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Angela Brown redefines opera, gives outstanding performance



On Sunday, January 25, 2015, internationally acclaimed soprano Angela M. Brown (center) performed with Duke Ellington School of Arts Chamber Singers, Ottley Music School students and Morgan State University Choir during a moving extravaganza in Bowie, Maryland. Brown also starred in her creation called "Opera From a Sistah's Point of View." (See article on page 10) Photo: Andrea Blackstone

App helps consumers choose health insurance

By Stacy M. Brown

A team of young entrepreneurs is offering a different approach to the insurance and health care market place from what they said is a completely different perspective.

Ruken Oral, one of the founders of the shop insurance app, xTeros, says the program not only introduces a new way to shop for health insurance, but it changes the focus from balancing low premiums versus high deductibles, to a focus on knowing overall out-of-pocket costs before an individual makes a purchase.

"Brokers and the state and federal exchanges sell insurance as if they were selling a used car. Plans are sold based on how big a monthly payment you can make," said Oral, a 24-year-old self-de-

scribed beauty nerd. "This approach

benefits the insurance industry because xTeros turns the actuarial science around in favor of the consumer, by looking at the consumer's actual health expenses and then applying those expenses to all available plans. This allows you to see

your out-of-pocket costs per plan." She also says that because insurance plans are designed to confuse the consumer, regardless of where you purchase the plan, the xTeros app cuts through the confusion and helps consumers know their options and the impact that each plan will have on their pocket book each month.

The free web app analyzes health plans across all exchanges and eHealth, the largest online insurance broker, to help users and it shows plans based on their actual health expenses, rather than lowest monthly premium. "Our initial plan was to quietly release individual apps without fanfare, while we focused on delivering a mature suite of tools [later] in 2015," William Wynn, the CEO of the Bethesda-based company, said in a release.

"Traffic to our Shop Insurance app has been far beyond what we could have hoped from a stealth launch. It is obvious that the app successfully addresses a real need," he said, adding that it was his idea to start the company in 2012 to help frustrated consumers.



A serial tech entrepreneur, Wynn said he's always been passionate about finding a means of helping others overcome the frustration of shopping for health insurance and managing routine medical costs.

The privately held xTeros continues to build a consumer community around web apps that provide price-transparency and shopping tools to the consumer, Wynn said.

Primarily, the company focuses on two market segments, healthy individuals between 18 and 30 years old and those with families between the ages of 30 and 64 whose monthly insurance expense

can exceed rent or mortgage costs, according to Oral.

"We have, in our system, all possible health plan data available in the nation. It took our team almost two years to gather and perfect the data so that our tool can provide accurate plans for the user," she said. "We also assemble drug pricing, drug formulary and drug efficacy information. This data is combined with statistical databases we have developed to help guide users in understanding their health care options."

For more information about the app, visit www.xTeros.com.



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Guest Editorials/Letters

It'll Never Be Time for Term Limits on Congress

By Lee H. Hamilton

It didn't get much attention at the time, but the elections last November did more than give Republicans a majority in the U.S. Senate. Voters also added to the ranks of people on both sides of Capitol Hill who believe members of Congress should serve a limited number of terms.

I know a lot of people to whom this is good news. I know them, because I hear from them every time I speak at a public event that allows for a give-and-take with the audience. Americans are frustrated with the federal government as a whole and with Congress in particular, and are searching for a simple solution. The notion that the bums could be thrown out automatically has great appeal.

Yet as popular as the idea might be among the public at large, it has no traction on Capitol Hill. The fundamental problem is that any measures imposing limits will need the support of leaders who, almost by definition, have served a long time. They're not going to put themselves out of a job they like. Small surprise that bills calling for term limits don't even make it out of committee.

Now, I should say right up front that you're not going to hear a strong argument in favor of term limits from a guy who served 34 years in Congress. I'm biased. However, I want to spell out the reasons for my bias, not because I think term limits are a burning issue in Washington—they're not—but because I wish they were less of an issue for ordinary voters.

Congress has a lot of problems right now, and the American people have a role to play in fixing them but term limits are a distraction from the truly hard work that needs to be done.

When you boil down all the debating points for and against term limits, there are two that bear the crux of the argument. The first has to do with the nature of our democracy. Supporters of the idea believe that bringing in fresh thinking and new leaders on a regular basis will make Congress more representative. However, stripping voters of the right to re-elect a representative whom they have supported in the past does not make for a more democratic system—rather, less.

Representative government rests on the notion that voters get to choose their legislators. Telling them that this is true for all candidates but one—the incumbent—does not strengthen voters' rights; it reduces their choices. It also weakens Congress and that's the other key issue.

The most important point to remember in all this is that if you take power away from a senior legislator, that power does not evaporate. Instead, it flows to the bureaucracy and the president. Serving productively in Congress is a tough, exacting task. It demands a deep knowledge of the issues that confront the country; a keen eye—backed by years of experience—for the ways in which executive agencies can go off track and then seek to hide that fact; insight into the ways in which both allies and opponents on any given issue might be motivated to shift their positions; and the hard-earned wisdom to forge common ground among competing interests and ideologies.

These traits come neither quickly nor easily. Kicking members of Congress out of their seats just as they're gaining the ability to legislate effectively and oversee the government responsibly demotes Congress to the status of a minor agency. A politician elected to a limited term immediately begins looking for another job, which reduces his or her effectiveness and attention to the job at hand.

Term limits are not the solution to the real dysfunction that besets Washington. They reduce the choices of voters and accelerate the accumulation of power in the executive branch. They move representative democracy in the wrong direction.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Re: Quick Tips for Sub-Zero Winter Driving

When it comes to winter car care, many motorists think of antifreeze and batteries, but vehicles need extra attention when temperatures drop below zero. These six quick tips will help your vehicle perform at its best during cold weather months.

1. Keep the gas tank at least half full; this decreases the chance of moisture forming in the gas lines and possibly freezing.

2. Check the tire pressure, including the spare, as tires can lose pressure when temperatures drop. Consider special tires if snow and ice are a problem in your area.

3. Have the exhaust system checked for carbon monoxide leaks, which can be especially dangerous during cold weather driving when windows are closed.

4. If you're not trying to defrost the windshield or warm the interior, modern cars are ready to be driven right away. Idling longer than 30 seconds in most cases is unnecessary for the sake of warming up the engine. The best way to warm up your car is to drive gently at the start.

5. Change to low-viscosity oil in winter as it will flow more easily between moving parts when it is cold. Drivers in sub-zero temperatures should drop their oil weight from 10-W30 to 5-W30 as thickened oil can make it hard to start the car.

6. Consider using cold weather washer fluid and special winter windshield blades if you live in a place with especially harsh winter conditions.

Sub-zero temperatures can have a real impact on your vehicle. Winter magnifies existing problems such as pings, hard starts, sluggish performance and rough idling, and very cold temperatures reduce battery power. If you haven't had your vehicle checked recently, a thorough vehicle inspection is a good idea so you can avoid the aggravation and unexpected cost of a breakdown in freezing weather.

For more helpful auto care information, motorists can order a free copy of the recently updated 80-page Car Care Guide for the glove box at www.car-care.org/car-care-guide.

Rich White
Executive Director
Car Care Council
Bethesda, MD

Fifty Years of Black Progress

*By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA Columnist*

Has black America made significant progress politically, socially and economically over the past 50 years? This is not only an important question to pose, it is equally important to answer and the answer is a resounding yes!

