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Maryland teen honored at 2015 Black Girls Rock!™ Awards



Fifteen-year-old Gabrielle Jordan (far right) from Bowie, Maryland was honored as a M.A.D. (Making A Difference) Girl during the 2015 Black Girls Rock!™ awards, which aired on BET on Sunday, April 5, 2015. First Lady Michelle Obama recognized the M.A.D. Girls for their outstanding professional achievements during the ceremony as they listened on stage. The other M.A.D. Girls are Chental-Song Bem-bry (middle) and Kaya Thomas (left). Gabrielle is the youngest of the three girls honored.

(See article on page 9) Courtesy Photo/BET

Church ushers call their duty a gift from God

By Stacy M. Brown

Many consider them ministers of hospitality, or the doorkeepers of the church. However, for Vanessa Lucas and Sylvia Graves, greeting parishioners and visitors on Sundays and other gathering occasions, their job is much more than simply saying hello.

"We are about serving God and being the best, representing our Christian love," said Lucas, president of the Interdenominational Church Ushers Association of Maryland (ICUA), an interfaith organization affiliated with the National United Church Ushers' Association and the Eastern Region Ushers' Association.

The group of faithful doorkeepers has a primary goal of training ushers in the universal method of ushering through a school of ushering. The organization's motto: "If every usher was just like me, what would this usher board be?"

"We use that model; when we train our ushers we expect them to be the Christian usher that God wants them to be," said Graves, the current ICUA Baltimore unit chaplain and former state dean of the ICUA's School of Ushering. "If they follow the training, they should be just that. Being a Christian organization and trying to be like Christ, that is what governs us."

Primarily, ushers have to know and understand how to greet people while at the door, be friendly, and to share a welcoming smile while performing their duties, she said.

On Saturday, April 11, 2015, the ICUA

will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a gala at the La Fontaine Bleue in Lanham at 2 p.m.

The event will feature a talk of encouragement from a local pastor and the banquet's theme will be a "Parade of States" where individuals will represent the state they're from by wearing local outfits and carrying flags and mementos from their respective states.

Headquartered on Eutaw Street in Baltimore near North Avenue, the ICUA has worked with church ushers across denominations to make sure that ushers are trained properly in what ICUA officials call the universal method of ushering.

"The ushers are the doorkeepers, they are usually the first person that someone coming into the church will see," Graves said. "The way that visitor is greeted often will determine whether they will return."

One online source outlines steps for ushering, including dressing appropriately for the job; smile at all who enter; handing out church bulletins; asking whether a visitor is there for the first time; welcoming all by name if possible; thanking them for coming; seating them according to how the seating capacity is in the sanctuary; during the offering, be sure to come forward with other ushers in a decent and orderly fashion; and always being on the lookout for distractions such as children playing.

Both Graves and Lucas say the usher plays a critical role in meeting the needs of the congregation and keeping the church



Courtesy Photo/Soul of America

service running smoothly. They said the hard work helps to put the congregation at ease and it prepares them to take in, undistracted, the sermon for that day.

"We have qualified trained instructors to teach individuals to be ushers and to train those who aspire to do better and those who would like to obtain a certificate or degree in ushering," Graves said. "We have an excellent manual and everything in there starts in the biblical form like how the Levites of the Bible looked over the tabernacle and how God highly favored them and expected them to look after the tabernacle."

Graves said the job of ushering isn't

for everyone, but that's okay.

"Not everyone is a people person or a good greeter," she said. "But, we teach them how to handle the worship house, including how to handle it during funerals. We have signs and signals where we don't even have to talk to communicate. We can be at a rather far distance, but we know what's going on because of the signs and signals that we've learned."

Tickets for the event are \$65. For more information, visit: www.icuaofmd.com or call 410-523-9292.

Correction

In the April 3, 2015 issue of The Annapolis Times on page 12, it was incorrectly stated that Ashly E. Smith was a graduate of Towson University. Smith attended Towson University but graduated from the Broadcasting Institute of Maryland. We sincerely regret the error.

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Progress in Baseball Came with a Cost

By Bill Fletcher, Jr., NNPA Columnist

Anyone who has followed my columns knows that about this time of the year I normally write something about the commencement of the baseball season. More often than not, I write about the late Curt Flood and the late Marvin Miller. Well, guess what? It is the beginning of the baseball season and yes you guessed it, a little something about two heroes, but from a different angle.

One of the most disturbing features of modern baseball is that most fans have no sense of the history of struggle contained in the game. If you have had the opportunity to watch Ken Burns' award-winning documentary, "Baseball," you get a better sense of not only the evolution of the sport, but the struggles that unfolded within it, many of which reflected larger changes in US society.

Two of the struggles in Major League Baseball were represented by Curt Flood and separately (and together) by Marvin Miller. Curt Flood resisted being traded to the Philadelphia Phillies and in so doing, stood up to a form of baseball indentured servitude known as the "reserve clause." Under the reserve clause, a player was for all intents and purposes, owned by the team. Flood battled for what became known as "free agency," which was introduced through a combination of the struggle that Flood unleashed and the organizing and collective bargaining that the Major League Baseball Players Association, under Marvin Miller, conducted. Miller led in the construction of a labor union of baseball players and through that organization, transformed the sport, defying the greedy and myopic owners.

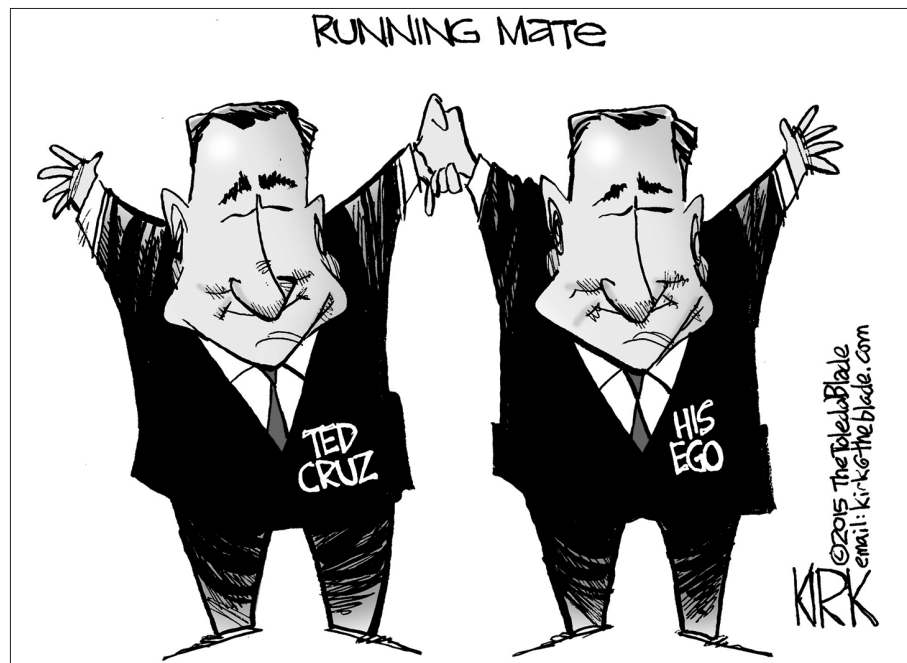
Despite the key historical importance of these two men, over the years the recognition of their significance has diminished. Many of the current members of the Major League Baseball Players Association have no sense of the key role of Curt Flood and the battle that he led for free agency, a battle without which today's players would never have been able to conceive of their current salaries.

Marvin Miller has been equally ignored, though one could go further and suggest that the late Marvin Miller remains hated by the lords of baseball for ruining the plantation environment that they so cherished. Memories of the successful organization and legitimization of a movement of baseball players that he led have been allowed to largely dissipate from the historical record as the years have moved on.

