

Hands Across Baltimore



Approximately 100 people, which included parents, families, youth, teachers, community activists and residents braved the near 100-degree heat at a Hands Across Baltimore event on Thursday, July 14, 2016. The participants stood together in the wake of a rash of shootings involving African American men and police in Louisiana, Minnesota and Dallas. Participants hugged, spoke affirmations to each other and expressed care for the children and youth who gathered during the hour-long observance. Patrol Officer Dennis Dour (above) from the Western District was on duty to patrol the event, but got out of his car to join the group. (See article on page 10)

Photos: Deborah Bailey

Annapolis youth named first Shelley C. White Jr. Memorial Scholarship recipient

By Andrea Blackstone

Laughter filled a small room at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BGCAA) as a group of people reminisced about the vibrant personality of Annapolis City Police Department detective, Shelley Curtis White, Jr. who died suddenly from pneumonia on May 22, 2015.

His wife, retired Navy Comander Delores (DeDe) Duncan-White's desire to further her late husband's legacy resulted in the creation of the Shelley C. White, Jr. Memorial Scholarship.

Duncan-White beamed with pride while describing the standout qualities of the 2016 scholarship winner, Harold Lloyd, III. The 18-year-old is a recent Broadneck High School graduate who will continue his education at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore this fall. He plans to study criminal justice and to become a lawyer someday.

Lloyd said that he lived in Robinwood and on Clay Street in Annapolis and knew the late Detective White, who

was known to take an interest in local youth. Through his own independent research, he found out about the scholarship and applied.

Duncan-White said five candidates applied for the \$2,000 award and a five-person committee selected Lloyd.

"The fact that they chose me really made me feel so special, because it made me feel like I was the chosen one to get it," Lloyd said. "College is very expensive, so this money is going to help me with my tuition."

In addition to current or former Boys & Girls Club of America membership, scholarship eligibility requirements included submission of three recommendations and a 500-word essay; being a graduating senior in Anne Arundel County; having a minimum of 2.7 unweighted grade point average throughout the final two years of high school; and acceptance and enrollment as a full time student in an accredited or college with a plan to pursue early childhood, sociology or criminal justice.

"This is a blessing. God is good," said



Harold Lloyd, III is the first recipient of the Shelley C. White, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. The recent Broadneck High School graduate will receive \$2,000 to help pay college expenses. The 18-year-old will be attending the University of Maryland Eastern Shore this fall.

Photo by Andrea Blackstone

Mary Green-Sills. "Harold is my first nephew in the family—the first boy. I am so proud to see that we have a young man that is going to be somebody. He will be somebody. His dad and mom (Harold Lloyd, Jr. and Rachelle James) have guided him [in] the right direction and it doesn't matter what neighborhood you come out of, [if] you keep your mind focused and stick to your goals."

Duncan-White says the memorial scholarship serves as a reminder that good policemen exist.

"I think this is perfect timing, especially with what is going on around the country," Duncan-White said, referring to tensions between the police and the public. "As everyone says, the majority of police officers are good people, and it's all about community policing, and that's what my husband was all about. You cannot serve a community if you are not a part of a community. I'm not saying you have to live in the community but you have to go [into] the community and work with the kids and get to know the families. And so when you have police in the community working with the kids [and] talking to the parents, it's a positive thing. That's when you have true community policing and that's when you don't have a problem. My husband served the communities for twenty plus years and in all of the communities—Robinwood, Harbour House—we never had problems when it came to our youth."

Duncan-White and the late Shelly White's son, Shelley C. White, III who is a 2016 U.S. Naval Academy graduate said that he knows it would mean a lot to his father that Lloyd was selected as the first scholarship recipient.

"He was just meant to serve," Shelley C. White, III said about his father. "Everything was just positive, and everything was just about him uplifting other people, so I feel like this scholarship is something that he would be proud of, and be bragging about, definitely. Something that is in his name—it just fits him perfectly."

To learn more about the Shelley C. White, Jr. Memorial Scholarship, visit: <http://www.shelleycwhitejrmemorial.com>.



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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Many states out of step with Constitution on use of force

By Jose-Antonio Orosco

Recently, President Obama held a town hall meeting to address the growing tension between minority communities and police forces after the shootings of Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, and the police officers in Dallas. He urged police officers to forge trust with communities and recommended better training and more resources.

Many groups around the country have been asking for better training programs, mandatory body cameras, and other reforms. These may indeed help to reduce shootings of civilians, but a deeper concern has to do with the laws surrounding the use of deadly force by law enforcement. What legal standards exist, which police officers can use to defend their actions after the fact?

Last year, Amnesty International conducted an investigation into the legal standards for the use of deadly force by police officers in the United States, comparing them with current Supreme Court rulings and international human rights standards, and found enormous disparities.

·It turns out that nine states and District of Columbia have absolutely no legal standards about when officers may use deadly force in arresting suspects.

·There are no states in the country that comply with international law enforcement standards. The current United Nations standard is that police officers should only use deadly force when it is a last resort, and then, only to prevent grave harm or imminent death to themselves or another person.

·What is even more astounding is that there are 13 states that do not even comply with current constitutional standards set by the US Supreme Court. In the 1985 case of *Tennessee v. Garner*, the Court ruled that police officers may only use deadly force if they have probable cause that the suspect poses significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officers or others.

My home state of Oregon is one of these places out of step with the Constitution, along with the very populated states of New York, New Jersey, Florida and California. In Oregon, for instance, police officers are allowed to shoot to kill if the police officers have a reasonable belief that a fleeing suspect has committed a kidnapping, arson, burglary or indeed, any felony at all, even if the suspect is not posing an immediate threat of death or physical harm. Oregon law does not require that a suspect be given a warning of the use of deadly force, even though such a warning is an international legal standard.

