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# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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## Baltimorean chosen to head BSO OrchKids Program



*Raquel Whiting Gilmer was recently hired as the first executive director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's OrchKids program. The BSO OrchKids program is a year-round, during and after school music program created in 2008 by BSO music director Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.*

*(See article on page 12) Courtesy Photo*

# 'Boys of Dunbar' Celebrated in New Book

By Stacy M. Brown

In the early 1980s, Dunbar High School in Baltimore enjoyed one of the most successful basketball programs in the nation. Most would argue that the school's 1981-82 team, the Dunbar Poets, were the best ever.

Future NBA stars Reggie Williams, Tyrone "Mugsy" Bogues, David Wingate and Reggie Lewis formed a foursome that captured the imagination and hearts of local high school basketball fans.

Now, author Alejandro Danois has captured their tale in a new 246-page book, "The Boys of Dunbar: A Story of Love, Hope, and Basketball."

The book not only highlights the on the court success of the athletes, but the various struggles of a city that was in the throes of a drug epidemic that threatened to claim many residents, including Baltimore's youth.

"That was a very trying time for residents of East Baltimore and other working class neighborhoods. The plague of crack cocaine and heroin changed the entire construct of the community, the drug business changed from being sold in controlled environments to open air drug markets, the manufacturing base declined as the union wage disappeared with the closing of many factories, iron foundries and steel mills, and families were struggling," said Danois, who interviewed Bogues and many others for the book.

"There was a steep rise in violence and street crime, those who could afford to, fled to the surrounding suburban counties, the quality of public education declined and people were struggling. And the community suffered immensely," he said.

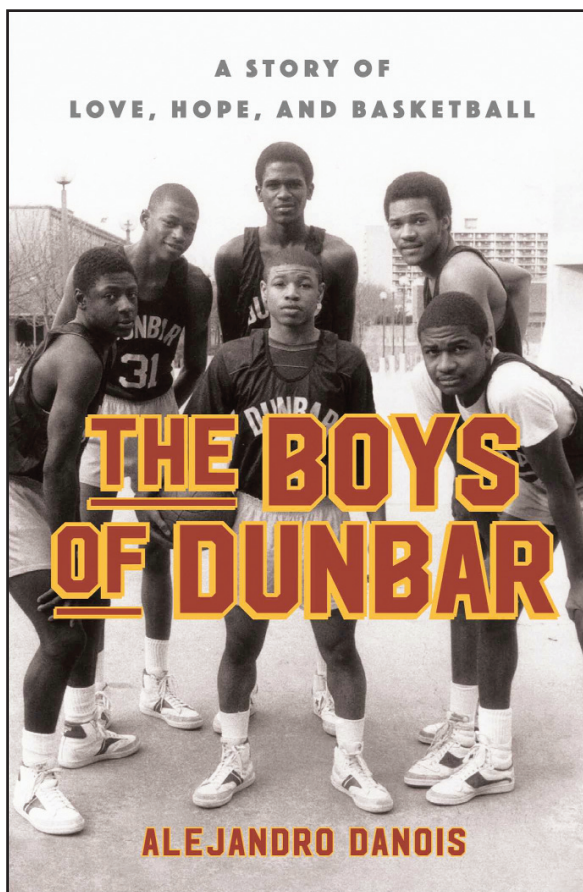
That his four primary subjects in the book succeeded is a testament to community role models and their strong families, Danois said.

"You also have these exceptional men like Anthony Lewis at the Cecil Kirk Recreation Center and Leon Howard at the Lafayette Recreation Center who'd worked with some of the boys and began harnessing their talents since they first began picking up a basketball," he said.

Dunbar High principal, Julia B. Woodland, a product of Baltimore City Public Schools, also served as a strong influence imploring her students each day, "Yes I can," Danois said.

Then, there was the coach, Bob Wade, whose work ethic, drive and determination was as important a factor as any.

"Wade was Dunbar's head basketball coach, but he



was much more than that. He was a mentor and father figure who was serious about education providing a passport to a better life," Danois said of the coach who attended Dunbar a generation prior, won a college football scholarship and played a few years in the NFL.

"Many of the players did not have fathers in the home, and he helped to fill that vacuum. He was stern, tough and abrasive at times, but extremely protective of his kids with a familial love that was a byproduct of him being from the community, and knowing many of his player's families before they were even born."

The new book provides "rock solid proof for young men and women that walk these same streets today that, despite the surrounding turmoil, there are bountiful examples all around them of people that overcame their circumstances," he said.

On the surface, it's a basketball story, but it's much bigger than sports. It's about love, hope and family, about believing in the beauty of



Alejandro Danois, author of the "Boys of Dunbar"  
Courtesy Photos

one's own dreams and putting in the work to make it happen, Danois continued.

"The Dunbar Poets team had a huge impact on the community. People struggling through financial distress, unemployment, frightening crime and homicide rates, a worsening drug epidemic and normal life struggles in this poor neighborhood left the gym feeling better about their own lives, encouraged by the vitality of this talented team displaying its originality, dominance, brilliance that approached artistic proportions, and rare ingenuity," he said. "They offered a lot of people a respite, along with hope."

Danois also noted that the city itself is one of the book's leading characters and much can be learned about its unique culture and sensibilities.

The book takes readers into the homes of the players, peels away who they really are and is as much about sociology as it is about basketball.

"Not only were they a great team, they also touched so many lives, providing inspiration, eliciting pride and offering hope in the unseen," Danois said.

Published by Simon & Schuster, "The Boys of Dunbar," is available at most retailers.

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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## E-Learning an Essential Tool for Improving Public Teacher Corps

By Hui-Yin Hsu

As classes start, public schools across the country are staring down crisis-level teacher shortages. Rapid City, South Dakota schools have 50 unfilled teaching positions. Georgia's Houston County has 90. San Francisco has over 100. Florida's Orange County: a whopping 300.

As older educators steadily retire, there's a desperate need for new blood in America's teacher corps. Worse still, too many young teachers lack the knowledge required to educate effectively. And the teacher corps remains remarkably homogenous, failing to reflect this nation's diversity.

Online teacher certification is the silver-bullet solution to all these challenges. E-learning portals empower people from less traditional career tracks to join the teaching profession, bringing unique perspectives, skills, and backgrounds into the classroom. More universities should offer online teacher training. And public school systems should value these degrees and recruit from these new pools.

E-learning represents the best way to improve our teaching corps. Consider Arlene Steenkolk, a former computer engineer in Beaverton, Oregon. After a successful career, she became passionate about fostering the next generation of computer scientists. So she began teaching, working as a technology assistant at a local elementary school. "I want to encourage (the students) to look ahead for their future," she explained.

There are countless Arlenes across the country. This vast talent pool, though, has gone mostly untapped due to prohibitively high transition costs. Many professionals can't afford to quit their jobs and spend years in full-time teaching programs. With kids to support, mortgages to pay, and retirements to plan for, many can't forgo years of wages.

Enter e-learning. Online teacher training programs allow working professionals to get highly specialized degrees at their own pace before switching careers.

The University of Massachusetts, for instance, offers online courses for over 20 teaching degrees. Ideal models include online instruction, regular trainings and visits to K-12 classrooms with real students. My university, New York Institute of Technology, offers online graduate programs and a blended program that incorporates classes and instruction on campus.