What is lost with our failure to remember and reflect upon the work of individuals such as Flood and Miller is that progress and justice come with a cost. Flood lost his promising career in baseball not because of greed but because of principle. He was prepared to take the risk and make the sacrifice, knowing full well that he might not, himself, benefit from such a step. Miller threw himself into the building of an organization of a workforce that had been so beaten down over the years that many people believed that a labor union of baseball players was nothing more than a pipe dream.

For these reasons we must not only remember Flood and Miller but must insist that they receive the special recognition that would come from their placement in the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame. Their significance arises not from their stats but from the fact that they led in the renovation of baseball.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the host of The Global African on Telesur-English. He is a racial justice, labor and global justice writer and activist. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.



Community Affairs

Taxpayers urged to file electronically as deadline approaches

Annapolis, Md.— With the tax-filing deadline less than a week away, Comptroller Peter Franchot urges taxpayers who have yet to submit a return to considering using the agency's free online tax filing system, iFile or another electronic method.

"Electronic filing is the safest, easiest and fastest way to prepare and file a tax return," Comptroller Franchot said. "Best of all, if you choose direct deposit, you'll get your refund in only a few days."

Comptroller Franchot reminds taxpayers to use all available preparation and filing resources at the agency's website www.marylandtaxes.com or receive in-person assistance from staff in Annapolis and 12 local branch offices to meet the April 15th deadline.

"With the deadline nearing, the Comptroller's Office can help make tax filing quick, easy and painless," the Comptroller said. "If anyone is uncertain about how to file their taxes, they should visit one of my 12 branch offices to have

their tax return prepared and filed free of charge."

In addition to Annapolis, the agency has local offices in Baltimore, Cumberland, Elkton, Frederick, Hagerstown, Landover, Salisbury, Towson, Upper Marlboro, Waldorf and Wheaton. Complete addresses of branch offices can be found at www.marylandtaxes.com.

To best serve each taxpayer, those seeking assistance in Annapolis or at one of the branch offices must bring the following items with them: W2 forms; Form 1099; and a completed federal return.

To date, more than 1.5 million taxpayers have filed their personal tax returns electronically with more than 96,500 filing via paper. Based on 3.04 million returns filed last year, about half of taxpayers have filed so far this tax season.

The agency's call center offers extended hours Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. through April 15, returning to normal business hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. thereafter. To check the status of a refund by phone, please call, 1-800-218-8160 or 410-260-7701. Refund status can also be obtained by visiting the agency's website at marylandtaxes.com.

Mr. Wade and the 'First Family of the Housing Projects'

By George E. Curry, NNPA Columnist

Approximately three weeks ago, I suffered a mild heart attack. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Robert T. Wade, a longtime family friend in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, died at the age of 94. Against the advice of close friends and even some relatives, I attended his funeral last Saturday.

To appreciate why I was determined to attend Mr. Wade's funeral, you have to understand what Mr. Wade meant to me, and thousands of other black kids who grew up in the housing projects during the 1950s and 1960s. Most black communities have a Mr. Wade, a universally respected adult who adopts every child in the community as his own.

As I said in my tribute to him at the funeral, we considered the Wades the "First Family of the Housing Projects." Of course, Mr. Wade was the president and his wife, Mrs. Ella Wade, was the First Lady. To those of us who lived in McKenzie Court, my all-black housing project, they were our Kennedys. They were royalty and we wanted to be like them.

Of the seven Wade children, two of them were males— Archie and Harold. Archie was the oldest and seven years my senior. Harold was five years older than me, about the same age as my youngest uncle, Jesse Harris. The three were the brothers I never had.

Hal and Archie were standout athletes and even played professional baseball. But they were scholars first. Mrs. Wade and the girls— Ethel Jean, Glenda, Jan-

and from school; many times he would be standing outside, which was an open invitation for us to stop by and talk.

For those of us who did not grow up with our biological father, Mr. Wade cast an even larger shadow. He became daddy, teacher, counselor and role model, all rolled into one. I can't think of a time I did not know Mr. Wade. Nor can I think of a time when he was so busy that he didn't immediately stop

was one of the first persons to greet me when I exited the stage.

One time I was back in Tuscaloosa and had just completed an interview at WTUG, the local black radio station. When I left the studio, there waiting for me was Mr. Wade. Yes, I was one of his boys and as one of his boys, you never wanted to disappoint him. Instead, you wanted to make him proud, you wanted him to know that all of the time and wisdom that he shared with you was not a waste of time.

When I listened to others at Weeping Mary Missionary Baptist Church share memories of this impressive man, his accomplishments were remarkable in breath. For me, his greatest contribution was the impact he had on young African Americans, especially boys, during an era of racial segregation. When so many people in society were telling us we couldn't accomplish anything because we were black, Mr. Wade convinced us that we could do anything that we could imagine. He reminded us that we would have to work twice as hard to get half the recognition, but we could beat the odds and take our rightful place in the world.

Mr. Wade has left us physically, but a part of him remains buried deep in our hearts. He was our shining example. And just like we didn't want to disappoint him in life, we won't disappoint him in death, either.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA) and BlackPressUSA.com. Curry can be reached through his website: www.georgecurry.com.

"As I reflect on his life, I am amazed how many times Mr. Wade encouraged me even after I became an adult. When Charles Steele, a childhood friend, first became president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), he presented us with a president's award. I was honored just to have my name mentioned in the same breath as Mr. Wade's."

ice, Phyllis and Karen— in addition to being beautiful, were classy and always exuded class.

If you happened to be at 73-B McKenzie Court around dinner time, which many of us skillfully managed to do, somehow Mrs. Wade had cooked enough food to accommodate young people like me who wanted to get as close to royalty as possible.

Mr. Wade was the first black businessman that I knew. He established Wade Printing Co. in 1953 and most of my life it was on what was then 32nd Avenue, now Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. It was on our route from McKenzie Court to Druid High School. So, every school day, we walked past his shop going to

what he was doing to talk to me and any other kid who sought his advice. Mr. Wade didn't just offer words he provided the example of how to live a moral, blemish-free, admirable life.

As I reflect on his life, I am amazed how many times Mr. Wade encouraged me even after I became an adult. When Charles Steele, a childhood friend, first became president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), he presented us with a president's award. I was honored just to have my name mentioned in the same breath as Mr. Wade's. When I gave a commencement address at Alabama A&M University, where he attended and roomed with future civil rights icon Joseph Lowery, Mr. Wade

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Dr. Elijah Saunders remembered as driven, unselfish, committed

By Stacy M. Brown

Prior to adjourning on Tuesday, April 7, 2015, members of the Maryland State Senate observed a moment of silence not for a fallen colleague or a long time government official, but for a man who for decades brought joy, relief and a lot of health care issues facing African-Americans to the forefront.

Dr. Elijah Saunders, who served as professor of medicine and head of the section of hypertension at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, died early Tuesday, leaving a major void not just in the world of medicine, but throughout a Baltimore community that absolutely revered him. He was believed to be 80-years-old.

"I knew Dr. Saunders for almost 40 years and he was my doctor for at least 30 of those years and I can honestly say that he was a giant of a man," said Maryland Democratic Senator Shirley Nathan-Pulliam. "Yes, he was world renown and anywhere you went, people knew of him. But, he was such a caring and warm individual and when I'd go see him in his office, he never made you feel like you were just a patient. He'd want to know what's going on in Annapolis and what was going on in my life."

Barbara "B.J." Shaneman, a nurse and cardiovascular specialist who worked for more than 20 years with Dr. Saunders, said she didn't learn that the doctor was sick until late Monday and she planned to visit him on Tuesday.

"I received a phone call that he had passed on Tuesday and it's devastating," said Shaneman, who has worked tirelessly with Dr. Saunders in promoting community health, efforts that have served to benefit many in the Baltimore area.

"Dr. Saunders was my teacher. He wasn't my mentor but he groomed me to be what he wanted me to be which was a good teacher and nurse," Shaneman said, choking back tears. "He allowed me to do what I did best in the community. He encouraged me, gave me the kind of respect a father gives a child. He corrected me where I was wrong but always in a way that was encouraging."