Up to 20 states allow police officers to kill a suspect simply for trying to escape prison or jail.

Given this legal framework, incidents of police shootings will not be reduced by body cameras or better training alone since it is the law itself that licenses wide discretion on whom and when police can kill.

This year, at least one state, Missouri, has started working to change that. After the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson and the protests that followed, legislators looked at the use of force provisions (which allowed officers to kill suspects who they believed had committed a felony) and found that it was out of step with the *Garner* standard. Everyone who is concerned about the tension in the country and the grievances of the Black Lives Matter movement should press their state lawmakers to ensure that law enforcement officials in their states are at least upholding the U.S. Constitution.

José-Antonio Orosco, Ph.D. writes for PeaceVoice and is Associate Professor of Philosophy: School of History, Philosophy, and Religion Director, Oregon State University Peace Studies Program.

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Community Affairs

BGE launches new responsive website for customers

Based on customer feedback, updated website provides convenient, anytime, anywhere access to important account information

Baltimore— BGE has launched a new website, providing anytime, anywhere access for customers. The responsive design of the new site optimizes the online experience for customers from any mobile device, tablet or desktop to enable easy access to important account information.

The new design incorporates feedback provided by customers. Upgraded navigation improves access to services, making it easy for customers to report and check the status of outages, view their energy usage and make more informed decisions based on user friendly, easily accessible pages and content.

“Enhancing the online tools for our customers based on their input is one of the many ways BGE is moving smart energy forward,” said BGE CEO Calvin G. Butler Jr. “We know our customers are using different types of devices in various settings, so we are pleased to offer an online experience that seamlessly fits into customers’ lives.”

In addition to the website update, BGE recently expanded the digital notification tools and options that give customers the ability to receive information from the company in several different ways. Customers can elect to receive notifications via text, email or phone about outages, billing, payment, usage and more.

BGE, and its sister Exelon utilities, ComEd, PECO, Pepco, Delmarva Power and Atlantic City Electric are using the latest web technology to enhance the customer online experience.

Customers can experience the new BGE website from any online device at bge.com.

When sending letters to the editor, your correct name, address and telephone number must be included with your submission.

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This is why ESPN is the Republican Party of sports television

By Raynard Jackson
NNPA News Wire Columnist

I am quite fond of saying about Republicans when it comes to blacks, "Even when they try to do the right thing, they do it the wrong way."

In a similar manner, ESPN has become the Republican Party of TV and sports. Last week they had their annual ESPYs awards show. This is their annual celebration of achievement in the world of sports.

They opened the show trying to do the right thing, but definitely did it the wrong way.

The event opened with four of the top NBA players speaking out against police brutality and gun violence. This was very moving to the extent that you had four of the biggest names in sports taking a public stance on a relevant, social issue, which is very rare for today's athletes. The players were LeBron James, Dwyane Wade, Chris Paul and Carmelo Anthony.

If this was such a good thing, you might be asking, then why am I criticizing the event?

All four of the above players are black. This issue of police brutality and gun violence is not a "black" issue; it is an American issue. Whites are subjected to these issues as well. Good and bad cuts across race and class.

In 2015, the NBA was 74.4 percent black, 23.3 percent white, 1.8 percent Latino, and .2 percent Asian, this was based on a survey by Richard Lapchick.

It would have made more sense for the ESPN to have players from each of these

ESPN's corporate office.

From my research, ESPN and the ESPYs seem to have no diversity in leadership in terms of decision-makers, the decision-makers all seem to be white liberals.

Maybe, just maybe, if they had people from diverse backgrounds in the decision-making loop someone would have pointed out the optics of LeBron's idea and encouraged him to have a diverse group of players on stage with him.

Diversity is not just about race or gen-

in many media outlets about his Christian faith and his positive family life. He is another version of Steph Curry.

When Jason Collins came out as homosexual, Broussard responded, "If you're openly living in unrepentant sin, whatever it may be, not just homosexuality, (but) adultery, fornication, premarital sex between heterosexuals...I believe that's walking in open rebellion to God and to Jesus Christ," Broussard said. "I would not characterize that person as a Christian, because I don't think the Bible would characterize them as a Christian."

His simple expression of his faith caused a backlash like I have never seen before. So, as long as you are for homosexuality, your thoughts are welcomed on ESPN, but if you don't agree with it, you are silenced.

I applaud these athletes for trying to take a principled stand at the ESPYs, but I fault ESPN for not having the foresight to fully understand and appreciate the optics of having all black athletes on stage.

Now, mind you, ESPN is supposed to be experts in optics, after all, they are the world leader in sports and entertainment. However, because they are surrounded by people, that all look and think like there was no one to point out the obvious racial connotation of these optics. Like the Republican Party, they tried to do the right thing, but did it the wrong way.

Raynard Jackson is founder and chairman of Black Americans for a Better Future (BAFBF), a federally registered 527 Super PAC established to get more blacks involved in the Republican Party. BAFBF focuses on the black entrepreneur. For more information about BAFBF, visit www.bafbf.org.

"I applaud these athletes for trying to take a principled stand at the ESPYs, but I fault ESPN for not having the foresight to fully understand and appreciate the optics of having all black athletes on stage."

groups on stage talking about these issues, sending the unmistakable message that this is not just a black issue but rather a societal issue. The optics of the display, were odd and quite offensive to me.

ESPN is owned by The Walt Disney Company, one of the top, pro-homosexual companies in the world. When they were aggressively promoting former player Jason Collins for coming out of the closet, they used the full panoply of races in their promotion of their homosexual agenda.

But when it came to police brutality and gun violence, they made it into a "black" issue, not a societal issue like homosexuality.

A few days before the event, LeBron James reached out to the ESPY's producer, Maura Mandt with the idea. Thus, the plan was agreed to by all the suits at

der; it's also about worldview.