This hybrid model has continually proven effective. A study by the former president of Princeton University examined over 600 college students and found that those who completed both online and in-class courses outperformed traditional students.

Empowering mid-career professionals to join the teaching corps would also address the serious knowledge deficit plaguing public schools. Research shows that many middle and high school instructors lack the necessary knowledge about math to effectively teach it.

When mid-career professionals migrate into education, they bring their knowledge and professional skills, too. Students can learn, say, about computer science from a Google engineer or about writing from a Fortune 500 advertising executive. Young minds deserve access to such elite knowledge.

There's also a serious lack of diversity among educators. While over 40 percent of public school students are students of color, more than 80 percent of teachers are white. Teachers from non-traditional paths are more likely to come from diverse demographic backgrounds, helping the teaching corps become more reflective of the students.

We can't afford to let these problems continue. Lack of qualified, diverse instructors causes lower quality instruction and poor outcomes. Today, the United States isn't even among the top 20 performing countries in international student achievement assessments.

Empowering adult professionals to become teachers through online learning technologies will inject fresh talent into a school system that desperately needs it.

Hui-Yin Hsu is the chair of the Teacher Education Program in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies and Education at New York Institute of Technology.

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## Letters to the Editor

**Editor:**

**Re: Colin Kaepernick and Racial Injustice**

Colin Kaepernick, quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, attempt to draw attention to racial injustice in United States by not standing up for the national anthem is commendable. Also, the fact that the national anthem was written by a slave owner, Francis Scott Key should give the nation pause for supporting the song.

Kaepernick's protest should inspire us all but more than protesting will be required to end racism.

After all, African-Americans and others have been marching and boycotting for decades and yet today the unemployment rate for African-Americans is nearly twice that of white Americans.

The poverty rate for African-Americans is almost three times the rate for

white Americans. The net worth of white America is 10 times more than the net worth of black America.

African-Americans can overcome these disadvantages by doing what other groups have done—to accumulate wealth.

Wealth controls America. With wealth you can select the police chief or the corporate president or through business ownership determine who is hired or promoted. You can build wealth by owning assets, businesses, corporations and industries.

By creating wealth through business ownership you can overcome racial injustice. Make an investment in yourself and build baby build!

**Elie Parker**  
San Leandro, CA

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## *Black unemployment rate falls in August*

**By Freddie Allen**  
*NNPA Newswire Managing Editor*

The unemployment rate for black workers improved from 8.4 percent in July to 8.1 percent in August, according to the latest jobs report from the Labor Department. Even though the black jobless rate has decreased more than one percentage point since last year (9.4 percent in August 2015), it is still nearly double the white unemployment rate (4.4 percent).

Nationally, the economy added 151,000 jobs in August, but the unemployment rate remained steady at 4.9 percent, the same mark set in July and June.

The labor force participation rate, which measures the share of workers that are employed or looking for jobs, was 61.9 percent for black workers in August, an increase from 61.2 percent in July and only a slight uptick from the black labor force rate last year (61.7 percent in August 2015). The participation rate for white workers was 62.9 percent in August, July and June and has only

edged up slightly since last August (62.6 percent)

The unemployment rate for white workers was 4.4 percent in August, the same mark set in August 2015, and a slight increase from the 4.3 percent rate recorded in July.

The unemployment rate for black men over 20 years-old was 7.6 percent in August, an improvement from 8.2 percent in July. The jobless rate for black women over 20 years-old was 7.1 percent in

According to The Hamilton Project, an economic policy think tank at the Brookings Institution, the economy would need to add 204,000 jobs every month until May 2017 to reach pre-recession employment levels.

In a statement about the August jobs report, Main Street Alliance, a national network of small business coalitions, noted that growth in the retail and restaurant sectors signaled “increased consumer confidence and spending heading into the

upward trends in several service industries, including food services and drinking places.

Bill Spriggs, the chief economist for the AFL-CIO, a national group of 56 unions that represents more than 12 million workers, noted gains in fast food jobs and in health care in a series of tweets last Friday.

“Despite whining about minimum wage increases, fast food establishments gain 34,000 last month, 312,000 over the year,” Spriggs tweeted.

Spriggs suggested that the black unemployment rate likely decreased, “for right reasons,” because the employment-population ratio, which is the share of the population that is currently employed also improved from July (56.1 percent) to August (56.9 percent).

Spriggs also tweeted that black workers that earn associate degrees experience a 5.4 percent jobless rate, which is only slightly better than the unemployment rate for white high school dropouts (5.6 percent).

In a statement recognizing the importance of Labor Day, Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.), said that although America has made significant strides toward an economic recovery in recent years, too many working people are still going without the basic necessities.

“It does not have to be this way,” said Scott. “Ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to make a decent life for themselves and their families is the central challenge of our time. Whether we rise to meet that challenge will define us for generations to come.”

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***“The unemployment rate for black men over 20 years-old was 7.6 percent in August, an improvement from 8.2 percent in July. The jobless rate for black women over 20 years-old was 7.1 percent in August, which was a step forward from the 7.3 percent rate a month ago.”***

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August, which was a step forward from the 7.3 percent rate a month ago.

The unemployment rate for white men over 20 years-old was 4.1 percent in August, the same as July. The participation rate, which was 72 percent in July showed no improvement. The unemployment rate for white women was 3.9 percent in August slightly higher than the 3.7 percent mark set in July.

The unemployment rate for Hispanic workers was 5.6 percent in August 2016 a step back from the 5.4 percent rate set in July.

holiday shopping season.”

The Alliance also reported that Washington state led the nation in small business job growth and Seattle topped the list of metropolitan areas.

“With job creation and small business success widely attributed to consumer confidence and spending, it is hard to ignore Seattle's rising minimum wage and the role boosting the wages of the lowest-level earners played in earning them the top spot on the list,” the Alliance statement said.

The Labor Department also reported

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# Baltimore City Youth Gain Career and Life Skills

By Ruth Young Tyler

School is back in session for students in Baltimore City and the surrounding counties. While some teenagers splashed in the pool and played basketball, there was a group of students who gained life skills, explored career opportunities and earned high school credits.

Eighty-five area youth successfully completed a seven-week internship program coordinated by the Y in Central Maryland New Horizons II summer initiative. The students were recognized during a closing ceremony at the Druid Hill location on July 29, 2016 in Baltimore City.

"This is exactly what I wanted to do this summer," said Ciree Ballard, 15. "I learned new skills in television production during my internship and made money too."

During the ceremony, Ciree introduced a video presentation that she and her peers were featured in. She was instrumental in writing, producing and editing the video that focused on the social injustices that plague many impoverished communities in Baltimore City.

The program was designed to encourage academic success, cultivate personal development and provide career-readiness opportunities for homeless youth between the ages of 14 and 19 from Baltimore City and Baltimore County. The students are considered homeless based on the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act's definition of the term: "Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."

The internships provided high school students with a combination of training



**(Left) Ciree Ballard, 15, completed a seven-week paid summer internship with the Y of Central Maryland New Horizons II program where she learned about television production (Right) Asia Yoon (left) is congratulated by Derryck Fletcher, vice president of youth development of the Y in Central Maryland for successfully completing the seven-week summer internship with New Horizons II.**



and work experience for eight hours a day, five days a week. The activities included college campus tours, etiquette training, resume writing and portfolio building.