In fact, 1965 to 2015 has been a remarkable period in the history of black America. However, make no mistake about it, all of our progress has come as a direct result of a protracted struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

The universal right to self-determination is a fundamental human right recognized by the United Nations. We have too often allowed non-blacks to mis-define our reality with distorted myths, negative stereotypes and cynicism.

This year will mark the largest Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) with 46 members. In 1965, there were only five African Americans in the Congress. We have come a long way politically in the past 50 years at the federal, state and local level.

In addition to representation in the House and Senate, we have served as mayors of big cities, as governors, as lieutenant governors, as speakers of state legislatures, as county commission chairs, as city council chairs, as school board presidents and as national party chairs. Black participation in state legislatures alone has increased five-fold over during past five decades.

come efforts by Republicans to suppress the black vote. This effort, carried out largely by Republican-dominated state legislatures, is underway as America experiences a dramatic demographic shift.

We are grateful that Sister Jeri Green and others at the U.S. Census Bureau who have assembled the latest social and demographic statistics for Black History Month observance:

in that same age group with a bachelor's degree or higher in 2012 was 18.7 percent.

- There were 3.7 million blacks enrolled in college as of 2012, a 28 percent increase over the 2.9 million in 2007.

- The annual median family income of black households was \$33,321 in 2012, compared to the national figure of \$55,017.

- The poverty rate for African Americans was 27.2 percent in 2012, compared to 15 percent nationally.

- There were 9.8 million family households in 2013 and among black households, 45.7 percent contained married couples.

- There was a record 17.8 million black voter turnout in 2012, a 1.7 million voter increase of the number of black Americans who voted in 2008.

- The record 66.2 percent of black Americans who voted in the 2012 presidential election was higher than the 64.1 percent of non-Hispanic whites who voted in 2012.

Yes, we have made progress over the past half-century, but future progress will not happen by osmosis. Rather, it will happen when we become wiser about how we spend more than \$1 trillion each year. We will also need to focus on strengthening black-owned businesses and grow a new generation of committed young entrepreneurs.

To be blunt, black Americans cannot afford to entertain any ideas of not moving forward to make more progress over the next 50 years. We have come too far to turn back now.

Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA). He can be reached at: dr.bchavis@nnpa.org.

“The universal right to self-determination is a fundamental human right recognized by the United Nations. We have too often allowed non-blacks to mis-define our reality with distorted myths, negative stereotypes and cynicism.”

Since the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, Black Power has moved from becoming a chant to a political reality. The late Edward Brooke (R-Mass.) blazed the way as the first black attorney general of a state and later as the first African American popularly elected to the U.S. Senate. Following suit, as governors were Doug Wilder in Virginia and Deval Patrick in Massachusetts.

Jesse L. Jackson's 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns paved the way for Barack Obama's successful campaign in 2008 to become the first black elected president of the United States of America.

On the heels of that success and blacks voting at a higher percentage than whites in 2012 for the first time, have

- As of July 1, 2012, there are now 44.5 million black Americans, either alone or in combination with one or more other races, in the U.S, up one percent over 2011.

- New York is the state with the largest black American population with 3.7 million. The District of Columbia has the highest percentage of black Americans at 51.6 percent, followed by Mississippi at 38 percent. Texas has the highest numeric increase in black Americans since 2011 (87,000. Cook County, Illinois, (Chicago) had the largest black American population of any county as of 2012 at 1.3 million.

- The percentage of blacks 25 and older with a high school diploma or higher was 83.2 percent.

- The percentage of African Americans

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BSU receives nearly \$1.2 million for cybersecurity education

By Andrea Blackstone

Bowie State University (BSU) will receive nearly \$1.2 million in federal funding over the next five years to support cybersecurity education.

The money is part of \$25 million grant from the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) through its Minority Serving Institutions Partnerships Program (MSIPP). Bowie State is the only Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Maryland awarded the funding.

The creation of a new cybersecurity consortium consists of 13 HBCUs, two national labs and a K-12 school district. In addition to BSU, participating consortium members are: Norfolk State University (lead); Clark Atlanta University; Paine College; North Carolina A&T State University; Allen University; Benedict College; Claflin University; Denmark Technical College; Morris College; South Carolina State University; Voorhees College; Charleston County School District; University of the Virgin Islands; Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory.

"The purpose is to develop and pilot a K-20 (kindergarten to college) pipeline that encourages and prepares students for cybersecurity careers," BSU provost Weldon Jackson said.

Jackson explained that along with Norfolk State University, Voorhees College, North Carolina A&T University, University of the Virgin Islands and Sandia National Labs, BSU participated in an existing NNSA-funded project that is designed to address workforce development needs in cybersecurity. Thus, BSU has become a leader in cybersecurity training at HBCUs.

"As part of the consortium, Bowie State University will expand its cybersecurity research efforts, enhance its cybersecurity curriculum, and increase opportunities for students to learn from real-



Weldon Jackson, Ph.D.
Provost, Bowie State University
Courtesy Photo

world experiences in the field. The grant will also allow Bowie State to increase its technological capability and develop additional K-12 pipeline summer pro-

"Bowie State University is the only Historically Black College and University in Maryland to receive funding through the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration's Minority Serving Institutions Partnerships Program to support cybersecurity education over the next five years."

grams," Jackson said. "The grant also directly relates to the University's first signature program, the Education

Innovation Initiative (EI2), which is designed to increase student enrollment and retention. The initiative integrates hands-on, real-world problem-solving in the classroom with collaboration from industry and agency partners, helps students see themselves as scientists and researchers, and builds a critical mass of faculty who integrate experiential learning into the curriculum."

Funding and enhanced cybersecurity programming will reportedly start at Bowie in the spring 2015 semester. Students who attend BSU will also participate in internships at Sandia National Labs in Albuquerque, N.M. Interns will receive training provided by industry professionals. They will also be exposed to cybersecurity case studies.

"This grant will help to strengthen the cybersecurity pipeline by increasing the capacity for pertinent academic training and research in NNSA focus areas at minority-serving institutions (MSI). MSI faculty will engage in collaborative research and technical workshops, and students will gain meaningful mentoring experiences to increase their interest and expertise in cybersecurity," Jackson said.

Training diverse cybersecurity professionals is expected to enhance well-paying job opportunities in a growing field.

"Maryland is the global epicenter of cybersecurity, developing our nation's cyber workforce to fill cyber jobs that are available now," Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) said in a press release issued Jan. 23, 2015.

"I am proud to see that Bowie State University is a partner in this new consortium to train cybersecurity workers to fill jobs today and jobs tomorrow.

Through cyber education, innovation and hands-on training, we will prepare students to be our first line of defense against cyber-attacks, making our nation safer and Maryland's economy stronger."

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Project SERVE helps with critical restoration efforts of Navy's ship

Baltimore— Currently the Coast Guard Yard, the U.S. Coast Guard's 115-year old shipyard, is a scene of living history as the USS Constellation is undergoing a critical four-month repair.

The USS Constellation is a U.S. Navy "sloop-of-war" with provenance dating back to the original frigate Constellation built in 1797. She is usually berthed in Baltimore's Inner Harbor Pier One. Historic Ships in Baltimore/Living Classrooms Foundation serves as the vessel's caretaker on behalf of the City of Baltimore. During the USS Constellation's last dry-dock in 2011, a major rot problem was discovered below the waterline. Since then over \$2 million has been raised to save this National Historic Landmark.