To their credit, ESPN has a very diverse workforce as far as race goes, but it is without question that an overwhelming amount of that diversity is racial, not ideological.

Most of their decision-makers and on-air talent are extremely liberal, which is totally in line with their corporate view. My friends who work for ESPN never dispute my conservative views in my private conversations with them, but they would never admit that they hold such views in public.

For some, expressing those views would be career suicide at worst or at best lead to a very public excoriation from peers and fair-weather friends alike.

Exhibit "A" in my argument is Chris Broussard. He is an analyst for ESPN who focuses on the NBA. He has been profiled

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times

2513 N. Charles Street

Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: 410-366-3900- Fax 410-243-1627

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ShopRite to host barbecue cook off in Howard Park, Parkville

By Stacy M. Brown

For the grill master of the neighborhood who boasts that their barbecue is always the summer's main event, Klein's ShopRite of Baltimore is hosting its first Barbecue Ribs Cook Off.

The cook off will be held at two locations, the first is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, August 20, 2016, in the Howard Park ShopRite parking lot located at 4601 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore City.

The second is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Parkville ShopRite parking lot and grounds located at 2401 Cleanleigh Drive.

"It's designed to be a feel good community day," said organizer the Reverend Elisha B. Morris, a community engagement manager with UpLift Solutions, a national nonprofit organization that supports food businesses, government, and nonprofits to create sustainable environments for underserved communities. "ShopRite is doing an amazing thing and everyone is welcome," Morris said, adding that they are seeking those who can barbecue ribs on the grill and those who think their barbecue is simply the best.

The fee to register for the contest is \$25 with cash prizes of \$500 for first place; \$300 for second place; and \$200 for the cook who finishes third in the contest.

Winners will also receive a trophy and a panel of judges for the contest include those from Baltimore and surrounding counties.

Morris said small business and local entrepreneurs may secure a limited number of spaces at the event for \$20 and proceeds from the event are earmarked for youth programs in communities of the ShopRite supermarkets.



The event will also include various games, entertainment and a DJ and churches may enter a contestant in the cook off as well as block and civic clubs and police and fire companies.

"This is about community building," Morris said. "The winners get prizes and bragging rights about their barbecue for at least one year."

Morris said the impact ShopRite has already had in the communities the store serves.

In 2014, ShopRite opened in Howard Park offering a wide array of groceries and fresh produce, meat, seafood, a fresh bakeshop, natural, organic and gluten-free products and a full-service pharmacy.

It also features ethnic foods and the convenience of freshly prepared foods for quick and easy meals, including hot entrees and side dishes, hearty soups, rotisserie and fire grilled chicken and

many ready-to-heat items.

The location also brought hundreds of new jobs to the community and ShopRite has been an integral part of the improvements made to the landscape of Liberty Heights Avenue.

The neighborhood had been without a grocery store for more than a dozen years and until ShopRite moved in, the area had great difficulty attracting grocers and developers.

The supermarket has provided residents with a convenient place to shop and already has helped to breathe new life into a once run-down commercial strip along the avenue. The 56,000-square-foot ShopRite of Perring Crossing, in the 2400 block of Cleanleigh Drive in Parkville, opened in 2012 and fills the space previously occupied by a SuperFresh grocery store.

The former store was gutted entirely and renovations vastly improved what

had been an eyesore in the community, not to mention an empty location that had taken away the area's lone supermarket.

"ShopRite has been really good for the community. Nothing was here and now we have a great place to shop," Morris said. And, now places to have a barbecue cook off.

"This only makes the stores friendlier to the community. We will make an entire entrepreneur village for the events," he said. "There are many entrepreneurs who work out of their homes or don't have an office and these events also mean they can come out and set up and have a place for their businesses for the day which will allow everyone to know they exists or know more about their business."

For more information about ShopRite's Barbecue Cook Off, contact AzusaMarketingLLC@aol.com or 215-268-3808.

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Cornell University Professor named next Dean of Engineering at Morgan State

Baltimore—Morgan State University President David Wilson announced the appointment of Michael G. Spencer as dean of the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. School of Engineering, only the second dean in the school's history. Dr. Spencer is a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Cornell University.

"I am pleased to welcome Dr. Spencer to our family," said President Wilson. "He is an accomplished educator and researcher who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our campus. This appointment is a signal to everyone that Morgan intends to maintain its position as a world leader in the production of minority engineers for many more decades."

Dr. Spencer received his bachelor's, master's and doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees in electrical engineering, all from Cornell University. He has more than 160 publications and 20 patents in the fields of compound semiconductors, graphene, power conversion, microwave devices and solar cell technology. His list of awards and honors includes, among others, the Presidential Young Investigator Award from the National Science Foundation; the Allen Berman Research Publication Award from the Naval Research Laboratory; the Quality of Education for Minorities (QEM) Giants of Science Award; and an appointment as a Sigma Xi lecturer in the summer of 2014. Dr. Spencer recently served on the National Academy of Engineering's Committee on Assessment of Solid State Lighting.

"I am very excited to begin this new chapter of my career," said Dr. Spencer. "I look forward to joining the family at Morgan State, and I am hopeful that I can build on the foundation established by Dr. Eugene Deloatch, the founding dean of the School of Engineering."

Dr. Spencer replaces Eugene M. Deloatch, who is retiring after 32 years at the helm of the Mitchell School of Engineering. Dr. Deloatch became the inau-



Dr. Michael G. Spencer
Courtesy Photo

gural dean of the school when it was launched in 1984. His retirement caps an extraordinary career of an educator who made a substantial impact on the number of minorities in engineering.