"Our goal is to provide cultural enrichment, life skills, financial literacy and college and career training," said Derryck Fletcher, vice president of youth development for the Y in Central Maryland. "We're hoping to break the cycle of poverty among our students."

Fletcher says the program is intended to bridge the gap between where the students are today and their desires for a brighter future in life. As a youth, Fletcher says he

was once homeless, based upon Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guidelines.

During the ceremony, eleventh grader Asia Yoon shared her personal testimony about her internship experience.

"I enjoyed the program," said Yoon who worked in a daycare center and helped 20 first and second graders increase their reading and comprehension skills and develop an affinity for arts and crafts.

Yoon also completed an online health education course for which she gained credit toward high school graduation.

"Over the course of the internship, I learned how to take constructive criticism that will help me in the long run, versus everyday criticism from others who may not have my best interest at heart," she said.

After graduation, Yoon plans to attend Johns Hopkins University and pursue a career as a neurosurgeon.

"We are poised to help our students create an action plan so that their dreams can become a reality," said Fletcher.

"The wonderful thing about our students is that they are very resilient."

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# Baltimore Ravens were obvious choice for return man Devin Hester

By *Turron Davenport*

Devin Hester is one of the most prolific punt returners in NFL history. He has returned a league record 14 punts for touchdowns.

Surprisingly, the Atlanta Falcons released Hester in July while he was recovering from a toe injury. He still received plenty of interest from other teams but wanted to give himself time to recover before signing with a team.

"When the [Atlanta] Falcons released me, I was still hurting," Hester said. "I wasn't able to perform; I wasn't able to practice. From that point on, they released me; teams started calling. And at the same time, I told my agent, and I was like, 'Hey, let's just go ahead and give this toe time to heal.' Not too much rushing, really rehab—going back to rehabbing—really give it time. This was an injury I just felt like time was the only thing that was going to heal it. I did all the treatment I could do, and it still wasn't where I wanted it to be. So, at the end of the day, we just realized time would heal everything."

Hester says the Ravens were one of the teams that reached out soon after he was released by the Falcons. He began to do some research on the various teams that showed interest and found a lot of familiar things about the Ravens special teams group.

"First of all, I looked at the history of special teams; [that was] number one for me," Hester said. "I'm a special teams guy, I return, and I wanted to go to a special teams unit that was pretty much one of the dominant teams in the league. I found [out] myself that the Ravens were in the Top 5 for the last five years or something. They were ranked No. 1 last year. And then they were also under my old special

"They were ranked number one last year. And then they were also under my old special teams coach in Chicago, Dave Toub, and those guys, they all worked together, so they run the same exact scheme. And then with the same exact scheme that they run, the group of guys that we have here, it wasn't a hard choice to pick the Ravens."

Despite holding numerous NFL records, Hester still has a chip on his shoulder. Getting released is never easy for anyone, especially a veteran player as established as Hester. He feels he has something to prove.

As an aging player, Hester has found it necessary to change his diet. No longer does he grab a quick meal from McDonald's. His focus is on eating right. Hester also noticed how injuries such as the toe injury he just recovered from take longer to heal. He finds himself undergoing more treatment, spending more time in the weight room and focusing on getting



*Atlanta Falcons return man Devin Hester celebrates a punt return for a touchdown during the 2015 NFL season. Hester has signed with the Baltimore Ravens for the 2016 season.*  
Courtesy Photo/NFL.com


more sleep to help his body recover better.

Although he's late to the party by joining the Ravens at this point, Hester is confident that his decade of playing experience will allow him to step right in for Baltimore.

"As a returner, I feel, is all about experience," Hester said. "Everybody out here can run fast, can make guys miss,

but I feel as though when you're back there you've got to be able to manage the game, you've got to make the right decisions, pick up small instincts just by repetition. And I feel like I've put a lot of time in it from the returner's standpoint, and I feel like I can come here right away and contribute."


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[www.alwaysbagels.com/employment](http://www.alwaysbagels.com/employment)**

## Three million low income Americans have crossed the digital divide with Comcast's Internet Essentials program

Philadelphia— According to a five-year progress report the company released recently, Comcast's acclaimed Internet Essentials program has helped connect 750,000 families or three million low-income Americans, to low-cost, high-speed Internet service at home.

David L. Cohen, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of Comcast Corporation, made the announcement alongside six-time Olympic Medalist Jackie Joyner-Kersey, who was recently named the national spokesperson for Internet Essentials.

The two kicked off a multi-city tour that, over the next six weeks, will stop in Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, Denver and Philadelphia where the company will announce more than \$2 million in grants to community-based organizations that provide vital digital literacy training and Internet access.

"In the last five years, we've learned that no single company or government program is ever going to fix the digital divide and that solving a big, difficult societal issue like this takes nothing short of a movement," said Cohen. "We are so proud that thousands of community partners around the country have helped us make a meaningful dent in the digital divide. With the recent announcement of our expansion to HUD-assisted homes, we look forward to bringing this essential connection to even more families over the next five years. There is still more good work to do."

"I've dedicated my life to inspiring young people to have the confidence to succeed in both academics and athletics," said Joyner-Kersey. "At my foundation's community center in East St. Louis, I've seen first-hand the kids who grow up without internet service at home and the impact it has on their futures. I'm proud to represent Internet



*Jackie Joyner-Kersey, an official spokeswoman for Comcast's Internet Essentials Program during the official kick-off of the six-year program announcement in Chicago on Wednesday, August 24, 2016.*

Courtesy Photo

Essentials and help close the digital divide, so every child can have the chance to develop to their fullest potential and reach their dreams."

The progress report comes on the heels of a recent announcement by Comcast to expand the program's eligibility to households receiving HUD-housing assistance, including public housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Multifamily programs.

In total, there are up to two million HUD-assisted homes in Comcast's service area across the country, which, according to HUD, account for approximately 40 percent of all its households. The announcement means even more individuals, including seniors, veterans, and adults without children, are now eligible to apply to the program.

Internet Essentials from Comcast is the nation's largest and most comprehensive high-speed Internet adoption program. It provides low-cost high-speed internet service for \$9.95 a month plus tax; the option to purchase an internet-ready computer for under \$150; and multiple options to access free digital literacy training in print, online and in-person. For more information, or to apply for the program, visit: [www.InternetEssentials.com](http://www.InternetEssentials.com).