A crew of skilled men and women are working long days to restore USS Constellation's wooden hull. Members from Project SERVE, a Living Classrooms Foundation program that provides on-the-job training for unemployed ex-offenders and disadvantaged young adults through construction and revitaliza-

tion work in Baltimore's toughest neighborhoods, are soaking up history as they provide an important and valuable addition to the labor force. Each day Project SERVE members make up half of the men and women working on the ship.

The historic ship was found to have extensive rot in her laminated hull that needed to be removed to prevent the deterioration from spreading into the ship's historic timbers and to maintain her watertight integrity. Twelve Project SERVE workers are helping to replace the hull planking. Jobs include demolition, putting on new planks, general painting, cleanup, etc. The project began the first week of November and is very labor intensive. Project SERVE workers didn't need any prior woodworking experience for the job but "learning by doing" is giving the men and women additional skills they can use to enter the labor force.

"Working on the USS Constellation has been a great experience. I've been able to learn a lot of history and about how the ship has been maintained. My motto is there's no dumb question, so I



A crew of skilled men and women work long days to restore USS Constellation's wooden hull. When the historic USS Constellation returns to the Inner Harbor on or around February 20, 2015, she will be open daily for public tours as a living classroom and as the flagship of the Historic Ships in Baltimore fleet.

Courtesy Photo/Living Classrooms Foundation

ask a lot of questions and learned a lot and gained helpful experience. I'm grateful for the job opportunity, the experience, and meeting and working with all of my co-workers and bosses. I am appreciative of the whole experience," said Melvin Moses, Project SERVE member.

People from all over Baltimore are coming together to preserve USS Constellation. When docked at her Inner Harbor berth, the historic ship is a wonderful "living classroom"— allowing students and visitors to learn first-hand about 200 plus years of naval and maritime history.

"The return of USS Constellation, tentatively scheduled for February 20th, is an important part of Living Classrooms'

30th anniversary year. USS Constellation embodies the very essence of a "living classroom," bringing our heritage to life for students and visitors," said James Piper Bond, President and CEO of Living Classrooms Foundation.

"With such big job to complete in such a short time frame this has been a very challenging project, as we knew it would be from the start, but thanks to strong partnerships with both the personnel at the USCG Yard and the hard-working members of Project SERVE, as well as the generous support of the community at large, we will be successful in our mission to save the USS Constellation," said Chris Rowsom, executive director of Historic Ships in Baltimore and Vice President of Living Classrooms Foundation.

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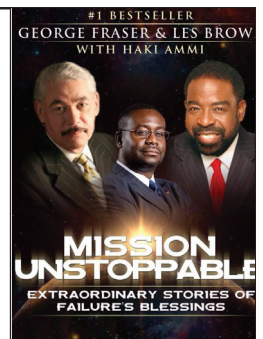
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For USC Cornerback Josh Shaw, the Focus is Football

By Turron Davenport

Josh Shaw was a standout at the Reese's Senior Bowl. Shaw is one of the prospects that the Baltimore Ravens had their eye on last week. He was clearly one of the better corners this week. He did exactly what he needed to do after the tough season that he experienced this year. He had an off field incident that may cause some teams to be hesitant.

His performance in front of the NFL teams will help to minimize the emphasis that may have been placed on his suspension. Many people who haven't spoken to Shaw before came away surprised at how well spoken he is and how much of an understanding he has of the position.

Shaw showed he can be a versatile player. Some teams talked to him about playing safety. In his mind, he offers a variety of ways to help a team.

"I think I bring multiple things. First off, I am a guy that can play on special teams and help whatever organization in that regard." Shaw said. "I am also a guy that can line up at any position in the backfield on the defensive side, at a high level."

His confidence shows when talking to him. That is the reason he has the mental makeup to be a very good press cornerback, which he says is his preference.

"It's where I am most comfortable at. I think I have the most upside at that position." Shaw said.

The Baltimore Ravens have shown interest in Shaw because his press coverage ability matches their defensive scheme. He is an aggressive defensive back that has all of the ability to "Play Like a Raven."

Shaw went into detail about what it takes to excel at the position.

"You have to trust in your preparation, how your coaches are coaching you but most of all, it's about confidence. Playing corner, if you're not confident, you're not good. You have to go out there with a great deal of confidence," Shaw said. "I think I am a match up nightmare for a lot of receivers. I know when I line up across from them, they probably don't want to deal with me. My mindset is to have a plan when I get to the line of scrimmage, I will make them have to deal with me."



Josh Shaw reacts after breaking up a pass against rival UCLA during the game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California on November 22, 2014.

Courtesy Photo/usc.edu

Shaw plays the position almost like a cat and mouse game.

"I always come to the line of scrimmage with a plan. If you don't, that's when you get in trouble. Sometimes, I like to switch up my techniques. I don't want to give the receivers the same picture every time. I don't want to give the quarterback the same thing every time." Shaw said. "I want to be able to mix things up. Of course you always want to make them feel you but there will be times when they may not feel you. That's when you just mirror them, turn and run with them. That's how you change it up."

Playing corner, especially a press corner requires having an extremely competitive edge. Shaw definitely checks that box on the football field.

"My mindset is that I am so competitive that when the defense is in the huddle, I hope the coach calls cover one or cover zero. That way, it's me versus the receiver."

While press coverage is something that he prefers, Shaw says that he has seen a lot from the five coaches that he

had while he was at USC.

"In the end, it all comes back to being confident with who you are." He feels that he can adapt very quickly. He said that he's had to play his share of off man in college also. The thing that he likes about it is that at some point, it becomes just man.

His reasoning is that he isn't one to hurry into his backpedal because he trusts his speed. He will allow the receiver to make their move and act accordingly. Some corners tend to lunge at the receiver because they have to get a hand on him to redirect them.

Shaw said that he likes Patrick Peterson and Aqib Talib because they are long corners. From a technical standpoint he studies Darrelle Revis. The same guys who trained Revis in the off-season are training him now. He knows the value of watching film but understands that each player is unique.

"I watch a lot of his film [Revis] but every guy is different. What works for him might not work for me," Shaw said.



Angela Brown redefines opera, gives outstanding performance

By Andrea Blackstone

Soprano Angela M. Brown who has graced prestigious opera and symphonic stages around the world, performed before approximately 300 supporters of the arts at the Bowie Center for Performing Arts in Maryland on Sunday, January 25, 2015. Brown presented her signature creation titled, “Opera From a Sistah’s Point of View.”

Attendees like artist and literary activist, J. Joy Matthews Alford (Sistah Joy) brought her granddaughter, Jordan Gregory and Jordan’s cousin to the affair that was presented by Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA). The event was free for youth ages 18 and under.

“Primarily, I am here today as a board member of CAAPA,” said Alford. “The excitement for me is that I am introducing my nine-year-old granddaughter to the opera today. I know she is going to be thrilled.”

At the end of the program, Brown’s palatable mix of opera, humorous storytelling and a dash of history garnered a standing ovation.

Admirers like Mary Ann White, president of the Board of Directors of the Prince George’s Philharmonic, greeted Brown during a casual reception. Adults and youth appeared equally eager to meet the world-renowned opera singer who dispelled operatic stereotypes.

“I believe that opera is entertainment and that you should never let anybody put you in a box and tell you that you won’t enjoy something. If you have never had a mushroom, don’t tell me you don’t like mushrooms. Try it and then you can make an educated ‘I don’t like it.’ That’s the way I feel about opera,” Brown said. “It’s entertainment. It’s something that can open your mind up to other things. One of my missions in life is to bring it to everyone. I just love seeing a diverse audience, and lots of babies, because have to build up our audiences for classical music.”