Dr. Saunders graduated from Morgan



**Dr. Elijah Saunders
1934 - 2015**

State University in 1956 and four years later, he matriculated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He practiced medicine at the University Maryland Medical Center as a cardiologist for more than three decades. He also served as clinical associate professor of medicine at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee.

blood pressure can often lead to and make worse many complications of diabetes, including diabetic eye disease and kidney disease. Dr. Saunders revealed that most people with diabetes develop high blood pressure during their life and that diabetes makes high hypertension and other heart and circulation problems more probable in that diabetes damages arteries and

Arrangements for Dr. Elijah Saunders
Friday, April 10, 2015 at Transformation Church
5150 Baltimore National Pike in Baltimore
Viewing — 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Pre-Celebration — 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday, April 12, 2015, at New Psalmist Baptist Church
6020 Marian Drive in Baltimore

Family Greeting from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Funeral Service begins at 6:30 p.m.

In the 2013 documentary, "Faces of Diabetes," Dr. Saunders, also the vice president for Graduate Medical Education and Affiliations at the University of Maryland, revealed a connection between diabetes and hypertension, a long-time scourge in the black community.

He said hypertension, which is high

makes them targets for hardening.

A pioneer in research related to African-Americans and hypertension, Dr. Saunders was a founding member of The International Society of Hypertension In Blacks (ISHIB) and was recognized as an expert on hypertension, especially as it relates to people of

African descent.

"He understood hypertension better than anyone and he also looked at the management of diabetes and, rather than making it a crutch, he showed where if properly treated, medication might not be needed," Shaneman said. "Everyone who knew him was affected in some way."

Four years ago, Dr. Saunders received the prestigious Herbert W. Nickens Award from the American Association of Medical College, which is given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to promoting justice in medical education and health care equity in the United States.

"He [was] an energetic and powerful mentor and role model," Dr. Albert Reece, vice president for medical affairs at the University of Maryland, said in a previous interview. "Throughout his career, Dr. Saunders repeatedly demonstrated his willingness to step forward and be the first."

Upon Dr. Saunders graduation from medical school, he reportedly was one of only four black medical students in his class of 140 and he was the first black resident to be trained in the cardiology and internal medicine programs, the first black cardiologist in Maryland, and he was instrumental to desegregating the University of Maryland's hospital wards in 1963.

Dr. Saunders also started the Hair, Heart, and Health (HHH) program to train barbers to perform blood pressure screenings and to refer clients to local health centers. More than 1,800 individual were screened through the program, the vast majority being African-Americans. As a direct result of his findings, U.S. drug companies reportedly now make a point of including African-Americans in their clinical trials, helping ensure all races benefit from research breakthroughs.

"He's done everything within his power to make equality the standard instead of the goal," Reece said.

And like many others, Nathan-Pulliam and Shaneman both said he'll be missed.

"Dr. Saunders is going to truly be missed," Nathan-Pulliam said. "It's such a tremendous loss and he was such a special person."



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Ozzie Newsome: Simply the Best!

By *Turron Davenport*

The Baltimore Ravens are known as an organization that makes very few mistakes when it signs free agents and picks draft selections. The Ravens tend to hit on a number of draft picks and seem to be able to add just the right veteran players in free agency. It is rare to see the Ravens go after any high priced free agents. The majority of the credit for being so accurate with their personnel moves goes to general manager Ozzie Newsome.

Newsome has achieved a high level of success as both a general manager and a player. His Hall of Fame career is well documented. When he retired, he had numerous receiving records as a tight end for the Cleveland Browns. He was one of the pioneers who showed that tight ends can be used as a major part of the passing game. His 662 receptions and 7,980 yards receiving still place him fifth all time for tight ends.

After retiring in 1990, Newsome first broke into the scouting world with the Browns as a special assignment scout. Bill Belichick took a liking to Newsome and named him as his assistant for pro personnel. This was where he began to develop the ability to scout players on other teams. His job with Belichick was to create detailed records of players on other teams and make suggestions on which players the Browns should go after.

In 1996, the Browns moved to Baltimore and became the Ravens. Newsome was asked to move with the team by then owner Art Modell. He was named the VP of Player Personnel. He was primarily responsible for the direction of the first ever draft by the Ravens. That draft set the tone for the Ravens team that fans love today.

The 1996 draft produced two Hall of Fame players that were monumental pieces in the Ravens history that includes two Super Bowl trophies. Jonathan Ogden anchored the Ravens offensive line and became one of the best, left tackles to ever play the game. Ray Lewis was the emotional leader of the team and directed the defense as one of the best middle linebackers ever.

Newsome was named as the NFL's Executive of the Year in 2000, thanks to the dominating defense that he assembled by selecting players such as Peter Boulware, Jamie Sharper, Chris McAlister and Duane Starks. The key free agent additions of Tony Siragusa, Shannon Sharpe and Rod Woodson were also key to the 2000 Super Bowl championship team.

The success the Ravens achieved in the early 2000s forced them to have to select players at the bottom of the rounds. However, that didn't stop Newsome from continuing his draft excellence. The Ravens were able to land key players such as Todd Heap and future Hall of Fame safety Ed Reed in late draft spots over the next few years. Terrell Suggs was another draft selection the Ravens made with Newsome as their general manager.

The success that Newsome has achieved during his



Baltimore Ravens general manager Ozzie Newsome (right) and head coach John Harbaugh talk things over during rookie training camp last year.
Courtesy Photo/ www.baltimore Ravens.com

venture in the NFL front office led to him being named the Ravens general manager in 2002. This was a monumental, because he was the first African American to be named the general manager of an NFL team—once again, Newsome was a trendsetter.

The Ravens have been the model of consistency, thanks to the players that have been acquired by Newsome over the years.

He was able to put together a trade that allowed the Ravens to move up to obtain Joe Flacco, the franchise quarterback. It was important to get the next quarterback pick right and the Ravens did just that by trading up to get Joe Flacco in 2008 draft.

Many people in the NFL respect Newsome because of how motivated he is to be successful which is supported by his work ethic. He works out on the treadmill in the player's weight room and is out on the field with the players frequently. There is a reason for that.

"Being around the coaches and players out at practice and in the weight room gives me a chance to track the pulse of the team." Newsome said.

Another reason that Newsome is so well respected is how he creates an environment that pushes assistant coaches to move on to become head coaches. The list of head coaches who spent time with the Ravens prior to becoming a head coach is a long one that includes: Jim Caldwell, Jack Del Rio, Marvin Lewis, Rex Ryan and more.

The Ravens make their own list of players to scout.

Newsome encourages every one of his scouts to have a voice. He gives credit to guys like assistant general manager Eric DeCosta for helping scouts learn the traits that the Ravens look for in players.

DeCosta created a picture of how the Ravens do things from a scout's perspective. He said, "A number of us look at everyone. We have the area scouts that look at certain players from other regions so we get multiple grades and opinions on all the players."

Newsome created what he calls a 20/20 club, which is used to develop scouts. The 20/20 title refers to the younger scouts who are hired in their 20s for \$20,000. They are able to cut their teeth as scouts learning the "Ravens Way." Their input is always encouraged and they are given opportunities to work their way up the ranks. DeCosta is a graduate of Newsome's 20/20 club.

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh summed it up best when he said, "Ozzie's credibility is what stands out the most. It's not just about what he has accomplished." Harbaugh continued, "To me, it's his commitment and focus while striving to do more."

The road to this point has been a long one for Newsome. He has seen success at every level. It all began in Alabama back in 1974 when he was a star player for Alabama head coach Bear Bryant. Newsome has been a trendsetter as both a player and NFL executive. Rest assured that the Ravens are in good hands for years to come with Newsome at the controls of the personnel moves.