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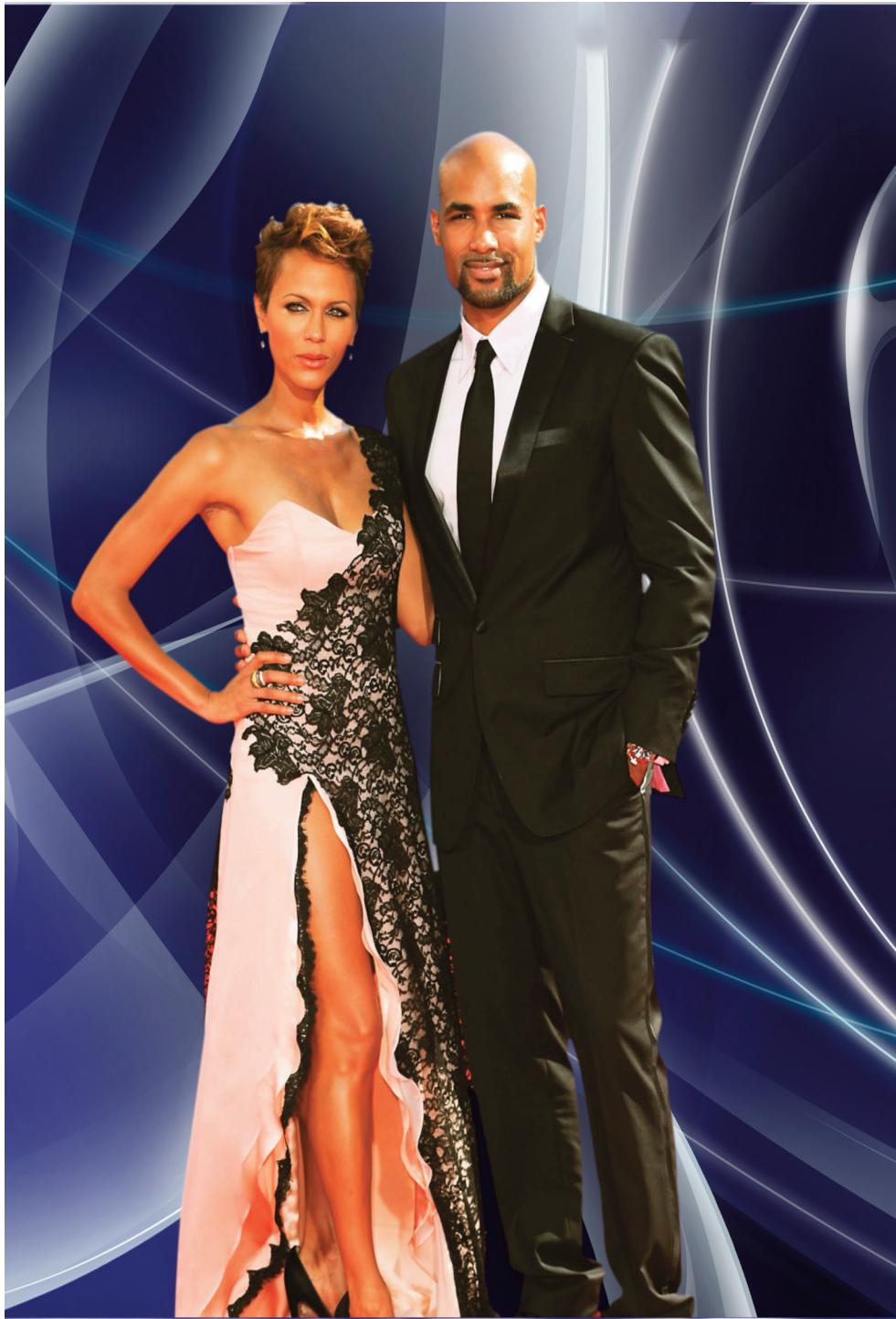
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# Life In Baltimore: Baltimorean chosen to head BSO OrchKids Program

By Brenda Bowe Johnson

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) recently hired Raquel Whiting Gilmer as the first executive director of its OrchKids program.

The BSO OrchKids program is a year-round, during and after school music program created in 2008 by BSO music director Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. The program started with 30 students in one school and now serves over 1,000 students in grades Pre-k through 10th grade across Baltimore City. OrchKids creates social change and nurtures promising futures for youth in Baltimore City through music education, instruments, academic institutions, meals, as well as performance and mentorship opportunities. The students are provided with the opportunity to experience music and art in a manner they'd likely never experienced and it's believed that this program opens their eyes to all of the possibilities available to them through hard work and determination.

"I'm honored to serve as the first executive director of the BSO's OrchKids Program. I am thankful to the BSO, the BSO board of directors, and Marin Alsop for the commitment they've shown to this program and our city with their investment in a full time executive director," Raquel Whiting Gilmer said.

Gilmer has spent time planning with the OrchKids team and reviewing the current systems and processes to gain an understanding of what is working well and to expand on those achievements. She has a strong operations background and believes that her experience will help her to work with the team to build a stronger foundation in order to fulfill their ultimate goal to make OrchKids accessible to thousands more students in the city.

"I truly believe that OrchKids is a vital program in our city and so I am personally committed to the program's growth and expansion," Gilmer said.

After graduating from Roland Park Country School, Gilmer attended Princeton University and graduated cum laude. She later graduated from the University



*Raquel Whiting Gilmer, executive director, OrchKids (second from left) and Marin Alsop, music director, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra with OrchKids Asia Palmer, Lowridar James and Joshua Grandy.* Courtesy Photo

of Virginia Law School. Gilmer has held several positions including managing two U.S. Senate campaigns in Ohio, and practiced law for several years at Arent Fox Law Firm in Washington, D.C. where her focus was on regulatory legal affairs. For the past eleven years, she has been developing and implementing high quality, out of school time educational programs nationally. First as the senior director of marketing and community relations at Catapult Online/ Education Online, a sister company of Sylvan Learning and later as chief operating officer at Learn It Systems.

Gilmer believes that all she has learned throughout her career will help her to lead OrchKids in its next phase of development.

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# Former NFL Player writes Children's Book

