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New Film Connects Civil Rights Heroes to BLM Movement



At the time of Baldwin's death in 1987, he left behind only 30 completed pages of the manuscript for his next project, "Remember This House," a memoir of his personal account of the lives and assassinations of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Now, in an incendiary new documentary, master filmmaker, writer and director Raoul Peck envisions the book James Baldwin never finished. The result is a radical, up-to-the-minute examination of race in America, using Baldwin's original words and a flood of rich archival material. (Photo): Crowd gathering at the Lincoln Memorial for the March on Washington in I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO, a Magnolia Pictures release. (See article on page 11)

Photo courtesy of Magnolia Pictures

Baltimore sailor deploys to support Operation Deep Freeze

By Ensign James Griffin,
Navy Expeditionary Combat
Command Public Affairs

Williamsburg, Va. (NNS)— Sailors assigned to Navy Cargo Handling Battalion (NCHB) 1 deployed to Antarctica in mid-January to support the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP), the nation's research program on the southernmost continent, which is managed by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

NCHB 1 deployed to NSF's McMurdo Station, where less than one percent of the world's population has ever visited, as part of Operation Deep Freeze—the military's logistical support component of the USAP.

McMurdo, the main U.S. station in Antarctica, is located at the southern tip of Ross Island, and is the primary logistics facility for supply for NSF's Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, 800 air miles inland, as well as remote field camps and is also the waste management center for much of the USAP.

As the USAP manager, NSF has a presidential mandate to manage three year-round research stations in Antarctica. McMurdo is the largest of the three stations and the globe's southernmost seaport.

More than 50 Sailors from NCHB 1 deployed to McMurdo Station during Antarctica's summer to offload containers of supplies to be used by scientists and support personnel. Cargo handlers will be working around the clock for nearly a month in below-freezing temperatures to transport hundreds of containers on and off the transport ship.

Military Sealift Command (MSC) chartered container ship MV Ocean Giant provides ocean cargo transport in support of Operation Deep Freeze. An MSC-chartered cargo ship and tanker have made the challenging voyage to Antarctica, which includes passage through a 15-mile ice channel, in places more than 13 feet thick, every year since the station was established in 1955.

Petty Officer 1st Class Derek McCleary, a Seabee from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, will be participating in Operation Deep Freeze for a second time and will bring with him his experience to ensure the mission is accom-



Petty Officer 2nd Class Michelle Panniell from Baltimore is among the sailors assigned to Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 1 deployed recently to support the U.S. Antarctic Program, the nation's research program on the southernmost continent, which is managed by the National Science Foundation.

Courtesy Photo/Navy Expeditionary Combat Public Affairs

plished safely and efficiently.

"We're the only command that supports McMurdo Station as far as getting cargo in and out of there," said McCleary. "It can only be done during a certain time of the year, because our winter is their summer— so that's why we go when we go."

While McCleary has experience as a cargo handler, he looks forward to learning and new experiences so he can prepare the next group of sailors for this annual mission to support the USAP.

"I think each time is a different experience; I'll be in a new leadership position this time around so there will probably be some new things to learn, expect, and teach to the next group of sailors," he said.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Michelle Panniell from Baltimore, also is excited to go on the ice and do her duty as part of the hatch team.

"The hatch teams are people who string up the containers and other equipment so they can be moved," said Panniell. "We do things to balance the load and make sure no damage is done to that cargo."

One thing Panniell plans to do during her down time is collect some of the ice in a bottle to take home.

back, but I feel extremely fortunate and honored for this opportunity," she said.

While resupply and support the NSF is the main mission, Sailors must also keep their safety as a main priority. For all of the Sailors participating in Operation Deep Freeze, they can expect to operate in 20-degree weather and will be required to wear 3-4 layers of clothing to carry out their cargo-handling mission.

All sailors are issued special cold weather gear that adapts to the ice, including boots that have better grips and extra insulated jackets.

Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG), a component of Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, is a Navy Reserve command organized and staffed to provide a wide range of supply and transportation support critical for peacetime support, crisis response, humanitarian, and combat service missions. NAVELSG consists of a full-time, Selective Reserve support staff and five Navy expeditionary logistics regiments and 11 cargo handling battalions.

"So many people are amazed that I get to have this experience; all of my friends and family want me to bring something



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WomenHeart and Burlington Stores host ‘Night Out to #KnockOutHeart- Disease’

Event will include a free heart health screening to educate women on their heart health

Baltimore— Did you know that one in three women die from heart disease and that it’s the leading cause of death in women? That’s why Burlington Stores, the national off-price retailer, has teamed up with WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease for the sixth consecutive year to educate women nationwide about the importance of their heart health.

On Friday, February 3, 2017, women are invited to a “Night Out to #KnockOutHeartDisease,” at Burlington’s Baltimore store located at 6901 Security Boulevard to receive a free heart health screening, inclusive of blood pressure, pulse, BMI and Cholesterol, by certified health professionals. Customers will also be able to receive bi-lingual (English/Spanish) women’s heart health information and tips for living heart healthy. Getting a screening is the first step in knowing the status of your heart health and knocking out heart disease. Those that get their heart health screened can tag at least two friends with #KnockOutHeartDisease to encourage those they love to do the same. For each use of the hashtag, Burlington will donate \$5, up to \$25,000, to WomenHeart.

From February 1 through March 31, 2017, Burlington store locations are encouraging customers to donate \$1 or more at check out to benefit WomenHeart’s mission to educate women about the importance of their heart health and to support those women living with heart disease.

For more campaign information, visit: www.BurlingtonStores.com/HeartHealth

Guest Editorials/Letters

Colleges are failing to prepare students for work

By Francine Glazer

Job prospects for today's college seniors are looking up. The hiring of bachelors-degree holders is expected to jump by 19 percent this year. But few are actually prepared for employment. Even though nine in 10 recent college grads believe they're ready for the workforce, only half the nation's employers agree.

Colleges and universities need to address this. Specifically, they should aggressively incorporate into their courses high-impact educational practices (HIP), which connect academic lessons to real-world problems and foster the creativity and critical thinking employers value. These practices can turn academically engaged students into profession-ready graduates.

Today, academic skills alone aren't sufficient for career success. Employers also want workers who communicate effectively, know how to manage their time, and can get a task done with minimal supervision. Indeed, over 90 percent of businesses value such "soft" aptitudes more highly than any specific college major.

High-impact practices provide this pre-professional base, often through extended research, collaborative projects, or community-based service jobs. In every case, a central feature is frequent, rigorous feedback. Students improve through input from peers and professors. Instead of toiling away at solo homework assignments and term papers, students operate in an environment that approximates the working world.