"Morgan is among the nation's top producers of black engineers, and that is due largely because of one man, Eugene Deloatch," said Dr. Wilson. "His record of success nationally in increasing diversity in the field of engineering is a matter of great pride for him personally and for Morgan State University. We join with many hundreds of his former students whose lives he has touched over the years to express our gratitude for his dedication and service."

Morgan's School of Engineering is home to a world-class faculty with expertise across various disciplines civil engineering; electrical and computer engineering; industrial and systems engineering; and transportation and urban infrastructure studies. It also offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Engineering, Doctor of Engineering and Master of Transportation, in addition to collaborative programs with the University's School of Architecture and Planning.

Dr. Michael Spencer assumes his new role as dean of the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. School of Engineering on January 4, 2017. Dr. Craig Scott has been appointed to serve as dean, in an interim capacity, through December 31, 2016.

Ravens keep specialists together through 2020 by signing Justin Tucker

By *Turron Davenport*

It's not often that so much attention is paid to the kicker, long snapper and punter. However, in the case of the Baltimore Ravens, their group of specialists is of the utmost importance.

The Ravens recently signed kicker Justin Tucker to a four-year, \$16.8 million contract. Punter Sam Koch recently signed a long-term contract of his own. Koch's deal was a five-year, \$16.2 million contract.

Even Morgan Cox, who is solely a long snapper got a long-term deal. His contract will pay him \$5 million over five years.

The three specialists call themselves "The Wolf Pack." Tucker's deal is the biggest, but they were excited to know he will be with them for the coming years.

"I heard from Morgan [Cox] and Sam [Koch] just a little bit ago," Tucker said. "They both sent their congratulations, and Morgan made sure to let us know next time we play credit card roulette, we are going to have to go to a nice restaurant and only use my card.

"It is all good things; I'm definitely pumped to be able to continue to work with those guys. They have been awesome for me these last four years on the football field and also off of it as good friends and teammates."

It is no coincidence that such an emphasis is placed on special teams. Ravens Head Coach John Harbaugh was once a special teams coordinator with the Philadelphia Eagles. The team spends a good portion of practice working on special teams. Tucker is very appreciative of the focus on specialists.

"I've got to give a shout out to [kicking consultant] Randy Brown and [Special Teams Coordinator/Associate Head Coach] Jerry Rosburg and 'Harbs' [Head Coach John Harbaugh]," Tucker said after signing his deal. "Really, everybody for helping me have the level of success that I've had these last four seasons. I'm glad to be able to keep it going for the foreseeable future."

The result of the focus on special teams is having one of the top units in the



Ravens kicker Justin Tucker celebrates after kicking the game winning field goal against the Pittsburgh Steelers last season. Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

NFL. Koch consistently ranks among the league leaders in average yards per punt. Often times, he pins opposing

teams deep in their own territory.


The relay of Cox to Koch are a reliable option for Tucker when he kicks field

goals. "To me, it is imperative to have a quality long snapper and a quality holder before you worry about how good your kicker is," Tucker said. "You have to have the first two steps before the ball leaves anybody's foot, and those two are the best in the business."

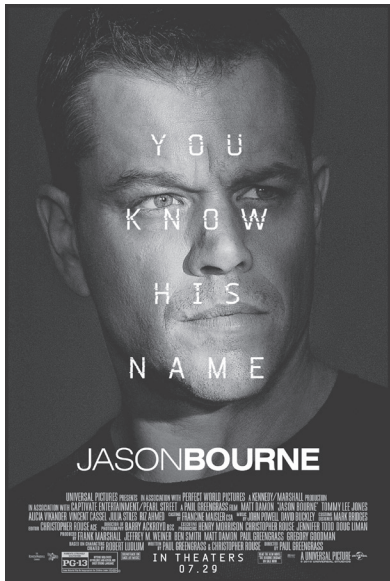
Tucker has been to the Pro Bowl before. The same can now be said of his fellow specialists Cox and Koch. Both of them went to the Pro Bowl for the first time last year. The three plan to make many more Pro Bowls in the future.

"Sam was obviously rewarded with his first trip to a Pro Bowl this last year, but we have known all along how good he is as a punter," Tucker said. "To be able to work with those guys, to be able to learn from each other over these last four years, has been awesome.

"Knowing that we are going to be able to keep going and hopefully make ourselves some of the longer-tenured specialists— one of the more-tenured specialist units in football— I think that the opportunity to do that is a very good deal."



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Hands Across Baltimore

By Deborah Bailey

“One hour of silence; one hour of no violence,” chanted participants who gathered at a school playground in the heart of the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood on Thursday evening.

Approximately 100 people, which included parents, families, youth, teachers, community activists and residents braving the near 100-degree heat stood together in the wake of a rash of shootings involving African-American men and police in Louisiana, Minnesota and Dallas.

Event organizer, Nova Gray of Sandtown says the event was meant to serve as the start of a crusade that can transform Baltimore.

“One hour of us holding hands across Baltimore can generate an energy that has never been felt. In one hour, if we can be in each other’s presence, we can build bonds that can’t be broken,” Gray said.

“We have to be there to interrupt when things are going wrong,” said Baltimore native Nancy Assero, who came because she is involved with city schools and wants to support ways for residents to reach across “divided Baltimore.”

“When people see things that don’t look right, we can at least be a witness and speak up. We have to protect black folks who are dying,” said Assero, who is white.

Participants hugged, spoke affirmations to each other and expressed care for the children and youth who gathered during the hour-long observance. Patrol Officer Dennis Dour from the Western District was on duty to patrol the event. He got out of his car to join in as the group began giving affirmations.

“It looks like a nice thing that is going on. This is a start but I think more of the community might have to get involved. Maybe a lot of different groups from different areas,” Dour said.

Wilson Park/Penn Lucy resident Marshalynne Seavers brought her four children to the event to see a different side of the struggle between African Americans and law enforcement.