By Ruth Young Tyler

## Tavon Mason hangs up cleats, starts foundation

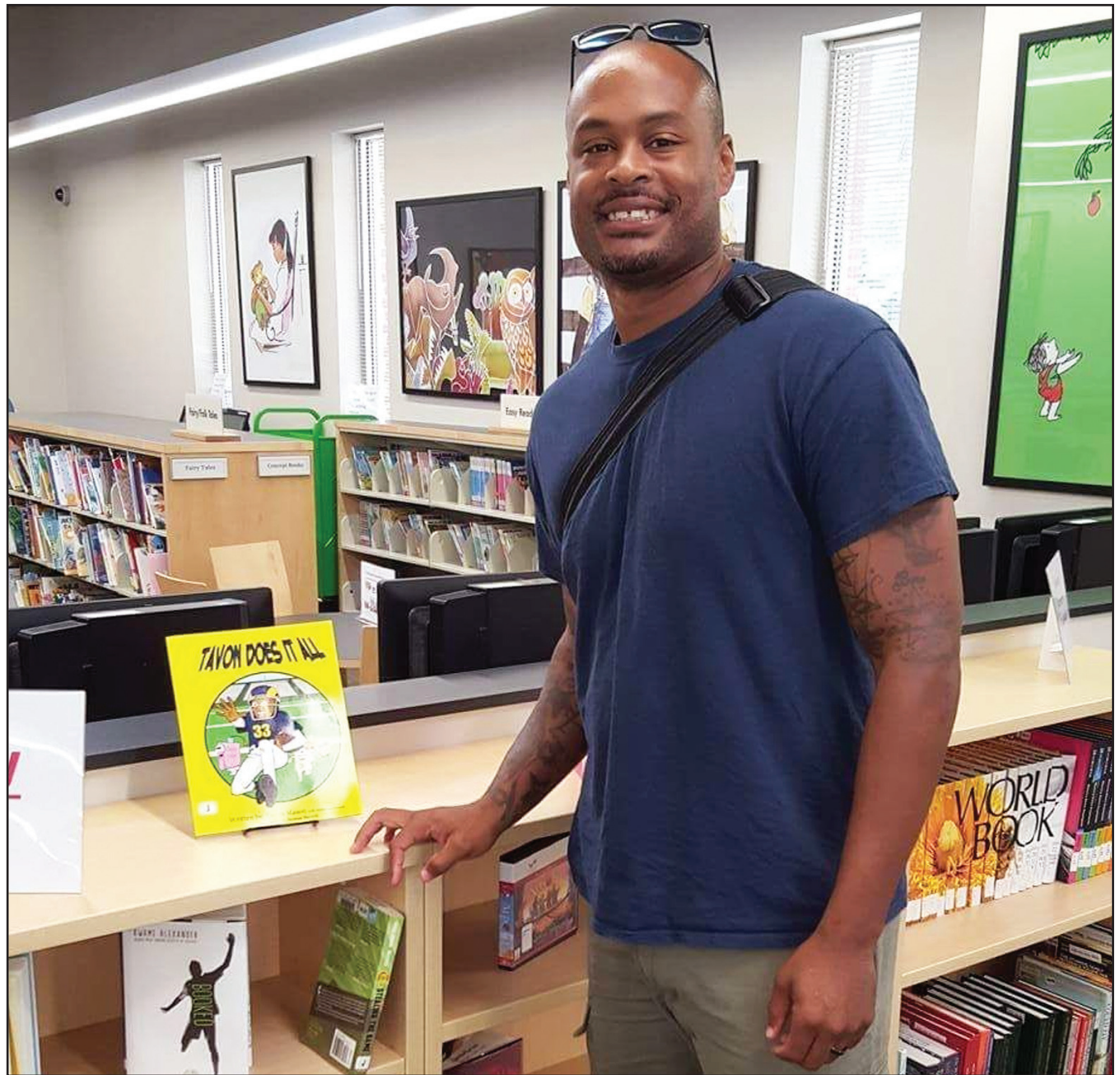
Tavon Mason, a former National Football League wide receiver for the New York Jets hung up his cleats and embraced a new position. In stark contrast to his former position on the field, Mason is now the author of a children's book.

Mason is also CEO and founder of Tavon Mason Loves the Kids Foundation, which focuses on promoting health, physical fitness and education.

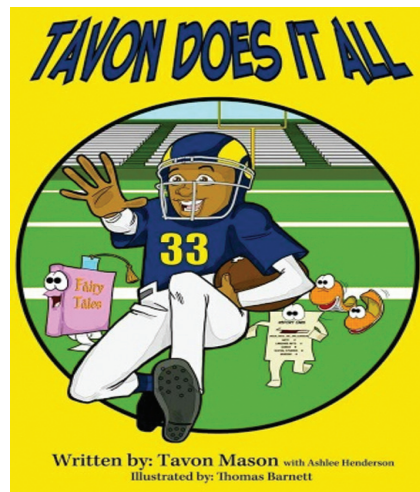
Mason's first children's book in cooperation with Ashlee Henderson titled, "Tavon Does it All," debuted in December 2015. The book is now featured in 20 Enoch Pratt Free Libraries throughout Baltimore City. Already featured in the Towson Public Library, the book will be featured in all Baltimore County locations later this year.

The inspiring children's story is a mix of fiction and non-fiction infused with autobiographical undertones. The main character is a third grader named Tavon who aspires to be a professional athlete. The story features a 'talking' report card and a pair of 'talking' slippers requesting to be donated to children who are in the hospital.

After retiring from two seasons in the NFL and one season with the Baltimore Mariners in the indoor league, Mason continued his quest to make an impact on the lives of youth and young adults across the region.



*Tavon Mason is an alumni of Woodlawn High School, the NFL and now reigns as CEO and Founder of Tavon Mason Loves the Kids Foundation and author of an inspiring children's book, Tavon Does it All. The book is featured in all Enoch Pratt Free Libraries in Baltimore City and soon to be debuted in Baltimore County Public Libraries in 2016. Courtesy Photo*



On and off the football field, Mason challenges others to reach their potential. "Dare to be great," he said. During his book tour, Mason encourages children and adults to, "Believe, succeed and reach for the stars. Only you can stop your dreams from being real."

The Baltimore native graduated from Woodlawn High School in 1998 and accepted a full athletic scholarship to at-

tend the University of Virginia. Currently, he serves as an assistant football coach at Stevenson University and a para-educator with Baltimore County Public Schools.

This year, Mason has participated in a variety of community events including, the annual East Coast Slipper Drive, Liberty Parks and Recreation Sports Fit Day, Back to School Drive at Leonard

Hicks Community Drive and the annual summer reading initiative with Baltimore City and Baltimore County libraries.

For more information about Tavon Mason, his foundation and his local appearances, visit: [www.tavonmasonlovesthekids.org](http://www.tavonmasonlovesthekids.org).

# The NAACP joins Black Church in fight against HIV/AIDS

By Mary B. Banks

It's no secret that HIV disproportionately affects African-Americans. Although African-Americans comprise less than 15 percent of the United States population, nearly half of all people living with HIV in America are black. Another daunting statistic is that out of the new HIV infections in the age group 13 to 24, nearly 60 percent of the newly infected are blacks.

To address the prevalence of HIV in the African-American community, the NAACP launched the initiative "The Black Church and HIV: The Social Justice Imperative" approximately half a decade ago.

HIV in the black community is an issue of health equity. Lack of health care, limited access to resources, and poverty are contributing factors to why African-Americans are disproportionately infected with HIV/AIDS.

Since the black church has historically been an institution that fostered social change, the NAACP partnered with faith leaders to combat HIV.

In 2011, the NAACP conducted a research study that explored faith leaders' attitudes towards HIV/AIDS. The goal for the research was to identify strategies on how to engage the black church in HIV prevention and to address barriers that prevented faith leaders' involvement in fighting the disease.

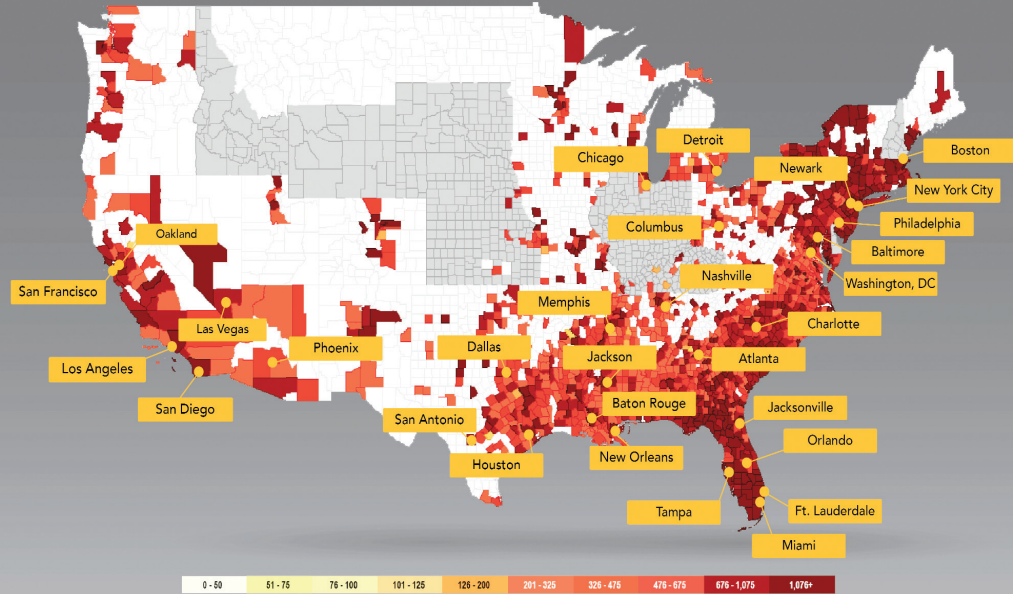
The focus groups were conducted in the 11 cities with the highest rates of HIV in the country: Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami/Ft. Lauderdale, New Orleans, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