It's no surprise, then, that students feel more confident with their professional prospects after participating in HIP, with 75 percent reporting that this work prepared them for life after college.

Employers also highly value HIP experience. Ninety-four percent of employers are more likely to hire a recent college grad who has completed a long-term project that included intensive research and problem-solving skills. And student participants don't have to wait until they get to the workplace before reaping the benefits, since HIP programs immediately enhance their academic performance.

Consider a study of nearly 400 colleges and universities. Researchers tracked students in "learning communities"—where folks took classes together and lived in close proximity—and found that these students put more effort into their school work, took harder courses, and developed closer relationships with faculty than those who did not. Likewise, research from Kent State University shows that students with more HIP engagement have higher GPAs. Some higher-education institutions have already recognized the power of HIP.

At the University of Iowa, for example, students interested in business live together in the "BizHawks" community. This program sponsors a contest in which student groups work collaboratively on a business pitch. "BizHawks" even practice business manners at meals with faculty and receive extensive feedback on their resumes.

And at my own university, New York Institute of Technology, faculty members provide students with real-world experiences, typically through team-based capstone projects or internships at companies and nonprofits. These internships are meaningful experiences and sanctioned by the school, as students sign an agreement with our office of career services detailing the skills they hope to develop.

In our school of architecture and design, one professor implements HIP in his course by having students transfer their designs into virtual reality apps so they can walk through their work and "see" ways to improve it. Industry leaders also inspect these virtual reality projects and provide honest feedback, giving our budding architects a taste of real-world project management.

Today's college students will enter a promising job market. Universities must evolve to better empower students to succeed once they're in the workforce. High-impact educational practices should be a central part of that equation.

Francine Glazer is associate provost for educational innovation and director of New York Institute of Technology's Center for Teaching and Learning.



Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Re: Do Not Trust Russia

Does President Trump trust Communist Russia but distrust our intelligence agencies? Will Trump stand up to Russia, an adversary of the United States and a country that wants to spread its Communist totalitarianism to Europe, the Middle East and North America?

Trump might be hesitant to admit Russia hacked into Clinton's campaign because he does not want the public to think he won a tainted election. He won the election because of the ineptitude of Clinton's campaign staff, Clinton's private email server, and the desire for change by a large segment of the electorate in key states unhappy with Obama's policies. Trump should wholeheartedly support the Congressional investigations into the possible hacking by the Russians.

Trump wants to have good relations with Russia so we can work together to jointly solve some of the world's problems, which might be a positive move by the president, and it could make both countries more secure.

However, we cannot completely trust Putin and Russia, and we always have to be wary of their motives and be ready to respond to their threatening and hostile actions.

Hopefully, Russia does not have compromising personal and financial information on Trump, which could be used against us.

We must support President Trump, because his success is our success.

Donald Moskowitz
Londonderry, NH

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Consumers get back over \$17 million, thanks to CFPB

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire Columnist

Dodd-Frank Reform Act violations hold TransUnion, Equifax Accountable

Millions of consumers who were duped into paying fees for their own credit scores will soon receive more than \$17.6 million, thanks to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Affected consumers can expect to receive notification letters in the mail.

TransUnion and Equifax—two of the nation's largest credit reporting agencies—sold credit scores, credit reports and credit-monitoring services to consumers even though the “credit scores” sold were not typically used by lenders to make credit decisions. As a result, what consumers paid to these two firms was of questionable value.

As credit scores are often cited as the basis for many consumers of color to either be denied access to credit or be charged higher than average interest rates, it is likely that many will also be eligible for restitution. TransUnion must

now provide restitution of \$13.9 million to affected consumers, while Equifax's cost of restitution is \$3.8 million. Assessed fines on the violations will add additional costs of \$3 million to TransUnion and \$2.5 million for Equifax.

“TransUnion and Equifax deceived consumers about the usefulness of the credit scores they marketed, and lured consumers into expensive recurring pay-

ments with false promises,” said CFPB Director Richard Cordray. “Credit scores are central to a consumer's financial life and people deserve honest and accurate information about them.”

In its advertising, Equifax falsely claimed that credit scores and credit-related products were free. In the case of TransUnion, the cost was promised to be only \$1. What neither made clear to consumers was that unless the ‘service’ was cancelled during its 30-day trial period, consumers would be charged a recurring fee—usually \$16 or more per month.

Additionally, Equifax violated the Fair

the way they operate. From clearly informing consumers about the nature of the scores they are selling to consumers; to providing simple, easy to understand information on how to cancel the purchase of any credit-related product, and ending billing and collection payments for any recurring charge once a consumer cancels the service.

The two final enforcement requirements are probably the most important of all:

1. Before enrolling a consumer in any credit-related product with a negative option feature, TransUnion and Equifax must obtain the consumer's consent; and

2. Truthfully represent the value or usefulness of products sold.

“We applaud the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for taking strong and vigorous actions against TransUnion and Equifax to protect the interests of American consumers,” said National Consumer Law Center staff attorney Chi Wu. “In addition to obtaining tens of millions of dollars in relief for consumers, this consent order will protect consumers from being ripped off in the future over deceptive credit monitoring products and sales practices.”

For more information about credit scores, visit the CFPB website at: <http://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/blog/what-you-need-know-understanding-why-offers-your-credit-score-are-not-all-same/>.

Charlene Crowell is the communications deputy director with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

“Beyond the costs of restitution and fines, CFPB will now hold Equifax and TransUnion accountable for changes in the way they operate. From clearly informing consumers about the nature of the scores they are selling to consumers; to providing simple, easy to understand information on how to cancel the purchase of any credit-related product, and ending billing and collection payments for any recurring charge once a consumer cancels the service.”

Both TransUnion and Equifax are charged with violations of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Financial Protection Act from 2011 to 2014 and included:

- Deceiving consumers about the value of the credit scores they sold; and
- Deceiving consumers into enrolling in subscription programs.

Credit Reporting Act, which requires a credit reporting agency to provide a free credit report once every 12 months and to operate a central source—AnnualCreditReport.com—where consumers can get their report. Until January 2014, consumers getting their report through Equifax first had to view Equifax advertisements, another illegal act. By law, such advertising is allowed after consumers receive their report.

Beyond the costs of restitution and fines, CFPB will now hold Equifax and TransUnion accountable for changes in

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After losing HUD funding, MCVET sticks to values, pursues other revenue

By Stacy M. Brown

An estimated 30,000 United States veterans are homeless. Here in Baltimore, the Maryland Center for Veteran Education and Training (MCVET) is one program that has worked tirelessly to provide those former service men and women a place to live, a system of support and job training.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has defunded more than \$1.2 million in funding from MCVET, causing the organization to pursue other sources of revenue to maintain the integrity of the services.