Brown’s program offered both regional and musical diversity. Kristen Wright, a general assignment reporter for News4 served as Mistress of Cere-



Soprano Angela Brown (center) rejoices with program attendees, participants and CAAPA’s executive director at the end of her performance in Bowie, Maryland.

Photos: Andrea Blackstone

monies. Dr. Lester Green, CAAPA’s artistic director, accompanied Brown by piano. Violinist, Alexander Strahan and pianist, Edmond Charles performed. Dr. Steven Allen directed Duke Ellington School of Arts Chamber Singers. Nevilla E. Ottley led Ottley Music School’s students. Under the direction of Dr. Eric Conway, Morgan State University Choir exhibited their choral skills. Conway is also a member of CAAPA’s Board of Directors. After individual selections were complete, Brown performed a moving extravaganza with a combined group of singers.

Samira Plummer, an 11th-grade student and aspiring opera singer who attends Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C. beamed while recalling her performance opportunity with Brown.

“She [Angela Brown] was very energetic. She was really entertaining. I sang behind other opera singers, being with Duke Ellington, but with her I was more interested because she was so alive and had so much vocal control. I want to do that. Can I do that? Her voice is just amazing,” Samira said.



Pamela Simonson (left) and her mother, Terri Allen (right) are two founders of the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA).

CAAPA is moving into the 11th season of “Bringing Color to the Classics” through community outreach, arts education, audience development, performance opportunities and arts partnerships. Terri Allen, CAAPA’s executive director, founded the organization along with her children, Pamela Simonson and Victor Simonson.

Pamela Simonson, who serves as chairman of the board, provided highlights of the Maryland-based nonprofit’s mission.

“CAAPA is really about “Bringing Color to the Classics,” which is a way to bring African American classical musicians into the community to spotlight them, highlight their talents and also give people an opportunity to hear classical music from a different perspective,” Simonson said. “One of our main goals in CAAPA is to have our students—especially the ones that are really interested in going into the field—be inspired by someone like Angela who was like them when she was their age.”

Brown was scheduled to teach a master class to vocal performance and opera students at Morgan State University the next day, under the under the auspices of CAAPA.

“Classical music gives you a good foundation that you can then build off of,” Brown said before the Baltimore visit: “Learn it right first and then you can go specialize after that.”



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Go Red for Women: 10 Years of Changing Hearts

Source: Go Red For Women
www.goredforwomen.org

In our first 10 years, we've changed millions of hearts

Ten years ago, the American Heart Association discovered that heart disease killed more women than men. And it took more women's lives than all forms of cancer combined. So we created Go Red For Women, a network of women dedicated to education, support, and research. Since then, we've educated millions of women on the dangers of heart disease, and made major changes in health care. Over these first ten years, we've tracked the progress for millions of women involved, and the improvements within the healthcare industry. Here are ten encouraging accomplishments that make all of those involved very proud.

1. Lives are being saved

- 34% fewer women now die from heart disease.
- More than 627,000 women's lives have been saved.

2. Overall heart health has improved

- Nearly 90% of participants made healthy lifestyle changes.
- 37% have lost excess weight.
- More than half now exercise more.
- 60% now eat healthier diets.
- 43% have had their cholesterol checked.

3. Awareness of heart disease has increased

- 23% increase in awareness that heart disease is the #1 killer of women.

4. Unhealthy lifestyle risks have decreased

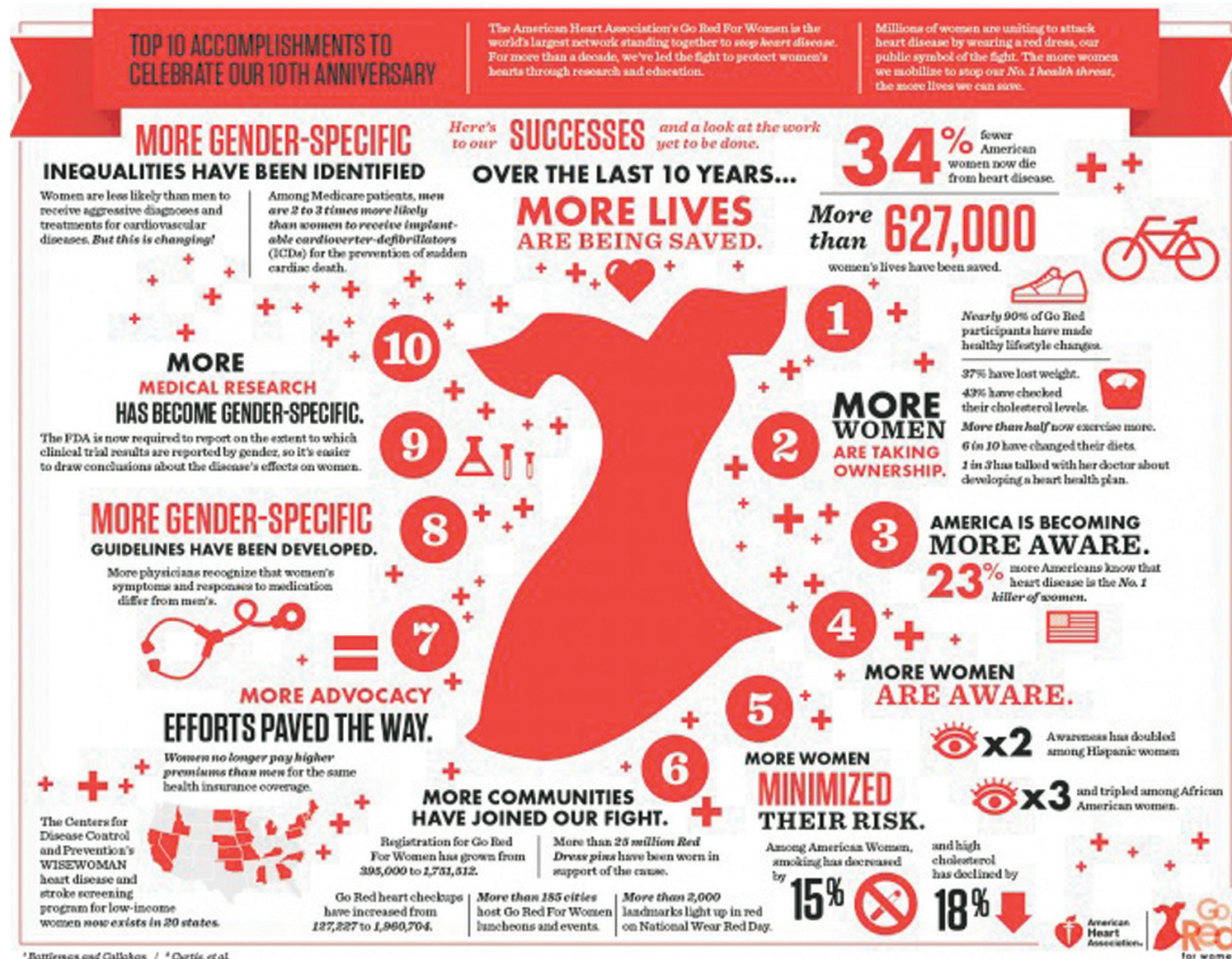
- Smoking decreased by 15.1%.
- Cholesterol levels decreased 18.1%.

5. Diversity challenges have been identified and targeted

- Heart disease rates vary by ethnicity, with unique challenges for each.
- Targeted efforts are reaching African American and Hispanic women.