The NAACP created accessible web-based resources to educate faith leaders about HIV: an activity manual, a virtual training manual and a pastoral belief pamphlet. These resources can be found online at [theblackchurchandhiv.org](http://theblackchurchandhiv.org).

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## THE BLACK CHURCH & HIV: THE SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPERATIVE

INITIATIVE CITIES REPRESENT THE AREAS WITH THE GREATEST RATE OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS



Rates of Black Persons Living with Diagnosed HIV, 2013

Data not shown \*

Data not released to AIDSvu \*\*

\*Data not shown to protect privacy because of a small number of cases and/or a small population.

\*\*State health department, per its HIV data re-release agreement with CDC, requested not to release data to AIDSvu.

NOTE: There are no country-level maps for Alaska, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico because there are no countries in these states.



GILEAD AIDSvu



The activity manual includes statistics, dispels myths about the disease, and outlines the various social factors that contribute to HIV transmission in the black community.

The manual also lists several ways the black church can help raise awareness about HIV prevention: integrating activism in the worship service, conducting screenings, volunteering at organizations that work with people living with HIV, and promoting safe sex.

Since Baltimore has one of the highest rates of residents living with HIV in the country, the black church and HIV initiative will hold a town meeting in Baltimore later in the year.

In 2013, there were 17,404 Baltimore residents living with diagnosed HIV. Seventy-seven percent were black; three percent Hispanic/Latino; and 15 percent white.

Pastor Dr. Sheridan Todd Leary of the Douglas Memorial Community Church, who assisted with the activity manual, is committed to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS.

"It is still devastating our community

and our ignoring will not cause it to go away," Leary said. "The church is the proclaimer of life and health, and not death and despair. HIV is no longer a death sentence. And it is incumbent upon the church to inform our communities that good health and long life is still possible, even for persons with HIV. It is the social justice imperative issue of the 21st century."

### Family Fun-n-Fit Day in Joseph Lee Park

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center in collaboration with Baltimore City Recreation & Parks; Docs in the Park; and Friends of Joseph Lee Park will host a Family Fun-n-Fit Day on Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The public is invited for a day of family fun and fitness, featuring: one-mile walk and parade; live music; free food and giveaways; activities and games; health and wellness information from Johns Hopkins providers and staff; arts and crafts station and much more! Joseph Lee Park is located between Johns Hopkins Bayview and Patterson High School at 5900 E. Pratt Street in Baltimore.



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# Rambling Rose

*Baltimore Musicians  
Strut their Stuff*



*Rosa Pryor Trusty*

Hello y'all! How are you enjoying this September weather so far? I think is fantastic! It is now perfect weather for outdoor events. I am having a ball. You will too if you follow my lead this week. As usual, there is so much going on. My Baltimore musicians are jumping up and down, doing the "James Brown" all over Baltimore and the District of Columbia. I am so happy to see so many of them working. It is also so wonderful to see so many organizations and clubs getting live entertainment instead of using recorded music. No offense to my DJs, but you know how I am, I love my live bands on stage.

Kicking the week off will be one of my favorite drummers, Dennis Chambers and my friend Mike Stern. Dennis has a propulsive style and versatility that enables him to play in combos or large groups and to work with fusion and hard bop bandleaders. He has also released two sessions as a leader himself. Chambers has recorded and played with Bob Berg, Bill Evans, Victor Bailey, Bob Belden, Kevin Eubanks and Mike Stern, just to name a few. Well honey child! You can catch him at Blues Alley Supper Club, 1073 Wisconsin Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. this entire weekend for two shows per night.

Continuing with this musical weekend with our local musician is The Marcus Lansey Jazz Quartet, performing at the Family and Children's Services Foster Grandparent 43rd Annual Recognition Ceremony on Friday, September 9 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at New Psalmist Baptist Church, 6020 Marian Drive in Baltimore. The tickets also include a delicious brunch menu. For more information, call, 410-366-1980.

Alright now, Jazz Expressways Foundation Jazz Breakfast is Saturday, September 10 at the Forest Park Senior Center, 4801 Liberty Heights Avenue from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. featuring the one and only jazz saxophonist, Craig Alston and his band. This is a BYOB event, that's right, you have your cocktail after you have your coffee, eggs and bacon, with home fries, fried apples, grits, and etc. We are serving a full buffet breakfast, with dancing and vendors. Call 410-833-9474 if you want to get your ticket at the door.

After having breakfast with us and listening to some great music, you will have just enough time to go home, change, and head back out to dinner at the Caton

Castle Lounge, 20 S. Caton Avenue to listen to George Coleman & Harold Mabern with Joe Farnsworth and Alex Claffey. They'll be there on Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. For ticket information, call 410-566-7086.

Our Baltimore musicians come in all flavors. That's right! The New Beginnings Barber Show is hosting their anniversary with a big Gospel Fest featuring Kenny Davis & The Melodyaires, Alvin Darling, The Soul Messengerz, Little David & The Bells of Joy, The Wings of Praise, The Divine of Annapolis and Sparkie & The Tones of Joy. Doresa Harvey & Minister Robert Wilson are the Emcees on Saturday, September 10 starting at 5 p.m., at the Greater New Hope Baptist Church, 2720 W. North Avenue in Baltimore. Food is available for purchase. For more information or tickets call 410-358-9661.

I have just a couple of things I want to tell you before I run out of space. "4 Men Production" is hosting a cabaret featuring First Class, Simply Black Kimberly and Style, all of Baltimore's top R&B groups on Saturday, September 10, 8 p.m. until 1 a.m. at the I.C. W. C Hall 4432 Park Heights Avenue, in Baltimore. For tickets, call 443-224-6114.

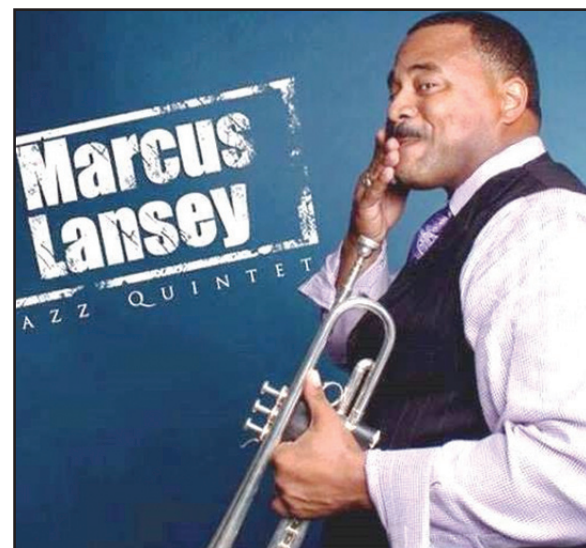
J.B. Brown, former radio personality is hosting an Oldies Dance Party at the Parkville VFW Hall Post 9083, 8123 Harford Road in Parkville, Maryland on Saturday, September 10, 7-11 p.m. It is cabaret Style; BYOB and BYOF with free set ups. For ticket information, call 443-425-8739.