Funding cuts have affected organization's like MCVET across the country, reflecting a national shift away from allocating funds away from transitional housing services and toward permanent housing support.

"HUD came out with a mandate encouraging programs to be a housing first model. But, we are not," said Jeffrey Kendrick, the executive director of MCVET. "There were low barriers for individuals who are residing in programs that are housing first to prevent them from being on the street.

"In order to cooperate with the HUD mandate, we would have to turn transitional housing into permanent housing and we have a zero-tolerance policy here which means we don't allow alcohol or drugs although we do provide training programs and recovery," Kendrick said.

HUD funding ended in November and MCVET officials say they couldn't compromise their already successful program even though it meant losing the



Jeffrey Kendrick, executive director of Maryland Center for Veteran Education and Training (MCVET). Established more than 20 years ago, MCVET houses homeless veterans many of whom arrive with drug or alcohol problems.

Courtesy Photo

funding which they'll now have to make up some other way, perhaps from individual or corporate donors.

"It's very adverse for us because we may have to reduce the number of staff which is 47-employees right now and we'd also have to reduce our 249-bed facility," he said.

Established more than 20 years ago, MCVET houses homeless veterans many of whom arrive with drug or alcohol problems.

New clients are required to attend 90 alcoholics or narcotics anonymous meetings for 90 days. After that, they must

attend five meetings a week, which is similar to a traditional 12-step program as part of a long-range plan used to help residents stay drug free. These programs are also open to the public, according to Kendrick.

"This is not an easy program," he said. "A veteran can come here and earn a degree or diploma, but if he or she doesn't work the program, they may have a diploma or degree, but they're still homeless."

There are three levels of residency at the center— emergency housing, transitional housing and Single Room Occu-

pancy. The veterans receive stipends and 20 percent of the stipend pays their rent. Residents are required to put 30 percent of their stipend into a savings account.

The Center has resources to help the veterans, from the Veterans Administration, and Healthcare for the Homeless. It also works with various schools through classes funded by the Department of Labor.

Average attendance is two years, although some leave earlier while others stay longer.

"With the cut in funding, it means that we may also have to reduce the amount of services for veterans in the program; we may have to let some of our case managers go; and we provide three meals a day and that must be cut as well," Kendrick said.

Still, and despite a recent meeting with HUD officials, Kendrick said MCVET refuses to sacrifice its zero-tolerance policy because the best way to prepare veterans for permanent housing and full-time employment is to address the problems they may be experiencing that initially led them to homelessness.

To try and make up for the funding, Kendrick said he's hired a grant consultant and they've reached out for private funding.

"As of right now, we have strong support from the VFW, the American Legion, and others," he said. "The real danger is that we are the only program in the entire nation to provide the type of services that we do. The bottom line is if this [lack of funding] continues, we could be in danger of closing."

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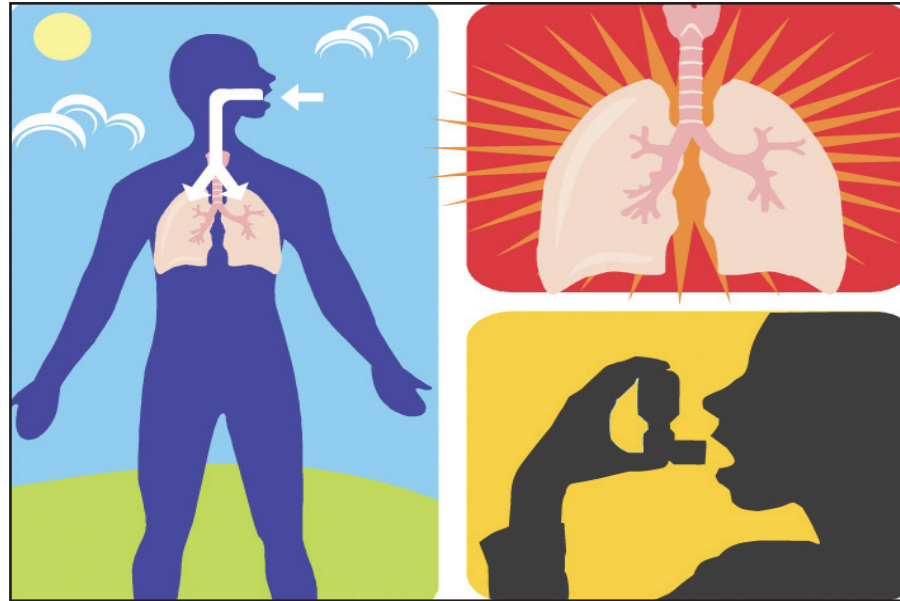
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Maryland agencies pursue program to reduce lead poisoning, asthma cases

Baltimore— The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has partnered with the Department of the Environment and the Department of Housing and Community Development to apply to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to develop an initiative to reduce lead poisoning and to improve asthma, two conditions related to environmental conditions in housing.

The program would leverage federal funds available through the Maryland Medicaid Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to eliminate sources of lead poisoning in housing, to build capacity in local health departments to reduce lead poisoning and asthma related to housing conditions, and to address lead and asthma health disparities.

"We know that housing conditions can severely affect a child's health, and this program would enable us to get to the root of the problems for many children," said Health and Mental Hygiene Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. "It would go beyond merely treating a child with asthma or lead poisoning—it would seek to prevent



exposures to the triggers, causes and social determinants of these conditions, which is the best means of preventing the life-long impacts of these diseases."

The new program would have two parts. The first component would involve a partnership between Health and Mental Hygiene and Housing and Community

Development to expand lead identification and abatement programs delivered by the latter agency. The second would expand local health departments' programs that help families and health care providers to identify and to eliminate sources of lead exposures and asthma triggers in homes. The programs would both

be coordinated with the Department of the Environment's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, prioritizing people affected by lead.

"We look forward to working with the departments of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Environment to ensure healthy housing for Maryland's families," said Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt.

If approved, up to \$3.7 million dollars in CHIP federal matching funds could be available to the State, to supplement \$500,000 that Governor Larry Hogan authorized Medicaid to use in fiscal year 2017 for lead abatement purposes. An additional \$2.6 million could potentially be available to the State in fiscal year 2018 to fund the local health departments' programs that serve families with children affected by lead or asthma.

"This continues Governor Hogan's emphasis on eradicating the lingering problem of lead poisoning through comprehensive, coordinated, and creative actions," said Department of the Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles.