Maryland teen honored at 2015 Black Girls Rock!™ Awards

By Andrea Blackstone

Gabrielle Jordan is a 15-year-old jewelry maker, sought-after motivational speaker, author, entrepreneur and mentor from Bowie, Maryland. She was honored as a M.A.D. (Making A Difference) Girl during the 2015 Black Girls Rock!™ awards program, which aired on BET on Sunday, April 5, 2015.

Of the three young ladies who were honored as M.A.D. Girls, Gabrielle was the youngest honoree. The other two honorees are Chental-Song Bemby and Kaya Thomas.

This year, First Lady Michelle Obama delivered a speech during the empowering extravaganza that celebrates achievement of black women and girls.

"I think my favorite part was going onstage and meeting Michelle Obama," Gabrielle said. "It was really awesome to be able to be on stage with her, give her a hug and her telling us that she was proud of us. We went backstage and she made sure that we got a picture with her. It was really cool."

Gabrielle's mother, Marcella Mollon-Williams is also her manager, partner and the chief operating officer of Gabrielle's endeavors.

Mollon-Williams said she was so focused on helping her daughter prepare for her M.A.D. Girls appearance, that it was only at the event that she realized the magnitude of the honor that Gabrielle received. She also said she was thankful to God for the opportunity to be hands-on with Gabrielle and to be able to watch her daughter live out her dream as a child.

Ron Williams, Gabrielle's proud father, produces his daughter's videos and photographs her handmade jewelry, which is available for sale at <http://jewelzofjordan.com>. Gabrielle founded Jewelz of Jordan at the age of nine.

The home-schooled student wrote the No. 1 Amazon best-selling book, "The Making of a Young Entrepreneur: A Kid's Guide to Developing the Mind-Set For Success" at the age of eleven.

Mentoring youth is Gabrielle and



Fifteen-year-old Gabrielle Jordan from Bowie, Maryland was honored as a M.A.D. (Making A Difference) Girl during the 2015 Black Girls Rock!™ awards, which aired on BET on Sunday, April 5, 2015.

Courtesy Photo

Mollon-Williams' recent endeavor. In 2014, the mother and daughter founded the ExCEL Youth Mentoring Institute.

"Our goal with the entire institute is to continue the work and to cultivate the seeds of youth and leadership within every young person. ExCEL stands for Excellence Created through Entrepreneurship and Leadership," Mollon-Williams said.

ExCEL Youth Mentoring Institute offers free membership. Weekly videos, newsletters and resources are sent to enrollees. The mother and daughter team also created a fee-based six-week course called the Mastermind class that is conducted through Google Hangouts. Youth from across the country participated in the last class. This month, Gabrielle will lead sessions with nine other young entrepreneurs who already started a business or who desire to do so. A sub-

scription-based program for girls is also in the works.

The Mollon-Williams' philosophy to instill confidence in her two children at an early age began when she volunteered with her husband as a youth leader. When the couple dated, they reportedly gained considerable insight about the importance of youth knowing who they are.

"Our goal was to make sure that our children were confident leaders from the time they were born," Mollon-Williams said. "All of my family is from Trinidad and my husband is African-American. We were able to instill strength from both sides. In a nutshell, I tell people that consistency is huge. Every single night we spoke into our children's lives who they are, what they will be, what they are capable of. When you consistently plant seeds of strength, and of confidence, and of knowing who they are, it makes it a lot harder for the world to come in and tell them something different."

Gabrielle is still elated about her recent recognition, although she is no stranger to receiving awards.

"It makes me feel like I am really making a big difference. People of such a large caliber like BET actually recognized what it is that I am doing. It means that I am actually doing something big and that it's actually making an impact in some way. It's pretty amazing," Gabrielle said. "It just feels like I am doing what it is that I was put on the earth to do and that's an amazing feeling."

Gabrielle's jewelry creations are available for purchase via <http://jewelzofjordan.com>. To learn more about ExCel Youth Mastermind program, visit: www.gabriellejordaninspires.com/.

Heavy Seas 1st Annual Island Jam Music Festival

Baltimore—The new music festival, Heavy Seas Island Jam, comes to Rash Field at the Inner Harbor on Saturday, April 11, 2015 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The festival features reggae legends, The Wailers; national recording artists Ballyhoo!; Heavy Seas beers, island foods, arts and many other surprises.

Presented by local Baltimore brewing company, Heavy Seas Beer. Event attendees will be offered several craft beer styles onsite to purchase, as well as a variety of food including local food trucks and island inspired cuisine. Guests are welcome to bring chairs and blankets to take advantage of the spacious stage viewing area.

General admission to the festival is \$29 in advance or \$35 on-site and includes admission to the event and all live entertainment. Food and beverages will be sold a la carte.

For more information or to purchase tickets for Heavy Seas Island Jam, visit: www.hsislandjam.com or call 800-830-3976.

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Dance Theatre of Harlem: Forty Years of Firsts

Baltimore—The Reginald F. Lewis Museum welcomes Dance Theatre of Harlem: Forty Years of Firsts, an exhibition highlighting the many accomplishments of African Americans and other minorities who defied stereotypes and gravity itself, to pursue their passion and pave the way for future generations of artists. The exhibit opens Saturday, April 18, 2015 and runs until Sunday, August 30, 2015.

When the dancers were told that African American bodies were not built for classical ballet, they mastered classical repertoire like Giselle, then set it in Creole society in Louisiana, to give it a distinctly American twist.

Central to the themes of the exhibition is the story of founder Arthur Mitchell himself. Mitchell was selected by legendary choreographer George Balanchine to join the New York City Ballet. As the only African American dancer of a major ballet company at the time, Mitchell's rise was a historic achievement in pre-Civil Rights America. He became a principal dancer within the company, then founded Dance Theatre of Harlem in 1969 in a church basement in the wake of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. It was Mitchell's way of giving back to his community, in honor of the late civil rights leader.

The inspirational story of the ballet company, as well as its social and artistic impact, is brought to life in this exhibition of costumes, historical photographs, set pieces, and video excerpts. The objects are from two productions that are iconic to the company: Firebird and Creole Giselle. In addition to the costumes and staged ballets, the exhibition includes artifacts such as original tour programs, letters from choreographers and dignitaries, magazine articles, design bibles, and original tour posters.

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture is located at 830 East Pratt Street in Baltimore. For more information about the exhibition, museum hours and tickets, visit: www.rflewismuseum.org/special-exhibition.



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Musical Celebration — 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 11, 2015
Wake/Viewing — 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Homegoing Service at 10 a.m.

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Screenings and Education

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C ORAL HEALTH LEADERS

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(L-R) Flavia Walton, The Links; Edna Moffitt, The Continentals, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Dr. Rabbit, Comptroller, Joan Pratt; Dr. Leana Wen, Baltimore City Health Commissioner, Dr. Marsha Butler, Colgate Palmolive; (Front Row) DJ Beauty and the Beatz.

DENTAL VAN



C INSIDE LOOK

Everyone had a chance to tour the new mobile dental van.

On Wednesday, April 1st, more than 400 children at Henderson-Hopkins school in Baltimore discovered the power of a bright smile. The Colgate-Palmolive Company chose their school to officially launch its worldwide oral health program called Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® in Baltimore. This program reaches over 800 million children in 80 countries and 140 million children in the United States each year.

For more information on Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures®, please visit www.ColgateBSBF.com

Life In Baltimore: Leah's Book Club Honors Women in the Community



Reverend Grady Yeargin, Honoree Minister Patricia Yeargin with sponsor Juanita Edgerton. Courtesy Photo/Candace McNeal



Marilyn McDonald, Leah Hasty with and honoree, Shauna K. Henson. Courtesy Photo

By Brenda Johnson

Leah's Book Club was organized in February, 1998 by Leah Goldsborough Hasty for like-minded readers to get together to discuss books—particularly those by African American authors. The book club would meet regularly and avail itself of many opportunities in the literary world, such as attending lectures sponsored by the Enoch Pratt Library and inviting authors to attend meetings.