*World-renowned, drummer/percussionist, Dennis Chambers and Mike Stern will perform at the Blues Alley on the weekend of September 9, 10 and 11 for 2 shows each night. You don't want to miss this!*

Castle Lounge, 20 S. Caton Avenue to listen to George Coleman & Harold Mabern with Joe Farnsworth and Alex Claffey. They'll be there on Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. For ticket information, call 410-566-7086.

Our Baltimore musicians come in all flavors.



*Marcus Lansey Jazz Quartet will provide the music for the Family and Children's Services Foster Grandparents 43rd Annual Recognition Ceremony & Jazz Brunch on Friday, September 9, 2016 at the New Psalmist Baptist Church located at 6020 Marian Drive in Baltimore from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.*



*Craig Alston, renowned musician and saxophonist will perform with his band at the Jazz Expressways Foundation Jazz Breakfast on Saturday, September 10, 2016 at the Forest Park Senior Center located at 4801 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

Last, but certainly not least, I want to say happy birthday to Baltimore/Washington jazz promoter Vernard Gray who is celebrating his 75th birthday on Sunday, September 11 at 4 p.m. at the Agora Bar & Grill @ The Inn at the Black Olive in Fells Point. For more information, call 202-262-7571.

On that note, it is about time for the fat lady to sing. I got to go. 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.



## 5th Annual East Coast Gospel Music & Arts Seminar Kicks to take place in Baltimore Area

Baltimore— Legendary radio personality Lee Michaels is working overtime to make his fifth annual East Coast Gospel Music & Arts Seminar the best one yet.

This year's event takes place Friday, October 28, 2016 through Sunday, October 30, 2016 at the Sheraton BWI Airport Hotel in Linthicum, Maryland.

"This event gives aspiring recording artists, actors, musicians and visual artists an opportunity to learn various aspects of the business side of the entertainment world," said Lee Michaels. "It's also a chance for them to showcase their talents and to network with people who may aid them in fulfilling their professional goals."

Some of the top behind-the-scenes executives in the entertainment world are scheduled to come to judge the artist showcases and to offer advice on various panels. Some of the top gospel artists have committed to come and participate in this year's event. Among them are Grammy® Award nominated recording artist Vashawn Mitchell, renowned choir-master J.J. Hairston of Youthful Praise, rising Christian Hip Hop star Uncle Reece, the musical super group Klarkent as well as veteran artists such as Bryan Andrew Wilson, Troy Sneed and Ted Winn.



Lee Michaels

Photo Credit: Glenwood Jackson

There will also be spoken word presentations and special workshops targeting pastors and ministers of music.

The Sheraton BWI Hotel is located at 1100 Old Elkridge Landing Road in Linthicum Heights, Maryland.

After serving in the Air Force and studying at the Broadcast Institute of Maryland, Michaels began his broadcasting career at various radio stations in the Maryland area in the early 1980s.

He moved on to WCAO Heaven 600 AM in 1991 as an announcer and became its Program Director in 1994. Through his leadership, the station has been Baltimore's #1 gospel radio station ever since. He still serves as the station's Program Director and morning drive host.

He is also the pastor of the Manifest Wonders Christian Center and hosts the weekly television program "Grace & Glory" that airs regionally on WMAR Channel 2, an ABC television affiliate in Maryland.

For more information about the 5th Annual East Coast Gospel Music & Arts Seminar or to register to attend, visit: [sicsummit.com](http://sicsummit.com).

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# Improvements needed in care for Sickle Cell Disease

By Stacy M. Brown

Nearly one in every 365 African-American births result in a child born with Sickle Cell Disease and according to a new report, one in 13 African-American newborns have the sickle cell trait which increases the chances that those infants could have the disease.

In the "State of Sickle Cell Disease 2016," released on Tuesday, September 7, 2016, by the American Society of Hematology, Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) disproportionately affects African-Americans.

The new report, which helped to kick-start Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month, revealed that despite knowing the exact cause of SCD, there remains no cure for the disease and existing treatments are often inadequate.

"Not only are individuals with SCD burdened by the pain and disability that comes with a chronic condition, but they also have very few accessible treatment options due to our fragmented health care system," Dr. Charles S. Abrams of the University of Pennsylvania and president of the American Society of Hematology said in a statement. "This status quo is unacceptable, and we are setting out to change it. ASH is proud to make a difference for people battling this disease worldwide by teaming up with partners from around the globe to launch the Sickle Cell Disease Coalition."

SCD is an inherited, lifelong chronic disorder affecting nearly 100,000 Americans and a growing global health problem that will touch nearly 30 percent more people globally in the next three decades, according to the report.

Although new approaches to managing SCD have led to improvements in diagnosis and supportive care, people living with the disease still have severe complications to overcome, according to the authors of the study.

Many are unable to access quality care and are limited by a lack of effective treatment options.

In an effort to identify unmet medical needs for people with SCD, the ASH, along with other groups, issued the report which also evaluates the disease in



*The "State of Sickle Cell Disease 2016," was released on Tuesday, September 7, 2016, by the American Society of Hematology. Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is an inherited, lifelong chronic disorder affecting nearly 100,000 Americans and a growing global health problem that will touch nearly 30 percent more people globally in the next three decades. SCD disproportionately affects African Americans.*

Courtesy Photo

four priority areas— access to care, training and professional education, research and clinical trials, and global health.

Significant improvements are needed across all areas and that, though patients are living longer, the system of care needs to change to ensure a better quality of life, according to findings in the report.

To address those challenges, ASH launched the Sickle Cell Disease Coalition to provide a platform to encourage stakeholders to work together to develop and implement vital projects and activities that will ultimately help the SCD community and improve outcomes for individuals with the disease, officials said.

"There are many unique challenges that people with SCD face. For example, the transition from pediatric to adult care can be especially difficult, and many people struggle to find health care providers with comprehensive knowledge and expertise to provide proper care, especially in rural communities," said ASH Vice President Dr. Alexis

Thompson of the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

SCD occurs in one in 365 African-American births, the report noted. The disease affects approximately 100,000 individuals in the United States and approximately 300,000 people have the sickle cell trait.

Further, the report found that 75 percent of adults with SCD and those with frequent pain crises fail to get hydroxyurea, the only current treatment approved by the FDA to treat SCD in adults.

Alarming, only one in three children with SCD receive appropriate monitoring for stroke by age two; and children not treated with hydroxyurea accrue over \$500,000 more in health care costs than those who receive the treatment. An accompanying scorecard released with the report by ASH, also revealed that 73 percent of family physicians said they believe that more education and support tools would help avoid complications in managing SCD.