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Obama legacy captured in docu-series

'The Obama Years: The Power of Words'

Smithsonian
CHANNEL 



Courtesy Photo

New York— Over eight years, President Obama delivered more than 3,500 speeches and statements, officially ending his era with a farewell address in Chicago. His speeches ranged from re-defining patriotism, candidly addressing race relations, inspiring hope and healing, and turning divisive moments into an opportunity for national unification.

But which are the moments that history will remember?

A new hour-long Smithsonian Channel special tells the story of Barack Obama, writer in chief, and takes viewers inside the defining moments of his political career through the prism of his most memorable speeches. “The Obama Years: The Power of Words” premieres on Mon. Feb. 27 at 8 p.m.

“Someday there will be the collected speeches of Barack Obama,” historian Douglas Brinkley said in the film. “I think they’ll tell us more about our hopes, dreams, aspirations and dark realities than any other document to represent that era.”

“The Obama Years: The Power of Words” examines how President Obama used the bully pulpit, by looking at six benchmark speeches, as a brash young state senator and as a president grappling with turbulent times in the face of

chaotic events. Some were the result of careful planning and intensive writing; others were written under extraordinary pressure, often with Obama doing much of the writing, in the wake of unexpected events. When tragedy strikes, the President has a tremendous responsibility to comfort the nation.

“The Obama Years: The Power of Words” gives viewers behind-the-scenes stories of the president and his process, how he and his core group worked to develop the messages, expert commentary comparing the speeches to those of other presidents, and analysis of the power and limits of the bully pulpit to shape events.

The program features insights from eminent historians Doris Kearns Goodwin and Douglas Brinkley and key members of Obama’s inner circle, including senior advisor Valerie Jarrett, Chief Strategist David Axelrod, and speechwriters Jon Favreau and Cody Keenan. Smithsonian curator Harry Rubenstein of the National Museum of American History, Rep. John Lewis, and Clark Judge, speechwriter for President Ronald Reagan, are also among the featured interviews.

“The Obama Years: The Power of Words” focuses on six notable speeches:

- The 2004 Democratic National Convention keynote;

- “A More Perfect Union,” presidential candidate Obama’s seminal speech on race relations in Philadelphia;

- The 2008 Democratic National Convention acceptance speech—delivered on the anniversary of the Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have A Dream” speech,

- The President’s eulogy for the victims of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary shootings in Newtown, CT.

- The 50th Anniversary commemoration in 2015 of the Selma to Montgomery civil rights marches.

- “Amazing Grace,” the eulogy for the victims of the 2015 shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C.

“The Obama Years: The Power of Words” is an original Smithsonian Channel production, written and produced Jody Schiliro. Charles Poe and David Royle are [the] executive producers. The film is narrated by Jesse Williams, star of the long-running hit series “Grey’s Anatomy” and executive producer of “Stay Woke: The Black Lives Matter Movement.”

The film will also be screened in museums across America during Black History Month— starting at

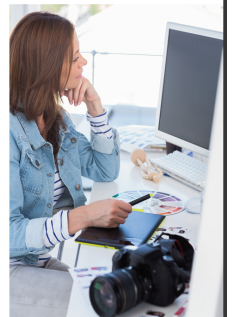
the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History.

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Weinberg Foundation Continues Great Work in City Schools



Students at Windsor Hills Elementary School in West Baltimore enjoy their new library which is one of 13 renovated thanks to the Weinberg Foundation.

Courtesy Photo

By Stacy M. Brown

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, hosted a celebration on Mon., Jan. 23 marking the re-grand opening of two more libraries as part of the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project.

Hampden Elementary/Middle School and George Washington Elementary School are the 12th and 13th schools, respectively, to receive newly-renovated libraries.

“The Weinberg Foundation is committed to continually improve academic achievement in Baltimore City Public Schools. To demonstrate that, we have engaged research partners who monitor and evaluate the Library Project,” Rachel Garbow Monroe, the Weinberg Foundation president and chief executive officer, said in a news release.

“Among the latest findings, the first three Library Project schools outperformed more than 120 Baltimore City Public Schools on PARCC tests measuring reading fluency,” said Garbow Mon-

roe. “This confirms that the libraries are continuing to have a profound, positive impact on students.”

The Baltimore Library Project is a multi-year, collaborative effort to design, build, equip, and staff with new or renovated elementary/middle school libraries in selected schools where existing funds can be leveraged, according to the news release.

The Weinberg Foundation provides approximately \$100 million in annual grants to nonprofits that provide direct services to low-income and vulnerable individuals and families, primarily in America and Israel.

The foundation has committed \$10 million to build or transform up to 24 Baltimore City Public School libraries to strengthen academic achievement among students.

By Fall 2017, the Library Project will serve approximately 6,000 students, which equated to 10 percent of city schools’ elementary and middle school population, according to Garbow Monroe.

“Each new library is a well-equipped, well-staffed, and well-resourced space that includes beautiful design, new furniture and graphics, the latest technologies, an ‘Enoch Pratt Parent Place’ for parents and guardians, and informal reading areas, as well as separate areas for study and research, instruction, and group discussion,” she said.

As of the most recent dedication, 13 new spaces have been built or completely renovated, including at Arlington Elementary/Middle; Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle; Elmer A. Henderson: A Johns Hopkins Partnership School; Harford Heights Elementary; The Historic Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Elementary; Moravia Park Elementary; Morrell Park Elementary/Middle; Southwest Baltimore Charter; Thomas Johnson Elementary/Middle; Westport Academy; and Windsor Hills Elementary/Middle schools.

The next library renovation is planned at Francis Scott-Key Elementary/Middle School and is scheduled to take place in the summer.

This year, the Library Project’s base of support has grown even broader because of Casino Local Impact Grant funds made available to the city due to the development of the Horseshoe Casino Baltimore. Those funds accrue annually to the city from the state, which requires that a percentage of gaming revenue be invested to support community development in surrounding neighborhoods.

“The school hosting [Monday’s] grand opening celebration, George Washington Elementary, is located within one of the neighborhoods of this catchment area, known as the ‘South Baltimore Gateway,’” Monroe said, adding that the Library Project is among several initiatives designated by the city to receive impact grant funds in Fiscal Year 2017 with the support of the Baltimore Casino Local Development Council or LDC.

The LDC advises the Mayor on annual priorities and on long-term strategies for making the best use of impact grant funds.

FoodWorks program graduates 22nd Class of Certified Chefs



Graduates: Oluwatosin Babatunde-Ijiyemi; Tia Dickerson; Stephen Hall; Lisa Heard; Wanda Hedgepeth; Jonathan Marsh; Jason Poist; Michael Thompson; and Ronald Willis. Instructors Rich Louis (Grey coat); Manny Robinson, executive Chef, FoodWorks; and Rehan Khan, Chef/ Owner, Umami Global Bistro.