“It’s good to see us taking actions that



Participants gather for Hands Across Baltimore event



Marshalynne Seavers and family arrive to support Hands Across Baltimore event in the aftermath of recent police shootings.



West Baltimore Police Officer Dennis Dour and Sandtown resident Diana Escalera.

emphasize love and positivity led by black activists in the city. I want to raise racially conscious children in this city,” Seavers said.

The next Hands Across Baltimore event will be held in late July-early August, according to Gray. The ultimate goal is a citywide event that will involve Baltimoreans from every background and community.

“If we do more listening and less talking we can hear more of what’s going on in our community,” Gray said.

Event organizers greet arriving participants for Hands Across Baltimore event.

Photos: Deborah Bailey



Heroes at Home, Rebuilding Together Team Up to Renovate Army Veteran's Home

Baltimore— This spring marks the ninth year that Rebuilding Together and Sears have joined forces for the “Heroes at Home” program. Volunteers from Rebuilding Together Baltimore and the Sears “Heroes at Home” program completed renovations of Baltimore U.S. Army veteran Charles Faison’s home on July 14, 2016.

Charles Faison is a 74-year-old United States Army veteran who has lived in his home for 50 years. At the age of 19, he decided to enlist in the army. He worked in ordinance repairing military equipment and as a cook, and in 1963, he was transferred from active duty to reserve. He served in the reserves for 30 years and was ranked as sergeant first class at the time of his discharge. After leaving active duty, Faison found a job at General Motors where he worked for 40 years until he became sick. Faison has three children and nine grandchildren. His son recently retired from the Air Force and his grandson will also be joining the Air Force.

The Turner Station neighborhood, where Faison lives, was selected as a target neighborhood for Rebuilding Together Baltimore for 2016 and 2017. With the organization’s support, they will assist 30 to 40 homeowners in the neighborhood over the next two years and also complete at least ten community beautification projects. This work will both help individual homeowners and revitalize the community.

Sears Heroes at Home has raised nearly \$20 million in nine years. Charles Faison’s renovation is one of the hundreds of projects that are made possible through generous customer donations both in-store and online at Sears. Now through July 30, Sears is encouraging customers to give back to the men and women who served our country by donating to Heroes at Home at their local Sears store or online at sears.com/heroesathome.



Sears Heroes at Home teamed with nonprofit Rebuilding Together Baltimore as a team of more than 20 Sears volunteers helped repair and renovate U.S. Army and Reserves veteran Charles Faison’s home of 52 years. In addition to the stairs, repairs included fixing damaged ceilings, roof patching, a new Kenmore stove, accessibility upgrades and more.



U.S. Army and Reserves veteran Veteran Charles Faison.



A Sears delivery team installs a new Kenmore stove.

Photos: Chris Cosgrove/Sears

Baltimore students picked to attend film seminar in Texas

By Stacy M. Brown

Dayla Williams believes strongly in the Black Lives Matter movement and embracing her heritage.

Kenya Cummings has faith that allows her to believe that good things will happen.

And, while Dayla, 17, attends the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women and Kenya, 18, plans to attend Hampton University this fall, the two Baltimore students are now inextricably linked.

They were among the select group of young people chosen to participate in the first-annual Nate Parker Summer Film Institute held earlier this month.

The 10-day seminar took place on the historically black college campus of Wiley College in Marshall, Texas.

“My college counselor emailed me the application and told me to take a chance, basically. She knew that I was a huge supporter of the Black Lives Matter movement and embracing black culture, and believed that I could benefit from the experience,” Dayla said. “I got the email in the middle of the night so I was just about to go to sleep when I found out. There was a lot of screaming and crying, and I didn't go to sleep at all,” she said.

Kenya found out about the summer seminar on Twitter. “I follow Nate Parker and came across a post about the application extension as I was scrolling through my feed,” she said. “I was the only one home and as soon as I saw it, I started jumping up and down in excitement.”

Hosted by acclaimed director and actor Nate Parker, the seminar was launched with the goal of promoting African-American representation in the film industry, officials said in a news release.

Following a competitive application process, 31 black rising high school seniors and college students from across the country were chosen to attend.

The mission of the institute is to transform the film industry by increasing representation of minority filmmakers through education, hands-on training and leadership skills.

The industry's lack of diversity is well documented in a report issued earlier this year by UCLA finding that minorities are underrepresented by nearly every metric examined, including in the number of film leads, directors, and writers.

“We need more people of color working in film today— in front of and behind the camera,” Parker said in a release.

The students, chosen based on essays and short stories they submitted addressing the lack of diversity in film, are poets, photographers, writers, directors and actors.



(Left to right) Dayla Williams and Kenya Cummings from Baltimore were among 31 black high school seniors chosen to participate in the first-annual Nate Parker Summer Film Institute held earlier this month on the historically black college campus of Wiley College in Marshall, Texas. The mission of the institute is to transform the film industry by increasing representation of minority filmmakers through education, hands-on training and leadership skills.

Courtesy Photo/Nate Parker Summer Film Institute

During the seminar, they attended courses in screenwriting, acting, and editing, as well as the history of minority filmmaking.

“Of course meeting Nate Parker was something I was looking forward to because I have been a fan of his for a long time,” Dayla said. “But, mostly having the chance to be in an environment where I didn't have to censor myself. I would be around like-minded, young black people who were fighting for the same things I'm fighting for.”

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Parker has appeared in such films as “Beyond the Lights,” “The Great Debaters,” and “Pride.” He has also written, produced, and directed film projects like “The Secret Life of Bees,” and “The Birth of a Nation.”

“When I realized that I was going to attend, it was an overwhelming feeling because I knew that the program would change my life forever,” Kenya said. “I couldn't stop smiling. I knew God was answering my prayer and I felt prepared for this journey.”