6. Grassroots movement has grown substantially

- Enrollment has grown from 395,000 to 1,751,512.
- Women completing Go Red Heart Check-ups has increased from 127,227



* Battleson and Galkhos / © Curtis, et al

to 1,960,704.

- Annual Go Red luncheons/events has grown from 65 to 1,377.
- Website hits have grown from 293K to 56.6 M.

7. Advocacy efforts have been successful

- Congress passed the Heart for Women Act in 2012, requiring the FDA to report clinical trials based on gender.

- We helped increase funding from the Center for Disease Control to provide screenings for low-income women.

- We helped pass a law in 2010 to keep women's health insurance premiums from costing more than men's.

8. Gender-specific guidelines have been developed for prevention and treatment

- We're helping physicians recognize

that women's heart symptoms and treatment are different from men's.

- Our "Get With the Guidelines" program has helped hospitals provide improved heart treatment for both genders.



9. We've helped medical research become gender-specific

- Women have been under represented in clinical studies, but the FDA now requires results reported by gender.
- Increased gender-based research has revealed important differences in women's symptoms and response to medications.

10. Gender-specific inequalities are identified and targeted

- We've discovered that women aren't receiving the same level of treatment for heart disease as men. But this is changing!

The fight is not over. Heart disease is still the #1 killer of women. But it doesn't have to be. We've made great progress in our first ten years, and with your help we'll keep working to change women's hearts.

Learn how to live healthy and sign up for Go Red For Women's E-Newsletter on <https://www.goredforwomen.org> for heart disease news, research and advice just for you.

Heart Attack Survivor Spreads Important Message

By Stacy M. Brown

A website saved her life. Julia Allen, the national spokesperson for the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women's campaign, says www.goredforwomen.org can save many more lives if everyone becomes aware of and makes good use of the website.

"If you say nothing else about me or about this cause, please just point everyone to the website," said Allen, who survived two heart attacks in one day in 2013. "There's nothing like a heart attack to make you change the way you eat and lose a little weight."

Allen is also helping to spread the word about the American Heart Association's National Wear Red Day, which takes place on Friday, February 6, 2015.

Heart disease is the number one killer of women and is more deadly than all forms of cancer, according to heart association officials.

Allen says the statistics are even more deadly for African-Americans and other minorities. African-American women are less likely than Caucasian women to be aware that heart disease is the leading cause of death. Diabetes, smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, obesity and a family history of heart disease are all greatly prevalent among African-Americans and are major risk factors for heart disease and stroke, heart association officials said.

What's more, African-American women have almost two times the risk of stroke than Caucasians, and more likely to die at an earlier age when compared to women of other ethnicities. The unsettling statistics include the fact that cardiovascular diseases kills nearly 50,000 African-American women annually and of African-American women ages 20 and older, 49 percent have heart disease and only one in five African-American women believes she is personally at risk.

Further, just 52 percent of African-American women are aware of the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and as little as 36 percent of African-American women know that heart disease is their greatest health risk.

In Allen's case, the married mother of three boys ages 14, 11 and 7, said she had always put her family and friends' needs ahead of her own.

She worked a full-time job, helped to get her children off to school each day and participate in various activities while also preparing regular meals for the family.

Allen said she first felt a heart attack come on while at work. Then, even as she felt pain in her chest, she went home to make an after school snack for her boys before finally deciding to drive to the hospital.

"I didn't want to believe I could be having a heart attack," she said. "But, I had at least two that day. And, really, I looked on the internet and came across the American Heart Association's website and I was able to check my symptoms and I found that I had six of the



Julia Allen's husband and three sons, 14, 11, and 7 are very supportive and makes sure that she maintains a healthy lifestyle. Julia is the survivor of two hearts attacks in 2013.



One in three women die of heart disease and stroke each year. Celebrate National Wear Red Day with Go Red for Women on Friday, February 6, 2015 to help say women's lives.

seven symptoms and that's when I knew that I was definitely having a heart attack."

Allen had also ignored the red flags she said were present, such as being anemic and a strong family history of heart disease.

Doctors told Allen that an artery in her left ventricle was 80 percent blocked, but because of where the blockage was, it couldn't be repaired with a stent. Treatment was done by medication, which helped the area repair by building new capillaries.

Allen, now 46, has made important changes to her lifestyle to reduce her heart attack risk. She eats healthier foods and makes more time for exercise. Instead of waiting in the bleachers while her kids play sports, she brings exercise clothes and walks around the track.

"My 14-year-old is my biggest supporter. He makes sure that I exercise and that I keep active," Allen said.

Thanks to a loving husband, family and supportive friends, Allen says she has also been able to reduce her stress and she regularly makes healthy lifestyle choices. She became a volunteer with the heart association where she works to raise awareness about heart disease and its affects as the top killer of women.

"I would encourage people to talk to their primary care physician and listen to him or her. Know your family history," she said. "And, if something seems out of whack, go to the doctor. Don't ignore it."

For more information about Go Red For Women or about heart disease, visit www.goredforwomen.org.

Rambling Rose

**Lexington Market Celebrates
Black History Month**



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello, my dear friends, I hope all is well with you and your family. As you know, this is a fun and festive time of the year for many people, for many races. Many folks take advantage of this month by having special entertainment events featuring Afro American-American shows; plays; dances; exhibits; display; arts and crafts. Well, my friend that is a good thing. Our World Famous Lexington Market is doing just that. For the entire month of February you can enjoy Lexington Market's free concert series every day. Performances of music, songs, narrated skits and dances based on African, Caribbean, jazz, blues, gospel, or big Band Swing/jazz themes. Also featured will be exhibits from Great Blacks in Wax Museum, African American authors, crafter's and a special presentation by the Buffalo Soldiers in full uniform. This wonderful lineup is both educational, entertaining and a lot of fun for celebrating Black History Month. With more than 100 food vendors and an international cuisine selection, there is a flavor for everyone. I will be there with both of my books ready to autograph them for you, so look for me.

Eubie Blake Cultural Center located 847 N. Howard Street is hosting a show on Sunday, February 8, 2015 starting at 6 p.m. featuring a one-man show with Robert Lee Hardy entitled "I Carry My Own Spotlight." Food and beverages are available for purchase. This one-man show will feature comedy, movement, drama, music and poetry. Mr. Hardy morph's into numerous characters that address many taboo issues in our culture. Mr. Hardy is a 2005 graduate of SUNY Purchase with a bachelor of fine arts degree in acting. He currently teaches drama at The Mount Washington School, he was the Youth Theatre's play director

at the Arena Players; he taught acting at the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center and was an acting instructor for Baltimore City Recreation and Parks. For ticket information call 410-225-3130.

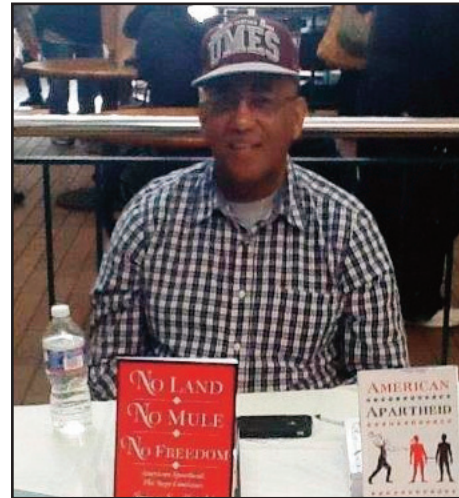
I call this month "The Double Whammy Month," because we also celebrate the "Sweethearts" Valentine's Day right in the middle. "The Quality Plus, Inc" will present a Valentine's Day Red & White Affair on Friday, February 6 from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. at the Delta Center, 2501 Springhill Avenue with an open buffet, free set-ups, champagne toast and it is BYOB. A special contest prizes for best dressed man and woman, Book signing by Yours Truly, "Rambling Rose", vendors and live entertainment by Nirvine Jazz Duo. For ticket information, call Vinnette Johnson at 443-762-7926. I will see you there.