Courtesy Photo/Maryland Food Bank

By Deborah Bailey

The transition from cook to chef was a 12-week journey for nine recent graduates of the Food Bank of Maryland's FoodWorks Program, celebrated with their families, friends and staff of the Maryland Food Bank at Foodworks 22nd graduation ceremony last week.

The FoodWorks program started in 2010. "Our primary focus was to address some of the root causes of hunger and poverty. Since we launched it seven years ago, we've produced one million meals for families with food insecurity across the state," Del Guercio said.

"Every time we bring a class in we preserve more food that might otherwise perish, we provide more food to people in need and we offer more technical training to our students," Del Guercio told the newest graduating class and their families in commencement remarks.

The 12-week program offers students a crash course in diverse culinary tech-

niques, competency in nutrition and menu planning and, certification as a ServSafe Food Sanitation Management expert, a needed certificate to work and compete in today's food industry, said Foodworks Executive Chef Manny Robinson.

Many of the new chefs, like Stephen Hall, already had a background in food preparation and cooking. Hall was ready to take that next step. But as the program intensified, Hall told his fellow graduates, he became to more than just training and certification. Hall pledged to use his skills to impact the almost one million Marylanders suffering from food insecurity and hunger.

"I initially came to the program because I had never been professionally trained as a culinary arts professional. I worked as a line cook in restaurants for several years," said Hall.

"As the weeks went by and I came to understand the depth and importance of the program, it touched my heart," Hall emphasized. "I just wanted to be in-

involved and do my best to further the goal of ending hunger."

For class valedictorian Lisa Heard, FoodWorks was the fulfillment of a dream.

"This is a first step to a dream that I wanted to pursue for so long. It's that first step of recognizing that 'it's possible' said Heard who cooked professionally for family and friends, but longed to demonstrate her gift for cooking in a restaurant setting.

"If you have the gift and the skill, the fire in your belly to work hard, then Foodworks is a good starting foundation for people who are looking to do anything in the food service industry," she said.

The Food Bank of Maryland began partnering with Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) to offer the FoodWorks program in 2015. Kent Smedley, Dean of Workforce Development at CCBC was on hand to encourage the graduates.

"The career path you've chosen takes

you into an area where the sky is the limit. The hospitality industry is an industry that has a pathway where you can keep learning and advancing your career," Smedley said.

One in eight people in Maryland don't have enough food to thrive. However, 39 percent of persons living in the areas served by Maryland's Food Bank earn more than the allowable limit to qualify for federal or state relief, leaving the food bank as the only vehicle available to supplement what many low-wealth families can afford to buy in grocery stores.

The FoodWorks program and its chef training provides workforce development for emerging chefs, while allowing the Foodbank of Maryland to prepare healthy meals from food products that would have otherwise gone to waste.

Recruitment for the next FoodWorks 12-week training class is underway. For more information, www.mdfoodbank.org/foodworks/

'I Am Not Your Negro'

New Film Connects Civil Rights Heroes to BLM Movement

By Stacy M. Brown

In 1979, James Baldwin wrote a letter to his literary agent describing his next project, "Remember This House." The book was to be a revolutionary, personal account of the lives and successive assassinations of three of his close friends— Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

At the time of Baldwin's death in 1987, he left behind only 30 completed pages of the manuscript. Now, in an incendiary new documentary, master filmmaker Raoul Peck envisions the book James Baldwin never finished.

The result is a radical, up-to-the-minute examination of race in America, using Baldwin's original words and a flood of rich archival material.

The film, "I Am Not Your Negro," is a journey into Black history that connects the Civil Rights movement to the present Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.

The film questions Black representation in Hollywood and beyond. Ultimately, it confronts the deeper connections between the lives and assassinations of the three African-American leaders in a work that challenges the definition of what America stands for.

"I started reading James Baldwin when I was a 15-year-old boy searching for rational explanations to the contradictions I was confronting in my already nomadic life, which took me from Haiti to Congo to France to Germany and to the United States," Peck said.

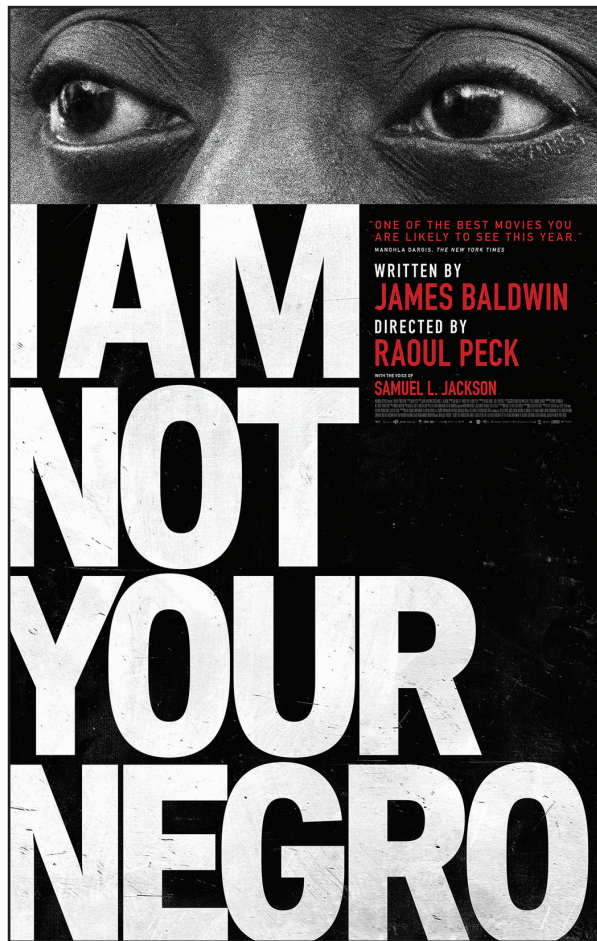
The director noted that he grew up "in a myth in which I was both enforcer and actor—the myth of a single and unique America. The script was well-written, the soundtrack allowed no ambiguity, the actors of this utopia, Black or white, were convincing," he said.

With rare episodic setbacks, the myth was strong, better; the myth was life, was reality, he said. "I remember the Kennedys, Bobby and John, Elvis, Ed Sullivan, Jackie Gleason, Dr. Richard Kimble, and Mary Tyler Moore very well," Peck continued.

"On the other hand, Otis Redding, Paul Robeson and Willie Mays are only vague reminiscences. Faint stories tolerated in my memorial hard disk. Of course, there was "Soul Train" on television, but it was much later, and on Saturday morning where it wouldn't offend any advertisers," he said.

In the course of five years, Evers, Malcolm X and King were assassinated. Peck says each of them was connected and not just by the color of their skin.