Beginning in 2000, each December the club began to host a holiday high tea with invited friends and the volunteer discussant, Irene Bennett Reid, an avid reader and charter member of Leah's Book Club who delighted the membership and audiences with her review of the books.

In 2011, Leah's Book Club thought it fitting to honor Irene's memory with the Irene Bennett Reid Memorial Tea during National Women's History Month. Each year the club members honor and recognize women who have made and continue to make contributions to their communities and those who embody the same spirit and concern for the welfare of others as Irene demonstrated throughout her career. Since 2011, more than sixty women have been honored.

The author/speaker at this year's tea was Attorney A. Dwight Pettit who discussed his book "Under the Color Of Law: The Story of An American Family" and signed books after the program. Past speakers have been Taylor Branch, Antero Pietila and Larry Gibson.

The program was chaired by Alice Shelton, readings were given Irene's grandchildren—Jewel Young and Jeremiah Young. The 2015 honorees were Marietta English; Bettye Fitzgerald; Dr. Alison Glascoe; Joy

Grandison; Bonnie Green; Shauna K. Henson; Gwendolyn Howard; Ernestine Jones Jolivet; The Honorable Verna Jones- Rodwell; Dr. Patricia L. Welch; Charlotte Makle Williams and Minister Patricia Yeargin.

Each honoree was escorted to the podium by their sponsor to receive a certificate and gifts.

When the honorees were asked their thoughts on receiving this recognition, the responses were "surprised and humbled."

Honoree Minister Patricia Yeargin said, "I was surprised, very humble and appreciative of the fact that someone paid attention to me. As a social worker in the school system working with students, parents and staff, you're not always recognized. This honor encourages me to continue my work as a social worker and minister."

Minister Yeargin uses the African proverb: "It takes a village to raise a child." She includes it in her work as she partners with parents and community to work with children. Not seeking accolades, Minister Yeargin loves people and lives by, "The Lord is my life and my salvation, whom shall I fear."

In response to the question, Honoree Bettye Fitzgerald said, "We are put on this earth to help others. Whatever I've done in my lifetime, I've done because I wanted to help a neighbor, family, friend and community, never looking for a reward."

The ladies in Leah's Book Club are committed to highlighting women in the community and providing an audience for authors to discuss their books at the annual Irene Bennett Reid Memorial Tea.

Members of Leah's Book Club are Lorna Brice; Lorraine Brown; Dr. Brenda Conley; Merita Donaldson;



Baltimore Attorney A. Dwight Pettit signing his book. Courtesy Photo/Conley Enterprises

Juanita Edgerton; Dr. Leah Hasty; Dr. Brenda Bowe Johnson; Bennie Keene; Dorothy Marshall; Marilyn McDonald; Evelyn Moore; Edna Y. Rich; Cassandra Ross; Alice Shelton; Dr. Louise Smith Margaret Smith; Claudette Swain; and Beulah Wallace.

Sisters welcome spring with hot shoe trends



By Andrea Blackstone

Erica Mitchell and Domeakia Snyder are shoe-loving sisters who both owned over 300 pairs, even before they were in the business of selling them. In 2012, the fashionistas who always wanted to own their own business launched an online ladies shoe boutique called Goddess Couture Boutique (GCB). The fun part of Mitchell and Snyder's endeavor may be testing out the merchandise. The sisters buy shoes and evaluate quality and comfort, before advertising them. The entrepreneurs sell shoes to customers nationwide and internationally through <http://www.houseofgoddess-couture.com/>. For shoe lovers who like the look of Christian Louboutins, but who seek affordable options, shoe prices typically begin at \$50.

"For Goddess Couture, me and my sister's motto was you can look like a celebrity for affordable prices," Mitchell said. "It works out perfectly. We have two different styles. She's more conservative, so she picks more conservative shoes. I pick statement shoes, so together we pick...the shoes that fit our personality."

Snyder currently lives in Baltimore. Mitchell, a native Baltimorean, recently moved to Florida and is also a successful shoe-styling expert. Mitchell has been styling celebrities since 2013. She focuses on selecting shoes, when many other stylists focus on putting outfits together. Mitchell can deliver affordable shoe picks or high-end selections. Reality TV personalities, Love Majewski from VH1's *Mob Wives*, Krystle Couso of *Jerseylicious* and Alexandra Dilworth from Bravo's *The New Atlanta* are clients who wear Mitchell's footwear selections, after she searches for shoes that may look good on clients.

"Once that shoe is on that client, it represents me as well. I get a whole bunch of shoes based on their style and what they have worn in the past," Mitchell said.

What shoe trends can you expect this spring? Mitchell shares that sticking to leather strappy sandals is still en vogue. Denim and retro styles are making a comeback. Shoes made with leather and cloth material tie ups are also being produced. For women seeking to sport a funky shoe trend, Mitchell believes that colors and patterns will be in demand this season.

"Teal, orange, yellow, violet and purple are the sea-

son's trends. If it's colorful, people tend to like it. Shoes with a lot of designs like checkers, strips, polka dots, flowers and tie dye are already being requested for Goddess Couture to carry them," Mitchell said.

Do not scratch wedges and flats off of your what to wear shoe list. Mitchell reminds that these styles can offer a good daytime look.

"Wedges are very comfortable to wear nonstop. There also are some fabulous flats. You can also find gladiator sandals," Mitchell said.

During work hours, Mitchell cautions about wearing weekend looks like peep-toe shoes or flip flops. If women prefer to wear pumps, Mitchell estimates that three-inch heels would be acceptable for many workplaces.

"Three inches is also a comfortable zone and it's comfortable for your feet. You can still look fabulous in a three-inch heel," Mitchell said.

And what if new heels hurt your feet?

"I always tell people to invest in Dr. Scholl's insoles. They are your best friend. Put them down in your new shoes and break them in, especially if you know you're buying shoes for an event and you're standing long hours," Mitchell said.

Mitchell believes that women of any body type can wear any shoe as long as they are matched well with complimentary clothing and accessories. Wearing bangle hoop earrings to work is a fashion don't in Mitchell's book but she gives pearl earrings a thumbs up. This spring season, Mitchell recommends wearing pearl necklaces that fall near the collar. Wearing stud earrings will allow women to wear their hair up or down. However, during time spent away from the office, wearing bold jewelry is this season's trend.

"I see that chunky jewelry is coming back," Mitchell said. "Fashion comes and goes, but style stays forever. Customers can turn everyday fashion into their own style by making it into their own."

You may visit <http://www.houseofgoddesscouture.com> to view GCB's shoe inventory. Please visit www.askericam.com for shoe styling tips, to see one-of-a-kind shoes posted in Mitchell's blog and to contact Mitchell for a styling consultation.



Domeakia Snyder and Erica Mitchell host their first meet and greet soiree in 2012 in Atlanta, Ga. Customers and shoe fans spoke to the fashion loving sisters about their business, Goddess Couture Boutique (GCB), which is an online ladies shoe boutique. Mitchell recently moved from Baltimore to Fla. Snyder still resides in the area. Courtesy Photos

Rambling Rose

**Jack and Jill of America, Inc.
Celebrates 70th Anniversary Gala**



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, hope all is well and you are just beginning to enjoy this beautiful weather. I just want you to know that my "Boo-Boo" and I brought this weather back with us from the islands of our cruise, which was absolutely fabulous!

There is so much going on for the next two weeks. I will try to tell you about as many of them as space allows.

First, I want to tell you about the "Jack and Jill of America Foundation, Baltimore Chapter 70th Anniversary. They are a non-profit organization founded in 1938 and are the oldest and largest African-American family organization in the United States. They are a membership organization of mothers with children ages 2-19 dedicated to nurturing future African-American leaders by strengthening children through leadership development.