Another "Sweethearts" event for next week is a "Pre-Valentine's Celebration Red & Black Affair" hosted by Carl Beasley, Mattie Holman and Carlos Hutchins on Sunday, February 8 from 4-8 p.m. at the American Legion Post #22 at 125 York Road in Towson, Maryland. Live entertainment by Slagz Band, DJ Sugar Chris will be playing your favorite records, It is BYOB and BYOF with free beer and free set-ups. For ticket information, call 410-916-2605 or 443-963-5711. I also will be there for a book signing. I will see you there.

Well, my dear friends, we are out of space, remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



Children from different elementary and high schools in Maryland will participate in activities during Black History Month at the Lexington Market every day.



James Wright, president of Black Writers' Guild will be at the World Famous Lexington Market, 400 W. Lexington Street in Baltimore for the first two weeks of February, Monday thru Saturday to start the celebration of Black History Month.



Carolyn Richardson, well-known card player from the Elks Lodge on Harford Road to the Sphinx Club to Maceo's Lounge is celebrating her birthday at Maceo's Lounge located at 1926 N. Monroe Street on Sat., Feb. 7, 2015, starting at 5 p.m. Delicious food will be served and music provided by Lil' Joe.



Darlene Hudson, entertainment director, marketing & promotions manager of Lexington Market and Baltimore Public Markets poses at "Rambling Rose" book signing table. Feb. 2 -14, 2015 is Literacy Week at Lexington Market. Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. hundreds of authors will be present for book signings. Exhibits to kick off Black History Month at Lexington Market will be on display.

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221-32.8 Oz. - Select Varieties
DiGiorno 12" Pizza
Without MVP Card \$6.19 EA

MVP
5 Lb. Bag
2.49 FOR
Russet Potatoes
Without MVP Card \$2.99 EA



MVP
99¢ EA
Hass Avocados
Without MVP Card \$1.39 EA



MVP
12 Oz. Pkg.
99¢ EA
Fresh Express or Dole Garden Salad
Without MVP Card \$1.57 EA



MVP
19 Oz. - Select Varieties
3.99 EA
Johnsonville Fresh Brats
Without MVP Card \$5.49 EA



MVP
44-48 Oz. - All Varieties
4.99 EA
Food Lion Deli Salads
Without MVP Card \$6.49 EA



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BUY 1 GET 1 FREE
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16 Oz. - Select Varieties
Ball Park Meat Franks
Without MVP Card \$3.99 EA



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18-32 Oz. - Select Varieties
Farm Rich Snacks
Without MVP Card \$6.49 EA



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18-20 Oz. - Select Varieties
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Sweet Baby Ray's Barbecue Sauce
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8.8-13.7 Oz. - Select Varieties
Nabisco Ritz Crackers
Without MVP Card \$4.59 EA
Limit 2 Free



MVP
2.49 FOR

8 Ct. - 12 Oz.
Ball Park Hamburger or Hot Dog Buns
Without MVP Card \$2.49 EA



MVP
2.49 FOR

48 Oz. - Select Varieties
Turkey Hill Ice Cream
Without MVP Card \$2.99 EA



MVP
BUY 1 GET 1 FREE
single item at 1/2 price

6.6-15 Oz. - Select Varieties
Keebler Fudge Shoppe Cookies
Without MVP Card \$3.29 EA
Limit 2 Free



MVP
2.49 FOR

6-8 Oz. - Select Varieties
Cabot Chunk or Kraft Shredded Cheese
Without MVP Card Regular Retail



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Center Stage: ‘One Night in Miami’

“We all have a Voice in the Movement”-- Malcolm X

When you are in a position to be able to uplift and educate, you must do so. The stage play “One Night in Miami” by Kemp Powers and directed by Center Stage Artistic Director, Kwame Kwei-Armah, Kwame continues does just that.

“I think part of my job is to bring the best new plays to the theater. This play focuses on an iconic moment not just a sporting event, but in black history. Cassius Clay coming out and moving to Muhammad Ali. Malcolm X dying within the year. It’s a huge moment for African-American history and for American history” states Kwei-Armah.

“One Night in Miami” is centered around the night Cassius Clay defeats Sonny Liston. Clay, Malcolm X, NFL Running Back-Jim Brown, and Soul Singer Sam Cooke, gathered in a motel room to celebrate. What comes out of this gathering is a conversation about life and the Civil Rights Movement. Although no one knows for sure what really took place that night, this is a look at what might have transpired between these heroes of the Civil Rights Movement.

The cast includes Tory Andrus (Malcolm X), Sullivan Jones (Cassius Clay), Grasan Kingsberry (Sam



Left to right: Tory Andrus, Sullivan Jones, Esau Pritchett, and Grasan Kingsberry.

Photo: © Richard Anderson

Cooke), Esau Pritchett (Jim Brown), Royce Johnson (Kareem), and Genesis Oliver (Jamaa). They played their parts so well you would believe you were actually

in the room with the real life individuals.

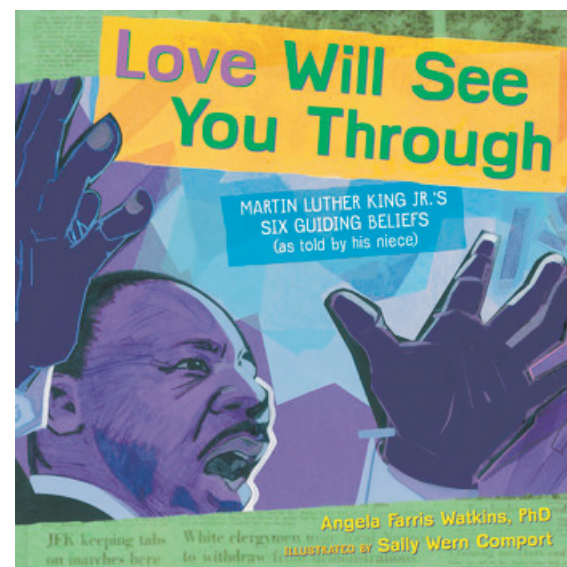
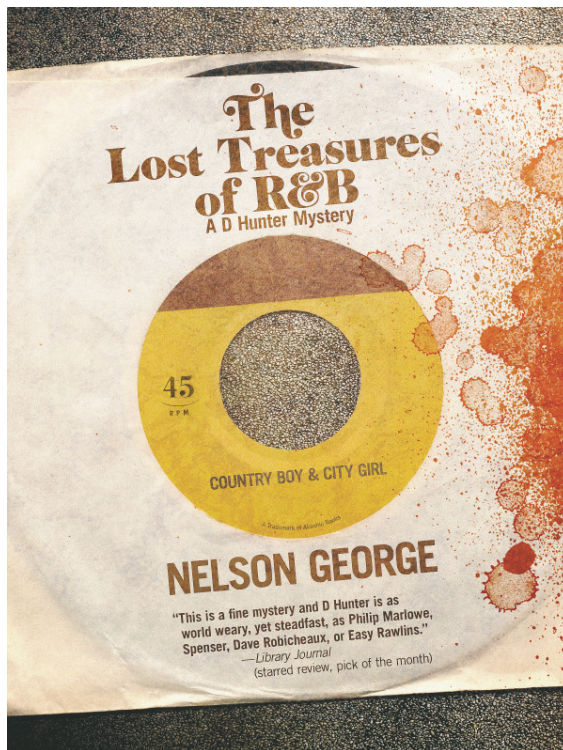
The play runs until February 8th 2015. Plan a date to attend!