"They fought on different battlefields," Peck said. "And, quite differently. But in the end, all three were deemed dangerous. They were unveiling the haze of racial confusion. James Baldwin also saw through the system. And he loved these men. These assassinations broke him down."



Theatrical one-sheet for I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO, a Magnolia Pictures release.

Photo courtesy of Magnolia Pictures

A Los Angeles Times review of the film notes that it's Baldwin himself we see at the start of the film, a guest on a 1968 episode of the Dick Cavett Show being asked by the host "Why aren't Negroes more optimistic – it's getting so much better."

"It's not a question of what happens to the Negro," Baldwin said with a look of inexpressible weariness crossing his face. "The real question is what is going to happen to this country."

This is the theme—the idea that what's really at stake in racial matters is America's soul that Baldwin returns to again and again in the course of the film.

"The truth is this country does not know what to do with its black population," he said at one point, adding later "Americans can't face the fact that I am flesh of their flesh."

Perhaps most movingly, in a televised interview with psychologist Dr. Kenneth Clark, Baldwin says he is "terrified at the moral apathy—the death of the heart which is happening in my country. These people have



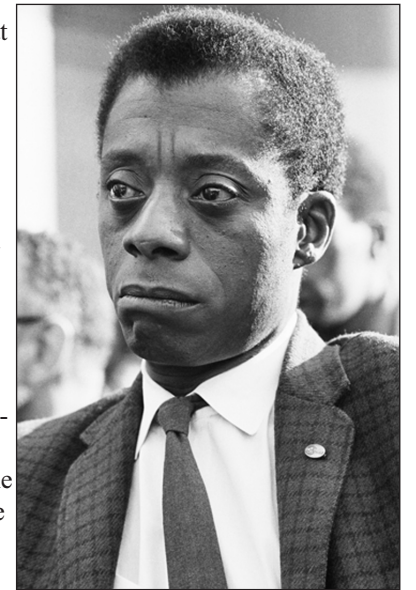
Raoul Peck, director, "I Am Not Your Negro"
Courtesy Photo

deluded themselves so long that they really don't think I'm human. And this means that they have become, in themselves, moral monsters."

But before it gets to any of that other material, "Negro" cuts immediately from that black-and-white Cavett footage to a sizzling montage of photos from Ferguson and other contemporary scenes of struggle, brilliantly edited to Buddy Guy's high-octane "Damn Right I've Got the Blues."

The film is opens for a one-week Academy-qualifying run and returns on Feb. 3 to theaters around the country, including Baltimore.

Note: "I Am Not Your Negro" has been nominated for "Best Documentary Feature" by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars).



James Baldwin
Photo: Courtesy/Magnolia Pictures

Rambling Rose

Black History Month Begins



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, I have some juicy stuff for you this week! Black History Month is approaching, bringing with it a host of exciting events for the community.

First, I want to congratulate Tessa Hill-Aston, president of the Baltimore City Branch of the NAACP, and the civil rights organization's officers and executive committee members who were sworn-in at a ceremony on New Year's Day at the New Waverly United Methodist Church.

I also want to congratulate the historical Arch Social Club, which is now called the Arch Social Community Network and has just had their 501(c)3 application for non-profit organizational status approved.

In celebration of Black History Month, live entertainment will be presented at the Enoch Pratt Library's Pennsylvania Avenue branch on Mon., Feb. 6 at 6 p.m. The Wayne Johnson Ensemble will perform jazz standards written by African American jazz masters and tunes sung by Billie Holiday. On Sat. Feb. 11, the Carl Grubbs Ensemble will perform the music of Eubie Blake and standards written by African American jazz masters at the Northwood Branch Library, 1 p.m.

Calling all authors, publishers, literary agents, publicists, editors, proofreaders! You're invited to the Louis Fields 4th Annual Langston Hughes Book Fair hosted by Baltimore African American Tourism Council of Maryland on Sun., Feb. 5, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event will be held at the Empowerment Temple AME Church, 421 Primrose Avenue in Baltimore. Authors of Christian books, history, inspirational, educational, motivational, positive and uplifting books are encouraged to reserve your

space at loucfields@gmail.com. It is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Lou Fields at 443-985-7974 and tell him Rosa Pryor told you.

Another event for Black History Month is Lindsey Johnson's Baltimore Black Memorabilia & Collectible Show, which will be held on Sat., Feb. 11, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture, 830 E. Pratt Street in Baltimore. The event will showcase vendors of black memorabilia; educational exhibits; verbal appraisal of black memorabilia and autograph sessions with Negro League Baseball Players. Iiyasah Shabazz, Malcolm X's daughter, and Rosa "Rambling Rose" Pryor, will also be there signing their books; Black memorabilia and collectibles for sale include slavery artifacts, books, autographs, stamps, paintings, prints, dolls, advertisements, kitchen collectibles, coins, magazines, toys, jewelry and civil rights, political, entertainment and sports memorabilia. Educational exhibits include Slavery Artifacts & Jim Crow memorabilia, Black Panther Party, Negro League Baseball, Marcus Garvey, and so much more. For more information, call 301-649-1915 or email Ljohnson-shows@aol.com.

I will end by saying happy birthday to Carolyn Richardson who will be celebrating at Maceo's Lounge, 1926 Walbrook Ave., (at Monroe St.) Sat., Feb. 4; 5 p.m. until.

Well my dear friends, this is it. I am out of space. I will see you on the flip side. 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 YOUR



"Spice" will perform at the Corinthian Restaurant & Lounge located at 7107 Windsor Mill Road on Thursday, February 2, 2017. For more information, call 410-265-7078.



Jazz Caravan will perform on the Arcade Stage at Lexington Market from noon until 2 p.m. on Saturday, January 28, 2017. The Baltimore band honors great American music from Dixieland to Bebop.



Charm City Jazz will host a "Sweet Soul & Smooth Jazz" event on Tuesday, January 31, 2017 at Magooby's Joke House & Soundstage located at 9603 Deereco Road in Timonium, Maryland. Featured vocalist is "Shang and saxophonist Isaac Parham. Showtime is 5 p.m. For more information, call 443-858-9781



Rodney Kelley and his band will perform at Vulcan Blazers Hall located at 2811 Druid Park Drive in Baltimore on Sunday, January 29, 2017 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The New Life Fellowship Worship Center Drama Ministry presents
a special Valentine's Day Weekend presentation of

For Better or Worse

Written by: Ursula V. Battle and Directed by Tracey Stephenson

Saturday, February 11, 2017, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

*(*Food to be served prior to each performance from 2pm-3pm and 6pm-7pm)*

Show will start promptly at 3 pm and 7 pm

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Donation: \$35 before February 1, 2017; \$40 after February 1, 2017; \$45 VIP Reserved Seating
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For
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by Ursula V. Battle

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President Obama honors Anne Arundel Co. resident

By Andrea Blackstone

January 18, 2017 was an extremely memorable day for an Anne Arundel County resident Kenneth L. Gray. A few days before President Donald Trump took office, he received The President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award for his work with youth. This is the highest national honor to bestow upon a citizen.