They are having their 70th Anniversary Gala on April 18 at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum from 8 p.m. to midnight. The evening will begin with cocktails, a stroll through the museum's current exhibit "Dance Theater of Harlem; 40 Years of Firsts," and a silent auction accompanied by jazz saxophonist, Tim Green. The silent auction is followed by food and an evening of dancing to the sounds of Baltimore' popular DJ's. Fox 45 news anchor, Kai Jackson and actor Lawrence Gillard, Jr. will serve as hosts for this event. For ticket information, call 443-465-7907.

I am so proud of my friend, James Hamlin and his family who owns "The Avenue Bakery" (Home of Poppay's Rolls), which is located at 2229 Pennsylvania Avenue for their dedication to the community, their goals and commitment to help make the Pennsylvania Avenue a better place to live, work and socialize.

On Friday, April 10, 1 p.m. the Avenue Bakery will unveil a one of a kind Photomontage "Billie Holiday a Life in Music" 100 year celebration of her life work. It will be held at the Avenue Bakery. Activities include the sounds of Billie Holiday performed by Nevitta & Company. Experience a historic gallery stroll on-site including historic timeline wall panels/photo exhibit and archive footage hosted by Mr. Hamlin, owner and Head Baker of "The Avenue Bakery, a longtime supporter of quality programs and activities for Booker T. Washington Students. Open to the public. For more information, call 443-280-2702.

On Saturday, April 11 8 a.m. the Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) of Maryland's statewide fundraiser breakfast to be held at Martin's West at 6817 Dogwood Road in Baltimore. Dr. Mark Campbell Pastor of Arlington Baptist Church is the guest speaker for the program. To register for the event go to <https://cefbreakfast.eventbrite.com>. For more information about this event contact Marie Dunsen Dawson, Director of Development at 410-9446435 or email cefm Maryland@gmail.com.

Dreams do Exist Foundation presents "4th Annual Dreams of Tomorrow Event" on Sunday, April 12 from 3-6 p.m. at Gordon Center for Performing Arts, 3506 Gwynnbrook Avenue, Owings Mills, Maryland. The entertainment will be provided by Isaac Parham, Rodney Kelly, Kenneth Trusty, Rodney Kelly Jr., Mel Valentine, Lorree Slye, Kiki Merritt, Tiara Waters, and so many more. For more details and ticket information, call Darryl Smith at 410-984-8444.

Dianne Reeves and friends will be at the Kennedy Center on Saturday, April 11 at 8 p.m. with Billy Childs, Raul Madon and Terri Lyne Carrington. For tickets go to: <http://www.kennedy-cen->



Heavenly Bless Gospel Group will perform at the Rosa Pryor Music Scholarship Fund Gospel Prayer Breakfast Fundraiser on Sat., April 18 from 8 a.m. until noon at the Forest Park Senior Center 4801 Liberty Heights Avenue along with many other gospel entertainers. For ticket information, call 410-833-9474

ter.org/calendar/event/MPJP?promotionno=199518.

Well, my dear friends, I am out of time and out of space, Remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at roapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



Just Being Blessed Gospel Singers will also perform at the Rosa Pryor Music Scholarship Fund Gospel Prayer Breakfast Fundraiser on Saturday, April 18th.

Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center gives tribute to the masters of Bebop madness in their beautiful intimate venue on the fourth floor jazz room, 847 N. Howard Street in Baltimore on Saturday, April 11 from 7-10 p.m. Kevin Jackson, R&B contemporary jazz, neo soul band will perform. Produced and hosted by WEAA FM's "Your Girl Cheryl." Cash bar and dinner menu available. Call 410-225-3130 for ticket information.



Yvonne McKinney, longtime member of the Rosa Pryor Music Scholarship Fund for over 22 years as the Financial Secretary and a member of the Board of Directors died last week. Her love for my organization, children, her dedication to her church of St. Peter Claver, her loyalty to the Eastern Stars and her passion as a RN for over 30 years will be truly missed. She was a special friend to me and I will mourn her passing for a very long time. Her memorial services will be held on Sat., April 25, 2015 at St. Peter Claver located at the split of Pennsylvania and Fremont Aves in Baltimore.



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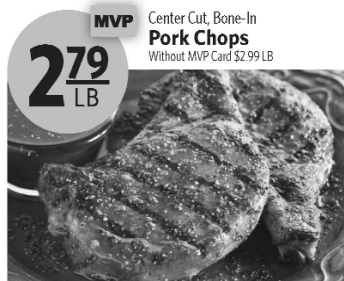


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National, local celebrity chefs are back to give Baltimore foodies a taste for the 5th Annual Brothers Who Can Cook



Chef Brad, "The Grill Sergeant" Turner competed against celebrity Chef Bobby Flay in a barbecue throwdown. Photo: Angela Byrd

By Phineste Demps

On Saturday, May 2, 2015, Baltimore foodies can bring their appetites to the 5th Annual Brothers Who Can Cook tasting affair to benefit the Christian Warriors Marching Band. The band serves as a recreational activity for at-risk youth and offers an outlet for the children to showcase their musical talents.

The delicious affair will be held from 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at the Downtown Cultural Art Center, located at 401 North Howard Street in Baltimore.

This year's affair welcomes back our celebrity chefs: Military Channel's Brad "The Grill Sergeant" Turner who competed against Celebrity Chef Bobby Flay for a barbecue throwdown; Mookie Hicks - Food Network's 24 Hour Restaurant Battle Winner; and Cooking

Tye - Celebrity Hip Hop Chef and author, along with scores of other celebrity chef talent.

"This not-be-missed event gives our renowned local and national chefs, an opportunity to spotlight their culinary skills while serving great causes," said Ujemma Masani, Chief Visionary Officer for Brothers Who Can Cook. "Chefs are also part of a movement to help fight against the pandemic of obesity and diabetes by exposing their extraordinary healthy appetizers and signature dishes to attendees during this event. Three of our chefs will receive the Renaissance Man Award for their entrepreneurial and charitable efforts."

For more information about Brothers Who Can Cook, visit www.brotherswhocancook.com.

Indie Soul Interview: Welcome Back Kenny Lattimore!

If you look up the word humble in the dictionary, it is defined as "having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance." Indie Soul believes that right next to the word would be a photograph of Kenny Lattimore, one of the most iconic figures in Soul Music.

"When people tell me that they appreciate my music and that they missed me, I am really humbled by those words, because I have never considered myself as that great," said Lattimore, who has been missing from the music scene for about five years.

Indie Soul can tell you that Lattimore's fans have greatly missed his smooth silky voice; his soulful sound; and his message of love and romance.

"Having to take the time to go through things both privately and publicly, I had to take time to be a dad. I wanted to be there for my son to make sure he is in a good space especially since I am the one who is taking care of him. I want to be an example for my son, plus I wanted and I needed time for me," Lattimore said. "Through everything—the marriage and having a child, then the divorce, I needed to reconnect, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Once I saw my son was okay and I was in good place, I knew it was time."

Another reason for the layoff Lattimore explained, "[I] just wasn't passionate, I still love music and performing, I just wasn't in love with the business side. I wanted to branch out and do other things and the labels wanted to keep me in that box," said Lattimore. "It wasn't until producers started reaching out, letting me know that I needed to be out there and that I was important."

Lattimore lights up when he talks about



Kenny Lattimore stopped by the Baltimore Times office to discuss music, life in general and his absence from the music scene with Indie Soul on Wednesday, April 1, 2015.

Photo: Phineste Demps

his new project as if this was his very first one and we all know how much of a monster that was!

"On my latest, it's a blend of old with the new. I am praying that everyone will love it like I do," Lattimore said.

If it's anything like the single "Love Me Back," Lattimore has nothing to worry about, he will have another monster on his hands—welcome back Kenny Lattimore! The CD drops Tuesday, April 14, 2015.

Visit us online at www.baltimoretimes-online.com to see the "Love Me Back" music video. Please check us out Facebook.com/TheBaltimoreTimes.