Indie Soul Review: Love Will See Us Through and The Lost Treasures of R&B

Literacy and education are key to helping our young people move forward and live successful lives. This month Indie Soul gives you two books to encourage our children to learn and gain understanding.

Love Will See Us Through: The world just finished celebrating MLK Day but many of today’s youth really have no clue who he really was. This book, written by Martin Luther King’s Jr.’s niece, Angela Farris Watkins touches on the events in life that demonstrate six principles that Martin Luther King Jr. lived by. Parents with children as young as three can begin the process of educating their children about an important figure in black history. For information on how you can purchase this book, please visit: <http://www.mylifetime.com/shows/kosher-soul>

The Lost Treasures of R&B: “The Lost Treasures of R&B” by Nelson George is written in the spirit of authors such as Walter Mosley and Donald Goines and will appeal to young adult readers. Don’t get it twisted, if you love music and mystery this book is for you as well. The book blends music from the past with thug appeal of the present to appeal to young and old alike. Pick up a copy by visiting: www.akaschic-books.com



Right: “The Lost Treasures of R&B” by Nelson George

Top: Love Will See You Through by Angela Farris Watkins

Indie Soul Review: Kosher Soul

On Wednesday February 25, 2015, Lifetime Television presents a very interesting show entitled “Kosher Soul.” “Kosher Soul” is a reality show or as Lifetime is calling it, docu-sitcom, that centers around the lives of Los Angeles stylist Miriam Sternoff, who is Jewish, and O’Neal McKnight, a comedian, who is black and from the South. After nine years of, off again-on again relationship, Sternoff and McKnight are about to be married.

As you can imagine, this show is going to be controversial and probably the most talked about show since VH-1 cancelled “Sorority Sisters” earlier this year. There is no question that the two are in love. The question is how will Jewish people and whites react to this show? Oh, did we forget to inform you, O’Neal is converting to Judaism?

On the other end of the spectrum, how will Black America respond? How will women react when they see some of McKnight’s cringe-worthy antics?

One must applaud Lifetime for taking the risk on a controversial topics including interracial dating, religion, and racism. Perhaps this will lead to more serious discussions about nontraditional relationships. Stay tuned. Check out our Facebook page: The Baltimore Times, for a chance to see a trailer for the show “Kosher Soul.”

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_btims



Miriam Sternoff and O’Neal McKnight,

Indie Soul: Africa Magic NEW Movies

Africa Magic, Africa’s largest provider of original film and television content, has released a new slate of films and TV series on its on-demand service. Africa Magic GO (AMGO), www.africamagicgo.com, is a service similar to Hulu, NetFlix, and Amazon, offering Africa’s freshest films and TV programs to Africans outside the continent.

This month, viewers may enjoy two great new movies set in Ghana and Nigeria: “Wine for Chocolate,” starring Majid Michel and Femi Jacobs, and “Return of the Prodigal Son,” starring Jibola Dabo and Chris Attah. Then it’s off to Kenya with “Lifestyle,” starring Kagwe Mungai and Virginia Mando. From there it’s time to head to South Africa for its offering “Love Game,” starring Solomon Sebothoma as a man who will go to great lengths to win the heart of a woman (Amanda Seshedi), including becoming someone he’s not.

In addition to films, viewers can watch television series from across the continent. South Africa is home to the riveting reality show “Dineo’s Diary,”

which follows the diva radio and TV personality Dineo Ranaka as she struggles with single parenthood, a messy breakup and a career change. And Nigeria is the setting for the much buzzed-about sitcom, “The Johnsons,” centering on a 15-year-old boy who struggles with the challenges of being a teenager—and being only two feet tall. The series stars Chinedu Ikedieze, Ada Ameh and Charles Inojie.

“These are extremely exciting times for the African entertainment industry. Africa Magic GO has created a platform for the African diaspora to share and connect with their invaluable memories of home,” said Ken Onwu, product manager for AMGO. “From the aesthetics to the content, Africa Magic GO has given the world Africa’s new outfit—one that she’s wearing with tremendous pride. We have an exciting lineup for the diaspora this year.”

Visit Africa Magic GO at www.africamagicgo.com.



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IN THEATERS FEBRUARY 6

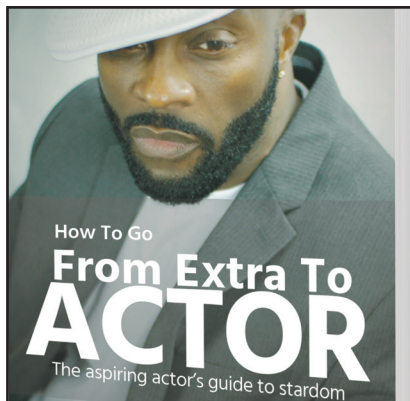
Baltimore native goes from extra to successful actor

By Kimberly Brown

Growing up in West Baltimore, Jerome Ro Brooks always dreamed of seeing his name in bright lights, however, it wasn't until leaving his hometown that the trajectory of his career changed.

Born Jerome Curtis Brooks Jr., the actor was always encouraged at a young age by family members to utilize his musical and acting gifts. As a result, the leading man soon encountered early success when he got together with a group of friends and formed the rap and dance group "Twice As Nice." The group performed regularly, which eventually led to an opportunity to showcase their talents at the famed Apollo Theater. As Brooks continued to set his sights on higher goals, acting inevitably became his destiny.

With over 20 years experience in the



entertainment industry, Brooks was compelled to write, "How to Go from Extra to Actor," a pocket guide for aspiring actors. Released in December 2014, Brooks said, "When I first started out in this business I felt there were limited resources for me to get the guidance and information I needed as an aspiring actor. So I always told myself, once I got to a certain level of success that I would



Jerome Ro Brooks is currently enjoying success playing the role of "Michael" in the Tyler Perry series "The Haves and The Have Nots" on the OWN Network. (Above) Brooks on the red carpet at the recent "Dinner With Ro Brooks" event in Atlanta, Georgia. Courtesy Photo

share what I learned along my journey as well as answer some of the questions that I had starting out in this industry."

The book provides information about headshots, how to become eligible to join the actors union, as well as tips for auditioning.

Brooks who started his acting career as an extra said, "Many of the world's most famous actors started as background talent so I just wanted to put out there that starting as background talent is not a bad thing, [as] long as you have a plan. It is my hope that readers will utilize the advice in this

book to avoid some of the pitfalls that many up and coming actors endure."

The happily married husband considers his wife, children, other family and friends as his biggest support system but more importantly, Brooks acknowledges

that his biggest strength lies in his relationship with God.

"Even when it gets difficult and I want to give up, I think about how far God has brought me so I have to keep pushing," Brooks said. "My neighborhood where I grew up—Edmondson Avenue and Monroe Street—is also who I do this for. I am who I am because of my city and where I come from. That's my hood."