Gray was among 44 other recipients from around the world honored by Sen. Donzella James (D-Ga.), Dr. Janice Barnett-Adams, and Pastor Lenora Wimberly-Peterson at former President Barack Obama's Lifetime Achievement Awards Ceremony, held at the Georgia State Capitol Building in Atlanta, Ga. Along with a signed certificate of achievement from Obama, Gray received an official service award pin, and a congratulatory letter from the former president.

"Your volunteer service demonstrates the kind of commitment to your community that moves America a step closer to its great promise," Obama wrote in Gray's letter. "While government can open more opportunities for us to serve our communities, it is up to us to seize those opportunities. Thank you for your devotion to service and for doing all you can to shape a better tomorrow for our great Nation."

Sherri Nelson, who was re-pinned as a 2017 recipient of President Obama's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award, said that she nominated Gray to receive formal recognition because of his volunteer work helping homeless children in school systems nationwide. Nelson further explained that she noticed different activities, training camps, and community events for children that Gray posted on social media, mentioning the role that Gray plays in getting youth active outdoors, helped her make the decision.

"I reached out to him (Gray), and just got to talking to him, and it just seems like he has dedicated his life to this cause," Nelson said.

Gray is personal trainer who provides mentorship, coaching, community out-



Recipients of The President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award celebrate with Ambassador/Pastor Lenora Wimberly- Peter, state Sen. Donzella James, Dr. Pastor Janice Barnett-Adams and Sherri Nelson on the steps of the Georgia State Capitol Building in Atlanta, Ga. on January 18, 2017. Kenneth Gray, a resident of Anne Arundel County, was one of 45 volunteers who were honored for their contributions and commitment to their communities. Courtesy Photos

reach, fundraising, and sports clinics and camps, through his youth athletic program, under his company, Dominant Force. He said that empowering others to better their lives is important. As the vice president of the Meade Senior High School Alumni Association, Gray has helped to raise money for homeless students to provide basic necessities, food, and clothing for Meade Senior High School on an ongoing basis. The self-proclaimed "world coach" said he wants to unify local government, schools, and individuals together to accomplish goals.

"I think if you take care of the kids, everything is going to follow," Gray said. "I am just doing what I love, and it has probably been over 25 years."

The presidential award provides recognition at gold, silver, and bronze levels of service achievement, in addition to lifetime achievement. One lifetime achievement award requirement is completing 4,000 hours or more of community service. According to www.presidentialserviceawards.gov, the

President's Volunteer Service Award is an initiative of the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) and is administered by Points of Light—the largest organization in the world dedicated to volunteer service.

Awards are issued to individuals, families and groups who meet various eligibility requirements. Hours are measured over a 12-month period and awards are designated based on cumulative hours. Although volunteers may not seek recognition for their good deeds, their powerful messages may encourage others to take action. Nelson added that recognition can also be used to encourage youth to do more in the community.

"By this being the highest award that you can get from the president as a civilian, the prestige of this award alone opens doors within itself," Nelson said. "And also by [Gray] receiving this



Kenneth Gray, recipient of The President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award

award...he can then nominate some children who are doing excellent community work, because for some reason, we forget about the children that are actually taking their time, when they could be doing other things."

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PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Project #1265 Project and Construction
Management Assistance on Water Con-
tract 1211 for the Ashburton Reservoir
Finished Water Tanks**

The Baltimore City Office of Boards and Commissions has been requested by the Department of Public Works, Office of Engineering and Construction, to certify the qualifications of engineering firms to provide Project and Construction Management Assistance on Water Contract 1211 – Ashburton Reservoir Zone 2 Tanks.

The Quality Assurance services to be provided are generally in accordance with the US Army Core of Engineers CQM program and include, but are not limited to assisting the City Office of Engineering and Construction with construction monitoring and inspection, preparation of daily reports, maintenance of project records and documentation, review of contractor's application for payment, attendance at progress meetings, preparation of record drawings, review of contract claims and support documents, estimating, scheduling, quality control, project engineering, constructability reviews, submittal reviews and responses, RFI reviews and responses, and other contract documents.

- Experience in Construction of Finished Water storage tanks with a minimum storage volume of 15 MG.
- Experience in development and implementation of a Construction Project Management program.
- Familiarity with standard construction inspection procedures and requirement for civil, Structural, Mechanical, and Electrical disciplines, and SCADA system installation and implementation.
- Familiarity with applicable codes and standards.
- Experience with change orders and claims analysis.
- Ability to provide field inspection and experience with controlled rock blasting as a means of excavation.
- Experience with Critical Path Method construction scheduling.
- Overall team approach with Minority/Women Business Enterprises.
- Experience with Primavera Contract Man-

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agement version 14 project tracking software

- Experience with Primavera version 6 scheduling software.

Project fees have been estimated at \$5,500,000.00 for a period of 6 years. If further information is required regarding this request, please contact Mr. Gurminder Singh at 410-396-5385.

Projects must comply with the 2006 edition of "The Specifications for Materials, Highways, Bridges, Utilities and Incidental Structures". City personnel will utilize the City of Baltimore Guidelines for the Performance Evaluation of Design Consultants and Construction Contractors for this contract/project.

Firms interested in submitting a proposal for this Project, shall address a "Letter of Interest" to the Office of Boards and Commissions, 4 South Frederick Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, Maryland 21215 (Email obc.consultants@baltimorecity.gov). Since these letters are utilized to assist small minority and women business enterprises in identifying potential teaming partners, the letter should be submitted within five (5) days of the date of the project's advertisement. The letter should contain a contact person. Failure to submit a "letter of Interest" will not disqualify a firm submitting a proposal for the project.

Each prime consultant applying for this Project will be required to complete and submit an original Federal Form 255, along with **five (5)** copies, to the Office of Boards and Commissions. The Federal Form 255 and the five copies must be submitted on or before 12:00 P.M. (Noon) on **Monday, February 27, 2017**. Submittals may not be accepted after this deadline.

Prequalification Requirement

All architectural, engineering, and surveying firms listed in the specific proposal for the Project must be prequalified by the Office of Boards and Commissions for each applicable discipline at time of submittal for this Project. Information regarding the prequalification process can be obtained by calling the Office of Boards and Commissions on 410.396.6883.