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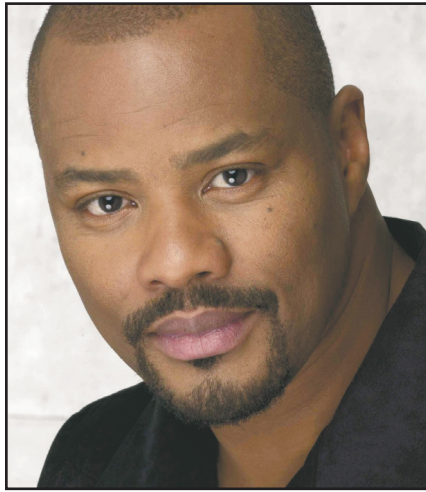
***Certain conditions apply.**

Joseph Edwards' play 'Reparations' premieres at Morgan

A groundbreaking theatre production about reparations that will touch audiences intellectually, emotionally and spiritually!

Directed by Shirley Basfield Dunlap, "Reparations," with a script and music by Joseph Edwards premieres at Morgan State University on Friday, April 10 through April 19, 2015 at the Murphy Fine Arts Center's Turpin-Lamb Theater.

A successful lawyer takes a case defending an insurance provider whose ancestor's company insured enslaved Africans. He encounters an ancient ancestor spirit with a mission to redirect his lost soul. What happens when divine intervention meets denial and arrogance? Director, Shirley Basfield Dunlap and her artistic team craft the show masterfully through the edgy delivery, spectacle, music and dance. The production is sure to be a bold theatrical experi-



Joseph Edwards Writer/Producer of "Reparations" Courtesy Photo

ence that will leave audiences laughing, singing and educated.

According to Joseph Edwards, "The goal of creating such a project is to use the arts to create a local, regional and national dialogue around reparations and reconciliation. Furthermore, developing the play at an HBCU (Historically Black College or University), of which many were founded as a form of reparations, would be an ideal environment. Morgan State University's Theater Arts Department and the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University are partnering on this Community Engagement Project".

Edwards is an artist and educator of diverse talents. His work as an actor and playwright has been showcased on film, television, and stage. Joseph's one-man show, "Manchild in the Promised Land" is a stage adaptation of the classic autobiography of Claude Brown and was nominated for an AUDELCO Award (Audience Development Committee, Inc.) for excellence in black theatre. Joseph won three AUDELCO awards for his critically acclaimed Off-Broadway production of "FLY," a comedy he both wrote and performed. For the past thirty years Joseph has inspired thousands of young people as a motivational speaker and educator.

Indie Soul: The Book of Negroes

"The Book of Negroes" recounts the harrowing journey of Aminata Diallo's (Aunjanue Ellis) return home after being forced into slavery as a child. A universal story of loss, courage and triumph, the acclaimed mini-series, which made it's United States broadcast premiere on BET in February this year is now available as a special edition three-disc DVD, exclusively from Entertainment One.

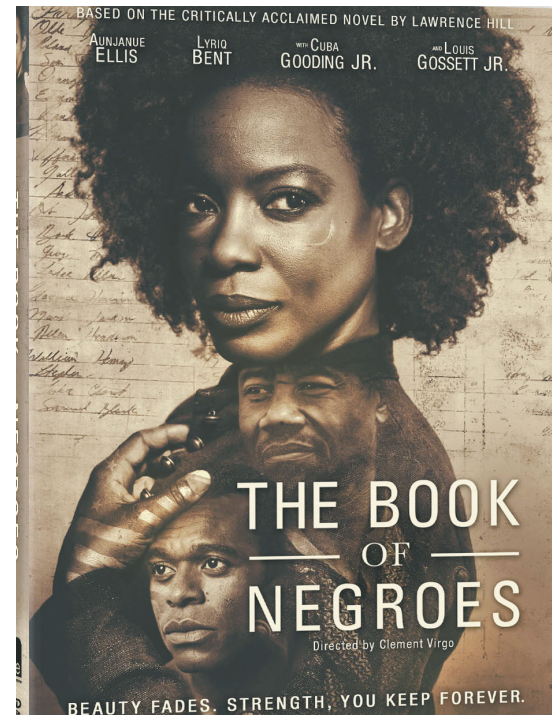
Indie Soul had a opportunity to chat with the Aunjanue Ellis and director, Clement Virgo to get their thoughts on the movie, its appeal for young teenagers and kids, and the importance of supporting similar projects.

Indie Soul: What was the personal impact of playing the part of Aminata?

Aunjanue Ellis: *Clement and I discussed that we wanted African-American women to see themselves in her. So many women through social media, or wherever I went, including young girls—as young as seven—were thanking me for that character. Because of "The Book of Negroes," we moved people to visit places like Civil Rights Museum and look at their history. Young children see themselves in my character, which makes me happy. We have created these characters that make people thankful and I am so happy for that."*

Indie Soul: What impact do you think this story had on young people?

Clement Virgo: *This generation seems to be interested in their past. They are open and curious. When we were in D.C. at Dunbar High School, when they see Aminata with her family and seeing her brought to America as a slave. This had a very lasting effect. I wanted to make a movie that would have them engaged. I wanted to give them a piece of history where they could connect and would keep them captive. I wanted the audience to feel her and keep them watching for the six hours.*



Indie Soul: What do you say when you hear African-Americans say, "I am not going to watch another slave movie?"

Aunjanue Ellis: *I get defensive when I hear that. It is deferred physiological effect. They think it's a damage of weakness as they see a reflection of themselves of the past and they don't want to see or watch that. I have to look at that from that point of view and not get hot about it.*

Clement Virgo: *When you see a holocaust film—each year we see at least one from "Sophie's Choice," "Schindler's List," or the new movie "Ida." These kind of stories are great. They tell and continue to tell the Jewish story. The same can be said of black films in cinema. They are few and far between these types of cinema. "Roots" was in the 70's and we didn't have another definitive slave film until "12 Years A Slave."*

Indie Soul welcomes your questions and comments. To contact Phinisse Demps, call 410-366-3900 ext. 3016 or 410-501-0193 or email: pdemps@btimes.com. Follow him on Twitter@pdemps_btimes

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IN THEATERS APRIL 17

'Beat The Pro!' celebrity basketball game to benefit charitable causes

By Andrea Blackstone

The Meade Senior High School Alumni Association has partnered with Dominant Force, a sports, training and entertainment company that hosts sports camps, clinics and fundraisers, to host the fourth annual Meade Alumni Beat The Pro! basketball game on April 12, 2015 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Meade Senior High School in Fort Meade, Maryland.

Kenny Gray, owner of Dominant Force and vice president of the Meade Senior High School Alumni Association, is actively involved in community outreach. He is instrumental in bringing local celebrities, retired professional athletes and current professional athletes together to help raise money for homeless students and two other organizations.

"My primary mission is to support the students," Aziz Abdur-Ra'oof said.

Ra'oof, now retired, played football at University of Maryland and was drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs. He will be playing on the pro basketball team during the fundraiser.

Meade Matters will be a recipient of funds and items collected at the basketball game. Twenty years ago, Joyce Wills founded the group to support students who attend Meade, which is located in Anne Arundel County. Wills and volunteers help to provide school supplies, feed students, supply clothing and provide necessities and other items. She mobilizes coworkers to collect everything from canned goods to prom dresses. The educator explained that some youth she encounters are homeless and live in local hotels, while others are from families coping with financial challenges.

"All of the children are not homeless. Many of them are, but some of them are



The 2014 "Beat The Pro!" celebrity basketball fundraiser featured professional athletes who played against Bowie High School alumni. In this year's charity basketball game the Pro team takes on the Meade High School alumni on Sunday, April 12, 2015 at Meade Senior High School at 2 p.m. (Left) Former Philadelphia Eagles player John Booty with an invited guest. They both played for the Pro team at last year's event. Courtesy Photo

just [from] very low income-families and they need help," Wills said. "The list gets larger every year. My program is year-round."

School supplies, gift cards, new or gently used clothes ranging from size zero for girls to 2XL for males are welcome contributions. Attendees of the charity basketball game can bring donations with them on April 12.