Besides publishing his book, Brooks is also enjoying success playing the role of "Michael" in the Tyler Perry series "The Haves and The Have Nots" on the OWN Network.

"Working with Tyler Perry was the highlight of booking this job. It was also a major highlight for my career as an actor. There are many actors in this business who desire to work with Mr. Perry so having this opportunity is a dream come true. The role as "Michael" helped solidify who Jerome Ro Brooks is. I've been blessed to have worked with other networks, but this show helped [to] establish my name."

Jerome Ro Brooks' natural talent and humble nature is the perfect recipe for a leading man in the entertainment industry today.

The book "How to Go from Extra to Actor" is available for purchase at www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com. Also, a PDF version is available at www.fromextratoactor.com.

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Four simple steps to stop a cyber thief

Maryland Bankers Association Raises Awareness for Data Privacy

Annapolis— In recognition of National Data Privacy Day— January 28, 2015 the Maryland Bankers Association is urging customers to take an active role in protecting their data.

“The Maryland banking industry’s first priority is to protect our customers’ deposits and information,” said Kathleen Murphy, President and CEO Maryland Bankers Association (MBA). “Banks use a combination of safeguards to protect their customers’ information, and we encourage customers to partner with us in that effort.”

To help ensure the safety of personal information, MBA suggests following these four tips:

1. Create c0mplic@t3d passwords. Avoid birthdays, pet names and simple passwords like 12345. It is also important to change passwords at least three times a year. Because friendly theft— theft by someone the victim knows— is the most common type of identity theft or fraud, don’t share your passwords with family members and be mindful of who has access to your personal information.

2. Keep tabs on your accounts. Check account activity and online statements often, instead of waiting for the monthly statement. You are the first line of defense because you know right away if a transaction is fraudulent. If you notice unusual or unauthorized activity, notify your bank right away. When a customer reports an unauthorized transaction in a timely manner, the bank will cover the loss and take measures to protect the account.

3. Stay alert online. Be sure computers and mobile devices are equipped with up-to-date anti-virus and malware protection. Never give out your personal financial information in response to an unsolicited email, no matter how official it may seem. Your bank will never contact you by email asking for your pass-

word, PIN, or account information. Only open links and attachments from trusted sources. When submitting financial information on a website, look for the padlock or key icon at the top or bottom of your browser, and make sure the Internet address begins with “https.” This signals that your information is secure during transmission.

4. Mobilize your defenses. Use the passcode lock on your smartphone and other devices. This will make it more difficult for thieves to access your information if your device is lost or stolen. Before you donate, sell or trade your mobile device, be sure to wipe it using specialized software or using the manufacturer’s recommended technique. Some software allows you to wipe your

device remotely if it is lost or stolen. Use caution when downloading apps, as they may contain malware and avoid opening links and attachments— especially from senders you don’t know.

Tips for Victims:

If you are a victim of fraud and suspect your personal information has been compromised, you should take the following steps:

*Call your bank and credit card issuers immediately so they can take necessary steps to protect your account.

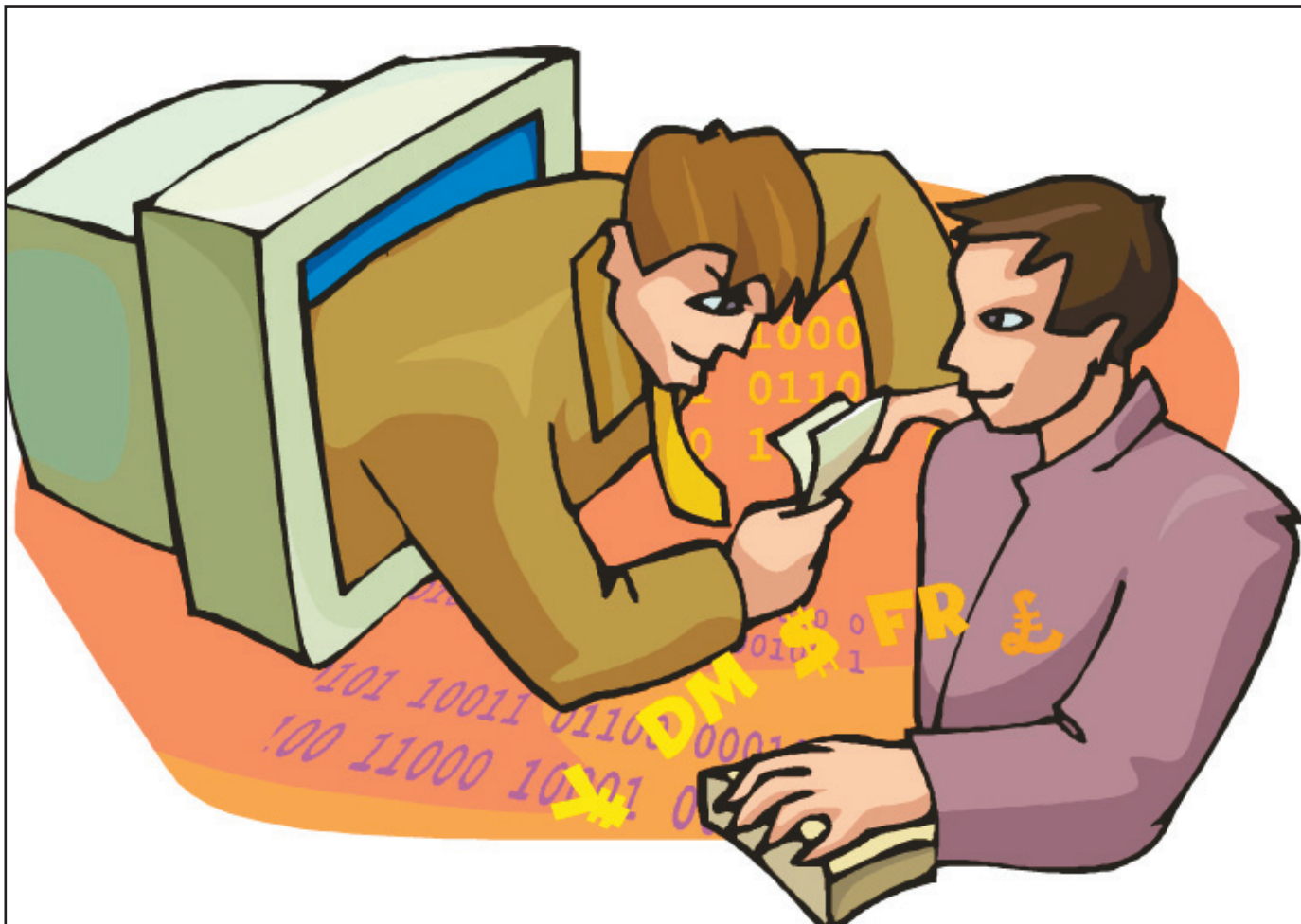
*File a police report and call the fraud unit of the three credit-reporting companies.

*Consider placing a victim statement in your credit report and a fraud alert on your account.

*Keep a log of all the contacts you make with authorities regarding the matter. Write down names, titles and phone numbers in case you need to re-contact them or refer to them in future correspondence.

*Contact the FTC’s ID Theft Consumer Response Center at 1-877-ID THEFT (1-877-438-4338) or www.ftc.gov/idtheft.

Data Privacy Day commemorates the 1981 signing of the first legally binding international treaty dealing with privacy and data protection. It is led by the National Cyber Security Alliance, a non-profit, public private partnership focused on cyber security education for all online citizens.



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