Kenya's dream is to eventually own and operate a film production studio where she can direct, write and even star in movies she creates.

“This is definitely a huge step toward achieving my goals,” she said. “I couldn't have imagined a more perfect way to jumpstart my film career.”

Dayla says her ultimate goal is to have her stories heard and to show others that black does not mean inferior.

“We are powerful beings who need to be heard. This program is a big part of me achieving my goals because it is showing me how to use one of the most influential forms of media – film – to make myself heard,” she said. “Being a person of color and constantly having to see people that look like me left out of TV shows and movies makes me feel like we aren't good enough to be seen.”

“Representation matters,” Kenya said. “All of us deserve the opportunity to see positive representations of our people in film.”

Our workforce and our entire economy are strongest when we embrace diversity to its fullest, and that means opening doors of opportunity to everyone and recognizing that the American Dream excludes no one. —Thomas Perez

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION



PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) released the second draft of the BaltimoreLink transit network redesign in July 2016. As a result of feedback received since last fall, this draft is a significant revision to the multi-phase plan.

MTA invites you to learn more about the BaltimoreLink transit network plan and to be involved in planning the final draft of the network redesign. Twenty (20) public workshops will be hosted in July, August, and September. Please join us at any of the workshops, each location will provide the same information and offer the same opportunities to participate. An introductory presentation, informational handouts, and exhibits will be provided as well as comment forms to submit your input. MTA will accept comments through September 30, 2016. For additional information, the dates of all workshops, and to download a comment form, visit BaltimoreLink.com or call 410-539-5000.

Workshops will be conducted open house style with project staff available to answer your questions. Feel free to visit when convenient for you. The schedule of upcoming workshops follows.

Thursday, July 28, 2016 • 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Coppin University
Talon Center, Room 218A
2500 West North Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21216

Transit to this location: Local Bus Nos. 1, 5, 7, 13, 16, 21, 22, 51, 52, 53, 54, 91, and the Mondawmin Shuttle

Wednesday, August 3, 2016 • 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Randallstown Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library
8604 Liberty Road
Randallstown, MD 21133

Transit to this location: Local Bus Nos. 54 and 77

Thursday, August 4, 2016 • 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Towson Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library
320 York Road
Towson, MD 21204

Transit to this location: Local Bus Nos. 3, 8, 11, 12, 48, 55, 102, and 106

Tuesday, August 9, 2016 • 6:00pm - 8:00pm

North Point Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library
1716 Merritt Boulevard
Dundalk, MD 21222

Transit to this location: Local Bus No. 4

Monday, August 15, 2016 • 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Northwood Branch *
4420 Loch Raven Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21218

Transit to this location: Local Bus Nos. 3 and 33

*Use of library meeting space does not constitute endorsement of this organization, this program or its content by the Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Tuesday, August 16, 2016 • 11:00am - 2:00pm

Humanim at the American Brewery
1701 North Gay Street
Baltimore, MD 21213

Transit to this location: Local Bus Nos. 5, 13, 15, and 47

Other ways to be involved:

Join the discussion board at mtamaryland.mysidewalk.com

Leave a message on the BaltimoreLink hotline at 410-454-1998



Locations are accessible for people with disabilities. Please contact the department listed below to make arrangements for: special assistance or additional accommodations; printed material in an alternate format or translated; hearing impaired persons; and persons requesting an interpreter. All requests must be received one week in advance.

Los sitios tienen acceso para personas con discapacidades. Por favor comuníquese con el departamento listado a continuación para concertar arreglos para: ayuda especial o adaptaciones adicionales; material impreso en un formato alternativo o traducido; personas sordas y personas que solicitan un(a) intérprete. Todas las solicitudes deben ser recibidas con una semana de antelación.

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Intersection of Change Celebrates 20th Anniversary with Open House

By Stacy M. Brown

Politicians, local officials and even Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake are among the more than 100 people expected to gather for an open house on Thursday, July 28, 2016, at the Harris-Marcus Center on Pennsylvania Avenue to celebrate the 20th anniversary and success of the nonprofit organization, Intersection of Change.

“This is important to our community and we want people to understand what is taking place on Pennsylvania Avenue where just one year ago there was unrest,” said Todd Marcus, the executive director of Intersection of Change, the nonprofit that’s hosting the open house and celebrating its 20th year serving the Sandtown-Winchester and Upton neighborhoods with innovative programs and community development projects that have proven vital for residents, businesses and others.

Intersection of Change, formerly New-born Holistic Ministries, has been working to change city neighborhoods through programs like Martha’s Place and Jubilee Arts. The organization’s work has been critical in revitalizing the 1900 and 2000 blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue as they’ve renovated dilapidated structures and vacant lots, in part, by organizing mural projects, green space creation and hosting special events.

“I have lived and worked in this neighborhood for 20 years and it feels good to know that despite the many negative stories about Baltimore, our organization continues to do important work and has shown the possibilities of how we can really make a difference in the daily lives

of our community members,” Marcus said.