A 50/50 raffle will also be held at the

Beat The Pro! event. Ticket sales revenue will be used to purchase gift cards for the families of critically ill children who utilize services provided by the Casey Cares Foundation, which is a non-profit organization. The late Abraham Scrivner ("Hammy") participated in Casey Cares programs, during his brain tumor battle. In 2014, the foundation introduced an additional program called Hammy's Heart. The new program was

created in memory of 10-year-old Hammy to feed children and loved ones of critically ill children. Hammy's mother, Gina Truesdale, joined forces with Beat The Pro! The upcoming event will enhance her ability to spread the word about Hammy's Heart and raise funds.

"It's just been exciting to be able to get support and make people aware of the program that's available," Truesdale said.

Walter Kirkland, chair of the March of Dimes for Prince George's County is partnering with Gray as the fundraiser's emcee. As a part of an effort to motivate the public to get involved in the March of Dimes March for Babies walk on April 25, 2015 in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Kirkland will speak about the importance of being educated about the March of Dimes and its work, especially in cases of Latinos and African-Americans.

"In Maryland, 1400 babies are born every week. One hundred seventy-one babies are born prematurely. One hundred twenty-three babies are born with low birth weight. Eighty-two babies are born a week to teen mothers. Ten babies die before their first birthday. This is every week in Maryland," Kirkland said, citing the National Center for Health Statistics.

Additionally, the Meade Mustangs will be honored at the Beat The Pro! event. The basketball team won the Maryland State 4A Boys Basketball Championship in March.

Names are still being added to the celebrity basketball fundraiser lineup. A car show will be held and a magician is scheduled to perform. All ages are welcome to attend. Tickets can be purchased online at <http://btp-meade-alumni-tickets.eventbrite.com> and at the door.

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BGE launches Annual Energy Saving Trees Program

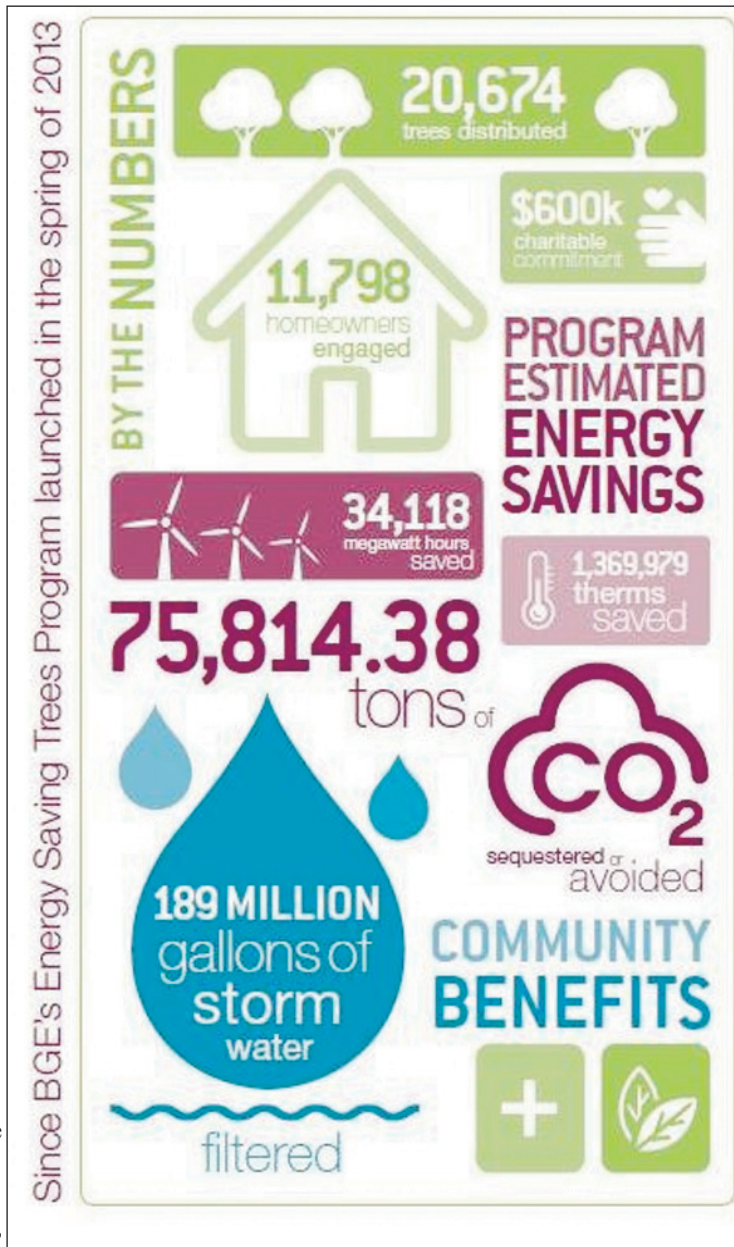
Through a contribution of \$100,000 BGE will again provide free trees to customers in an effort to promote energy-efficiency and make a positive impact on the environment

Baltimore— Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) kicked off its annual Energy Saving Trees Program on Monday, April 6, 2015, as part of its ongoing efforts to enhance and promote environmental stewardship and natural resource responsibility in communities throughout its central Maryland service area. In its third year, the BGE Energy Saving Trees Program is a joint effort between BGE, the Arbor Day Foundation and Davey Institute. To date, BGE has committed \$750,000 to the program and provided more than 32,000 free trees to customers through an online tool. In addition, the company also donated 360 trees to Baltimore City in 2014 and will provide 150 trees to the City of Annapolis this year. Customers who would like to receive up to two free trees from BGE are encouraged to visit www.arborday.org/BGE on April 6 to reserve their free trees, while supplies last.

To protect the integrity of BGE's infrastructure, the interactive tool will feature an overlay of BGE overhead lines for safe planting and choosing the appropriate tree. Customers must agree to follow Right Tree, Right Place guidelines and plant the trees in an energy-saving location, away from overhead power lines and underground utilities. Customers are reminded to always call Miss Utility at 811 to have underground utilities marked before any digging or planting project.

"Heating and cooling typically account for nearly half of a home's annual energy use and studies have shown that planting the right tree, in the right place, can help customers save up to 30 percent on their energy use throughout the year," said Rob Biagiotti, vice president and chief customer officer for BGE.

"Properly placed trees help keep homes cool by provid



ing shade from the harsh, summer sun and by slowing cold, winter winds. As part of the BGE Energy Saving

Trees Program, BGE customers can reserve up to two free trees per customer through an online process, while supplies last."

Trees offered through the program include: Shadblow Serviceberry, White Dogwood, Bald Cypress, Red Oak, Red Maple and Eastern Redbud, which is native to Maryland. To reserve a tree, go to www.arborday.org/BGE. The website will walk customers through a map of their home, choosing the right tree, and will provide guidance on where to plant the trees. Once the trees are reserved, the two to four foot trees will be shipped directly to customer homes, ready for planting. Basic tree planting educational materials, a map of the designated planting site and information about contacting Miss Utility at 811 prior to planting, will accompany the tree order.

"In addition to supporting efforts to improve the quality of the environment and promote energy efficiency, this program also provides the added benefits of storm water runoff reduction, improved air quality and neighborhood beautification," said Biagiotti.

The Energy Saving Trees online tool was created by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Davey Institute, a division of Davey Tree Expert Co., and uses peer-reviewed scientific research from the USDA Forest Service's i-Tree software to calculate estimated benefits.

Since the program's inception in 2013, BGE and its customers have achieved the following environmental benefits from the BGE Energy Saving Trees Program: more than 75,000 tons of carbon dioxide sequestered or avoided; 189 million gallons of storm water filtered; more than 34,000 megawatt hours saved; and nearly 1.4 million therms saved

For more information on BGE's Energy Saving Trees Program, visit www.arborday.org/BGE. To learn more about BGE's commitment to the environment, visit bge.com/ourcommitments/environment.

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