Insurance Requirements

The consultant selected for the award of this

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project shall provide professional liability, auto liability, and general liability and workers' compensation insurances as required by the City of Baltimore.

MBE/WBE Certification

It is the policy of the City of Baltimore to promote equal business opportunity in the City's contracting process. Pursuant to Article 5, Subtitle 28 of Baltimore City Code (2000 Edition) – Minority and Women's Business Program, Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) participation goals apply to this contract.

The MBE goal is **27%**
The WBE goal is **10%**

Both the proposed Minority and Women's Business Enterprise firms must be named and identified as an MBE or WBE within Item 6 of the Standard Form (SF) 255 in the spaces provided for identifying outside key consultants/associates anticipated for utilization for this project.

Verifying Certification

Each firm submitting a SF 255 for consideration for a project is responsible for verifying that all MBEs and WBEs to be utilized on the project are certified by the Minority and Women's Business Opportunity Office (MWBOO) prior to submitting the proposal. A directory of certified MBEs and WBEs is available from MWBOO. Since changes to the directory occur daily, firms submitting SF 255s should call MWBOO at (410) 396-4355 to verify certification, expiration dates and services that the MBE or WBE is certified to provide.

Non-Affiliation

A firm submitting a proposal may not use an MBE or WBE to meet a contract goal if:

1. The firm has a financial interest in the MBE or WBE
2. The firm has an interest in the ownership or control of the MBE or WBE
3. The firm is significantly involved in the operation of the MBE or WBE (Article 5 subtitle 28-41).

Additional Requirements

A firm submitting as a prime consultant that

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fails to comply with the requirements of Article 5, Subtitle 28 of Baltimore City Code when executing a contract is subject to the following penalties: suspension of a contract; withholding of funds; rescission of contract based on material breach; disqualification as a consultant from eligibility to provide services to the City for a period not to exceed 2 years; and payment for damages incurred by the City.

A resume for each person listed as key personnel and/or specialist, including those from MBE and WBE firms, must be shown on the page provided within the application.

Please be advised that for the purpose of reviewing price proposals and invoices, the City of Baltimore defines a principal of a firm as follows:

A principal is any individual owning 5% or more of the outstanding stock of an entity, a partner of a partnership, a 5% or more shareholder of a sub-chapter 'S' Corporation, or an individual owner.

Out-of-State Corporations must identify their corporate resident agent within the application.

Firms will not be considered for a specific project if they apply as both a sub-consultant and prime consultant.

The applications for this Project (Form 255) cannot be supplemented with any additional information such as graphs, photographs, organization chart, etc. All such information should be incorporated into the appropriate pages. Applications should not be bound. Applications should simply be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Cover sheets should not be included. Inclusion and/or submittal of additional material may result in the applicant being disqualified from consideration for this project.

Failure to follow directions of this advertisement or the application may cause disqualification of the submittal.

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **FAP NO. STP-3065(14)E; SHA NO. BC410016 BALTIMORE CITY NO. TR11318 KEY HIGHWAY AT LIGHT STREET INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. **March 1, 2017**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge at the Department of Public Works Service Center located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 as of **January 27, 2017** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$150.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractor's Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 S. Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on this project are A02602 Bituminous Concrete Paving and D02620 Curbs, Gutters, Sidewalks. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$5,000,000.00 to \$10,000,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted at **10:00 A.M. on February 10, 2017** at 417 E. Fayette Street, Charles L. Benton Building, Richard Chen Conference Room, 7th Floor. Principal Items of work for this project are Superpave Asphalt Mix 25.0 MM for Base, PG64S-22, Level 2 – 3,500 TONS, Conventionally Reinforced Portland Cement Concrete Pavement Repairs Type I, Mix No. 9 – 2,000 SY, and 6" Graded Aggregate Base Course – 9,000 SY. The DBE goal is **26%**. APPROVED: Bernice H. Taylor, Clerk Board of Estimates

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Give the gift of history to the children in your family

America's youth are suffering from a "history deficit."

Washington, D.C.— Those "gotcha" moments on television when a young passersby is asked to name the first president of the United States and responds with a quizzical look may be funny but that exposes the fact that American youngsters suffer from a history deficit.

"It's the reason the Grateful American Book Prize was created," said David Bruce Smith, co-founder of the award. "The Prize encourages authors and publishers to produce more works of historically accurate fiction and non-fiction for young learners and we feel compelled to encourage parents and grandparents to give the gift of history to the children in their lives this holiday season."

Numerous studies have shown school children have a discouraging lack of knowledge of American history. Too many of them don't know even the basic facts about our nation's past, about the events that shaped America, the people who founded the country and those who built it, creating the world's first superpower. One survey of elementary school children revealed that 25 percent believed Columbus sailed to America sometime after 1750— not 1492.

Author and publisher Smith teamed up with Dr. Bruce Cole, former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, to establish the Grateful American Book Prize. It's the first award of its kind that offers an incentive for new writers and established authors to focus on historically accurate books for chil-



dren, novels and biographies that can bring history to life for kids.

"Our children are not stupid so there must be another reason for the widespread and appalling lack of the basic knowledge of who, why and how the nation was founded. If you ask the students, they are apt to tell you that history class is boring, that they don't get the connection between what happened then and what is happening now, and that history books are dull. Perhaps, the real reason is that many schools don't even have history classes anymore; they cover that base nowadays with Social Studies and/or Civics classes using texts that provide the facts but do little to spark an interest in history," Smith said.

Perhaps, since we live in an age when the focus of education is on science, technology, engineering and mathematics—the so-called STEM subjects— history takes a back seat in the classroom, according to Smith.

"Some say it's critical that we teach young learners 'practical' subjects so they'll be competitive in the Global Economy of the 21st Century. That may be so, but as education consultant Robert Pondiscio put it: 'Many Americans have forgotten we have public schools so students can become educated citizens capable of self-government.'"

Smith notes that the odd thing is that as kids grow older, particularly when they are out of school, many develop a hankering for the past. They seek out history-based films and, more important, books about historical places, figures and accomplishments.

Here's what one young woman who was "bored" in history class said: "Since I left school I have become pretty good at reading lots of historical novels. It's because they are more interesting. If I had done this while still at school, I think that my marks would have been heaps better."

It makes sense, Smith remarked, "The books she read were engaging; they roused her curiosity and dusted up her desire to learn more about the historical characters and places in those novels. Her regret is that she didn't start reading while she was in school. And, that shows us that there is a way of encouraging students to embrace history class: give them a good read. So, when you go shopping for holiday gifts this year, don't just go to the toy store; make a stop at your local book store while you are at it."

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