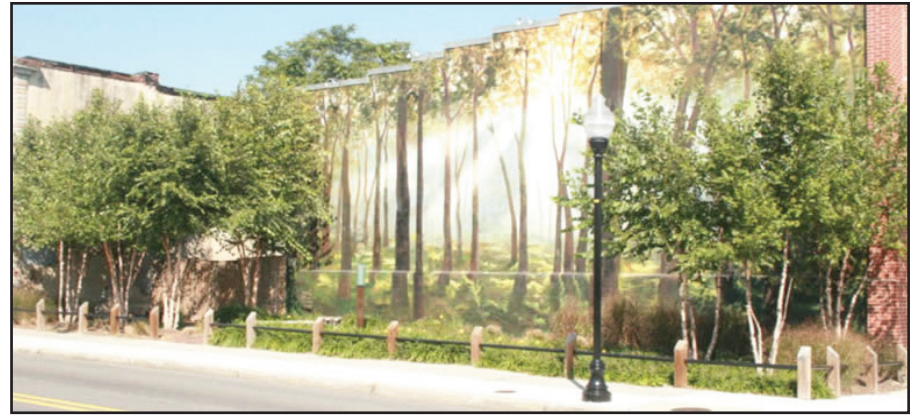
In a news release, the organization noted some of its significant accomplishments have included the full renovation of six previously vacant and dilapidated buildings; the transformation of 18 vacant lots into community green spaces and gardens; the creation of 12 neighborhood murals; the opening of Jubilee Arts in 2009 in a formerly vacant building and creation of community based classes in visual arts, dance, ceramics and business. Jubilee Arts has grown from 15 classes in 2009 for adults, seniors, families and children to more than 30 current classes.

The opening of Martha’s Place 16 years ago was the result of the overwhelming epidemic of drug abuse in the community and the desire to help women in their own communities. Marcus said the recovery rates for Martha’s Place now far exceed national trends.

“This anniversary year affords us an opportunity to tell our story and thank the many people who have helped us along the way,” Marcus said. “There is still a lot of work to be done but we remain committed to serving our community, doing more work, and showing the hope and potential of our neighborhood.”

As the organization looks to the future, they are incorporating several themes into a new vision for 2020 to include the programs like “Championing Freedom,” which offers addiction care and treatment to another 150 women.

Intersection of Change officials also plan to engage more than 100 teens in a “Youth in Business” class to help them become entrepreneurs.



An abandoned lot at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Presstman Street was transformed into the Choose Life Memorial mural and garden in remembrance of lives lost to drug addiction and violence in the community over decades. The space is open to the public. Courtesy Photo

They also plan a “Cultivating Beauty” program by creating ten new community murals and employing community members and Baltimore artists in community development and a “Fostering Creativity” initiative in which the organization will provide art classes and community art projects to 10,000 youth and adults.

The nonprofit has also scheduled four fundraisers this year that’s aimed at rais-

ing money while celebrating their anniversary, Marcus said.

“The community response has been very supportive,” he said. “This is very important to the community. The open house affords everyone, the mayor, council and others who have been supportive of us, an opportunity to come out and see what we’re able to do.”

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Comcast, HUD announce major expansion of Internet Essentials

Residents of public housing and HUD-assisted homes now eligible

By Ursula V. Battle

Comcast has taken an historic step towards closing the nation's digital divide. The global and media giant recently announced that public housing and HUD-assisted residents living in Comcast's service area are eligible to apply for Internet Essentials. Comcast estimated that up to 2 million HUD-assisted homes will now have access to low-cost Internet service.

"This announcement reaffirms Comcast's determination to make a meaningful impact to close the digital divide for low-income families in this country," said David L. Cohen, senior executive vice president and chief diversity officer of Comcast. "This is the single largest expansion of the Internet Essentials program in its history, and we're thrilled to be working with HUD to help connect even more families, including seniors, veterans, and adults without children, to the transformative power of having internet service at home."

Comcast's announcement came on Thursday, July 14, 2016 following a three-month pilot program in four locations— Miami-Dade County, Nashville, Philadelphia and Seattle— where residents of public housing units were eligible to apply for Internet Essentials.

According to Comcast, the extension means all households that receive HUD housing assistance in Comcast's service area, whether seniors, single adults, veterans, and married couples without children, can apply for low-cost Internet and ultimately help better their lives.

"The national expansion to HUD-assisted resident's announcement marks the ninth time in five years Comcast has expanded eligibility for the program, and underscores the company's commitment to attacking the digital divide," said Cohen. "We have made many enhancements, but never a more sweeping change than this one. Previously, a family with a child who received free or reduced price lunches was eligible. Now, any resident of public housing or who receives public housing assistance is eli-



David L. Cohen and HUD Secretary Julián Castro give a free laptop and six months of free Internet service to Karisha Bailey, a self-employed mother of four. Courtesy Photos/Comcast

gible regardless of whether they have child in the school lunch program or not."

Cohen stressed that the expansion seeks to provide a meaningful contribution to closing the digital divide for low-income Americans so they can improve the quality of their lives, get a GED credential, take online classes, search and apply for jobs, and learn to be digitally literate so they are more marketable for 21st century, higher paying, digital jobs.

"ConnectHome is opening doors of opportunity for our next generation of Americans," said HUD Secretary, Julián Castro. "Today's announcement has the potential to transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of kids across the nation by giving them the tools to reach their full potential. We're grateful to Comcast for joining the ConnectHome initiative, which has extended its reach to more than 1.5 million children in one short year."

Internet Essentials is Comcast's acclaimed, high-speed Internet adoption program for low-income families. From August 2011 through December 2015, the program has connected more than 600,000 low-income families, benefiting

more than 2.4 million Americans, to the Internet at home.

ConnectHome is an initiative to extend affordable broadband access to families living in HUD-assisted housing. Through ConnectHome, Internet Service Providers, non-profits, and the private sector are offering broadband access, technical training, digital literacy programs, and devices for residents in assisted housing units in 28 communities across the nation.

Maryland ranks eighth in the top 10 states with the largest number of HUD-assisted households in Comcast's service area.

According to Comcast, between 2009 and 2014, broadband service providers spent over \$422 billion on capital investments, and three in four American households now use broadband at home. However, Comcast also notes that despite significant progress, one in four American households still don't access the Internet at home, particularly lower-income families with children.

"If we want to provide every American with a fair shot at building a brighter future, we need to find solutions for clos-

ing our nation's digital divide," said Castro. "We can look to the story of the Martinez family from Chicago. Internet Essentials gave their oldest son Jonathan the tools that he needed to graduate as a Salutatorian of his high school class, and then to become the first person in his family to attend college."