Approximately 69 percent of family doctors reported that clinical decision support tools would be useful for treating the illness, but only 20 percent said they felt comfortable treating patients with SCD.

While stem cell transplantation has shown success in curing some with SCD, it is not widely available, doctors said.

The report noted that more than 90 percent of children with SCD do not survive to adulthood in resource-poor countries while 90 percent of those with the illness do live well into adulthood but with various issues and challenges. However, ASH officials remain optimistic.

"Given recent advances in research and treatment, there is enormous opportunity to transform the way we care for people suffering from SCD and to conquer this disease," Thompson said. To view the full report, visit: [www.hematology.org](http://www.hematology.org).

# Miss Sharon Jones Documentary Reveals Icon's Battle with Cancer

By Stacy M. Brown

Just as her career began to take off, the iconic soul diva Sharon Jones faced her greatest challenge—a life-threatening battle with cancer. However, not only has Jones remained on stage, her battles have been chronicled in a new documentary that's receiving rave reviews.

Director Barbara Kopple covers a difficult episode in Jones's life, utilizing that vulnerability to create moments that are breathtaking, even inspirational, the Washington Post noted in one riveting review.

Before rising to her current level of globe-touring prominence, Jones performed in a wedding band while working odd jobs, including a stint as a prison guard.

Her big break came after meeting Gabriel Roth, the Dap-Kings bandleader and a co-founder of Daptone Records, the Post noted.

After a string of successful albums and tours, Jones got disastrous news: Diagnosed with bile duct cancer, she would need surgery.

Kopple's film focuses on the period of Jones's convalescence, as the singer

divided her time between Upstate New York and Georgia, undergoing chemotherapy and trying to regain her strength.

Growing up in South Carolina, Jones knew from the first time she sang in her church's Christmas play that she wanted to be a musician.

"I was, like, maybe eight or nine years old and I got to sing 'Silent Night,'" she said in an interview that aired earlier this year on NPR. Jones remembered audience members taking note of her performance.

"Right then and there," she said. "I knew that I was going to be a singer. God had blessed me with a gift."

With her high-power vocals growling over the Dap-Kings' caffeinated soul, Jones channels the power of James Brown in his prime, another review, this one by the New York Times, raved.

Mainly, though, the film traces her life from a terrifying diagnosis of Stage 2 pancreatic cancer in 2013 through her triumphant return to the stage in 2015. The celebratory tone we hear from Miss Jones at the end of the movie contrasts with the more muted one she sometimes strikes today, the review notes.

The early part of the film casts back to Jones's childhood, which was rife with racial indignities. During her birth in Augusta, Georgia, her mother needed a cesarean operation, but since the hospital didn't allow African-Americans in their main units, the procedure took place in an unsanitary storage room.

In the film, Jones returns to a local store she patronized as a child, where she says the owner had trained his parrot to recite a racial epithet whenever a black person entered.

"It had a lot of effect on us as children," Jones said. "You'd be afraid when you saw white people."

Kopple, the director, says Jones has "got a tough attitude."

While major labels repeatedly shunned the singer as over the hill and "too dark," she finally found a perfect partner, and a breakthrough, via the fledgling indie Daptone Records, which specializes in reanimating the vintage sounds of soul, funk and Latin music.

The prolific Dap-Kings have put out seven albums with Jones and backed Amy Winehouse on her album "Back to Black," while Jones herself has been a popular choice for cameos on recordings and live shows for artists like Michael Bublé, Rufus Wainwright, David Byrne and Phish.

Central parts of the film show the financial hardships both Jones and her band underwent when they weren't able to work during her illness.

The film balances that with scenes of the star being nursed back to health in upstate New York by an acquaintance, Megan Holken, whom Jones had only connected with a few times over the years.

At a news conference for the film's first showing at the Toronto Film Festival last year, Jones announced her cancer's initial return. At that time, doctors found a spot on her liver (later treated with radiation). "I didn't want people to come up and congratulate me on beating cancer when it's back," she said.

Similarly, the singer lets her audience at shows this year know some of what she's going through with the cancer's latest re-emergence.

"There's pain in my hips, and my legs feel like tons," she said. "Getting out on that stage, that's my therapy. You have to look at life the way it is. No one knows how long I have. But I have the strength now and I want to continue."

"Miss Sharon Jones" is now playing at the Charles Theatre in Baltimore.



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# Memorial Ceremony Pays Tribute to All Lost Pets

*Fifth Annual Pet Memorial Sunday Ceremony on September 11, 2016 at the Baltimore Humane Society Memorial Park*

Reisterstown, Md.— On Sunday, September 11, 2016, the fifth annual Pet Memorial Sunday Ceremony will be held by the Baltimore Humane Society Memorial Park at 11 a.m. in observance of National Pet Memorial Day. Anyone who has experienced the loss of a beloved pet is invited to attend.

When someone's pet dies it can be just as difficult, and sometimes more difficult, than when a family member passes away. That's because to many pet owners, their pet is a family member. It's also not that unusual for someone's dog or cat to be the closest family member of all.

However, the life of a pet rarely gets acknowledged or remembered with a memorial service, making the grieving process that much more difficult for their owners. That's why Baltimore Humane Society is holding its annual pet memorial service for the public on Pet Memorial Sunday—the second Sunday in September.

With flutes playing under a canopy of trees, speakers address grief and guilt at the entrance to Baltimore Humane Society Memorial Park. There is even a flower ceremony with names of the attendees' pets called out while owners place a flower in their memory.

Matt Wilson, Baltimore Humane Soci-



*The fifth annual Pet Memorial Sunday Ceremony will be held on Sunday, September 11, 2016 at the Baltimore Humane Society Memorial Park in observance of National Pet Memorial Day. Anyone who has experienced the loss of a beloved pet, no matter when the loss occurred, is encouraged to attend. Friends and family are welcome. Anyone planning to attend is asked to RSVP by calling 410-833-8848 ext. 219 or sending an email: [mwilson@bmorehumane.org](mailto:mwilson@bmorehumane.org).*

*Courtesy Photo/Baltimore Humane Society*

ety Memorial Park Director, will lead the ceremony and speak on "Lessons Learned: How our pets continue to help us and others." "Grief Response to Pet Loss" will be addressed by Carol Williamson Jenkins, Bereavement Counselor from Stella Maris. Dr. Ayrika White-Mfoudi, Veterinarian from Peace-

ful Passage, a mobile vet that performs at-home euthanasia, will speak on "Guilt and Euthanasia." And Jennifer Gerber, a member of the Baltimore Humane Society Memorial Park free pet bereavement group, will recant "Gracie's Story." Members of the Dulaney High Flute Ensemble will play during the flower ceremony.

All members of the public are invited to attend the free ceremony. You don't have to have a pet buried at the Memorial Park or adopted from Baltimore Humane Society to attend. Pet Memorial Sunday cere-

mony is for anyone who may have experienced the loss of a beloved pet, no matter when the loss occurred. Friends and family are also welcome.

Anyone attending is asked to bring a photo of their pet to put on display during the ceremony and a flower to place in their honor. You are also being asked to RSVP with the name or names of pets you would like to be read aloud at the ceremony. To RSVP, call 410-833-8848 ext. 219 or email: [mwilson@bmorehumane.org](mailto:mwilson@bmorehumane.org).

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