in Maryland.

"I can't think of a better way to celebrate the New Year than connecting with the great outdoors through a First Day Hike," Maryland Natural Resources Secretary Mark Belton said. "Maryland Park Service rangers, staff and volunteers invite the public to join them in one of dozens of hikes across the state to learn what makes our state and its beautiful lands so special. I encourage everyone to make a New Year's resolution to get outdoors and get healthy."

Details on every state's hikes are located at www.naspd.org. Participants are encouraged to log their adventures on social media with #FirstDayHikes.

"America's State Parks provide havens for young and old alike to explore the beauty and serenity of nature through outdoor recreation," National Association of State Park Directors Executive Director Lewis Ledford said. "Hiking offers inspiring ways to improve your physical and mental health, while discovering beautiful public lands in every state."

First Day Hikes originated more than 25 years ago at the Blue Hills Reservation—a state park in Milton, Massachusetts. Last year, more than 41,000 people covered over 79,000 miles on 997 hikes across the country.

This year's event coincides with the National Park Service's Centennial, a celebration of the 100 years of stewardship of natural resources in state and national parks. State parks across the country are encouraging Park Service staff to join in on the First Day Hikes.



Participants are encouraged to log their adventures on social media with #FirstDayHikes. For details about each state's hikes, visit: www.naspd.org.

Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture Needs Volunteers

The museum is dedicated to serving the community by providing multifaceted support through meaningful interactions with history and material culture of Maryland African Americans. Volunteers are needed to assist at the Information Desk, as Docents, for Special Events, and more. There are ongoing opportunities on Saturdays and Sundays for assistance with greeting guests and patrons at the main entrance and to work with kid's activities during public hours. The minimum age for volunteers is 14. Volunteering is open to adults, seniors, college, and high school students. Service-learning credit hours can be earned by high school students. We are accepting applications for the following volunteer positions: Special Event Volunteer, Administrative Assistant, Curatorial Assistant, and Visitor Services. Volunteer orientations are held at 7:00 pm on the last Monday of each month. Contact Erica Holmes at 443-263-1800 or holmes@maamc.org; web site: www.AfricanAmericanCulture.org.

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