He added, "In fact, the Martinez family has credited the Internet Essentials program with giving their family an affordable way to stay online, even when they went through some financial tough times. Their story proves that expanding Internet adoption is about much more than modems and megabits per second. It's about giving the Martinez kids and young people like them across the nation the chance they deserve to reach their full potential. I thank Comcast for its outstanding commitment. HUD is proud to join Comcast in this vital mission, which helps to make America the undisputed land of opportunity."

For more information about the program or to apply, visit: www.InternetEssentials.com or call 1-855-846-8376. Spanish speakers should call 1-855-765-6995.

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Tips to protect health during extreme heat

Washington, D.C.— Following the heat advisory issued for the Mid-Atlantic by the National Weather Service, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reminds local residents about steps they should take to protect their health from the extreme heat.

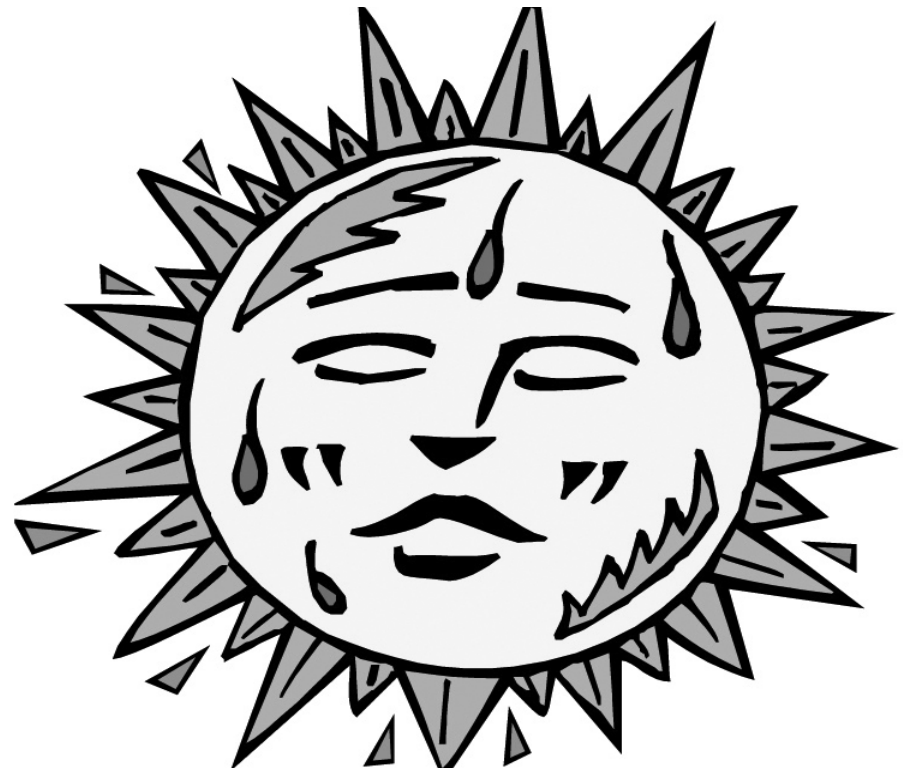
“People may not often think about it but extreme heat can have devastating effects on health,” said Dr. Nicole Lurie, HHS assistant secretary for preparedness and response (ASPR). “Young children, older adults, and people on certain medications can be particularly vulnerable to heat. Recognizing the signs of heat stress and knowing what to do can save a life.”

People suffering from heat stress may experience heavy sweating; weakness; cold, pale, and clammy skin; fast, weak pulse; and nausea or vomiting. Early signs include muscle cramps, heat rash, fainting or near-fainting spells, and a pulse or heart rate greater than 100.

People suffering from heat stress should be moved to a cooler location to lie down. Apply cool, wet cloths to the body especially to head, neck, armpits and upper legs near the groin area where combined 70 percent of body heat can be lost; and have the person sip water. They should remain in the cool location until recovered with a pulse heart rate is well under 100 beats per minute.

Signs of the most severe heat-related illness, heat stroke, include a body temperature above 103 degrees Fahrenheit; hot, red, dry or moist skin; rapid and strong pulse; and altered mental status which can range from confusion and agitation to unconsciousness. Call 911 immediately and take steps to cool the person.

While children are especially vulnerable to heat illnesses, they may be unable to explain what is wrong but may act differently than usual. In extreme heat, consider changes in a child’s behavior to



be heat stress.

Similarly, people with communication-related disabilities may have difficulty expressing a heat-related problem. In extreme heat, look for a change in behavior as a sign of heat stress.

Older adults face additional risk of heat stress and heat stroke, for a variety of reasons. The National Institute on Aging’s fact sheet explains more about how extreme heat can affect seniors.

To help prevent heat-related illness:

- Spend time in locations with air-conditioning when possible.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Good choices are water and diluted sport electrolyte drinks (one part sport drink to two parts water) unless told otherwise by a doctor.
- Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing
- Limit outdoor activity to morning and evening hours

As air conditioning use increases, electrical grids can

become overwhelmed causing power outages. In power outages, people who rely on electricity dependent medical devices, like oxygen concentrators, may need assistance so check on family members, friends and neighbors who use this type of equipment.

Community organizations and businesses can help local emergency managers and health departments plan for the community’s health needs amid the summer heat— and other emergency situations that cause power outages— using the HHS emPOWER Map. The HHS emPOWER Map provides the monthly total number of Medicare beneficiaries’ claims for electricity-dependent equipment at the national, state, territory, county, and zip code levels.

For more information about preventing heat-related illnesses visit the HHS public health emergency preparedness website at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>.

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