

Def Jam Records signs Baltimore trio Riplay



(L-r): A'laiza Hebron, aka "Lay; Kiya Hawthorne, aka "Ki," and Marshaye Hebron, aka "Shay," came together to form the group known as "Riplay." Def Jam Records signed the Baltimore R&B Pop girl group who received extensive training and preparation under the tutelage of executives from Phantom Boyz Records in New York. The trio is on a tour of schools in Baltimore, Virginia and Washington to help encourage other young individuals about the dangers of bullying and the importance of building self-esteem. (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photo

Let your comeback be stronger than your setback!

By Nikki Abraham, The Nucleus Team, Positively Caviar, Inc.

When things don't tend to go your way you are ultimately left with two options: give up and throw in the towel or lift your head up and overcome.

Giving up and letting go of your dreams will leave you with the mindset that you are unable to accomplish your set goals. Figuring out how to overcome will prove to the "naysayers" and to you that you are able to fulfill the destiny that you were put here on earth to accomplish.

Here are a few ways to set yourself up for a comeback in the midst of trials and tribulations:

Grow through what you go through. Struggle is inevitable. It's important to realize that it's not about what you are going through but how you are growing through. I find so much inspiration from stories about people who have had difficulties in their life but still manage to end up on top. How your life prevails is not about what happens to you, it's how

you react to it. Life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you react to it. Ask yourself if you are learning from your setbacks and becoming a better person because of it.

If at first you don't succeed dust yourself off and try again. Late R&B songstress, Aaliyah said it best. Things will not always go your way. You may not always get the #1 spot. Letting defeat keep you from reaching your goals is only doing a disservice to yourself. We were not put on this earth to be second best so don't stop trying for the #1 spot. Study your craft and find the areas that you feel need more work and take the necessary steps needed to crush your goals. It's always possible! The end result will be an overall reflection of your time and effort. You get out what you put in. Give it your all every time and you will never fail.

Push yourself— no one is going to do it for you. A lot of people are fortunate enough to have people in their corner providing the motivation to reach the top spot. While encouragement means



"The Nucleus" (left to right) Jean Claude Louis-Charles III, Shayma Sulaiman, Nikki Abraham and Chazz Scott
Courtesy Photo

everything, you will quickly realize that no one in the world will hold your hand and take the necessary steps to success for you. Encourage yourself, and approach every situation as if it's sink or swim. Think about the Oprahs and Jay-Zs of the world who were not born with a silver spoon in their mouths but still managed to make it to the top. Other people may not understand your vision and they don't have to. Keep your ultimate goal in mind and be your own motivation.

When the caterpillar thought its life was over it began to fly. You may think it's over? No, my friend, it's just getting started. Sometimes you experience your ultimate pitfall before you end up on top. I've had moments when I felt like I

wanted to drop off the face of the earth. Hey, we are all human. I'm not saying that the punch in the gut feeling won't happen but it's important to realize it doesn't have to end there.

Continue to make decisions in life that will ultimately lead you down the road to success. So, stick to the fight when you're hardest hit. It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Don't delay, sign-up for Affordable Healthcare today!

*By Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.)
Chairman, Democratic Faith Working Group*

The deadline to enroll or modify healthcare coverage under the Affordable Care Act is December 22, 2017 in Maryland. So, time is running out!

Despite what you may have heard, the Affordable Care Act is still the law of the land, and everyone must have health insurance or pay a penalty. Go to www.healthcare.gov to find a plan that works for you. Don't delay, enroll today.

Congress enacted the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to ensure all Americans have access to affordable quality healthcare, which ought to be a basic human right. Since becoming law, the ACA has provided health insurance for more than 20 million people who did not have it before its passage.

When Congress was considering the Affordable Care Act, I spoke on the House floor and called the legislation the "Civil Rights Act of the 21st Century." I gave it that moniker, because the ACA outlaws discrimination against sick people and their families. It outlaws discrimination against women, closes the Medicare "donut hole" and allows adults up to age 26 to stay on their parents' policies. I strongly believe that access to affordable, high-quality healthcare should be a right for all, not a privilege solely for the wealthy and well-connected.

Despite the current administration's ongoing attempts to undermine the law, sign-ups for 2018 have outpaced most expert predictions. To date, more than 2.5 million Americans have already chosen plans. This is a great showing and proves Americans want affordable health care. Discounts and subsidies are still in place and may be better than last year. In fact, 80 percent of healthcare.gov enrollees will be able to purchase a plan for \$75 or less per month.

As the Chairman of the Democratic Faith Working Group in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have been working with faith groups from across the country to spread the word and articulate the good work about the ACA. This outreach has engaged the faith community in promoting sign-ups during this open enrollment period through our "Souls 2 Enroll" outreach effort and other engagement activities. We need to build on this record of success in the remaining days of Open Enrollment.

Time is running out for you to enroll in the Affordable Care Act. If you have questions or need help, there are many people willing to assist you. Go to the website, www.healthcare.gov or you may be able to find in-person help in your area at <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov/#/> to shop for plans and sign up. You can also call the marketplace call center at 1-800-318-2596. Don't be left without health insurance— get covered today!

U.S. House Assistant Democratic Leader James E. Clyburn represents South Carolina's 6th congressional district. In Congress, he serves as the Chair of the Democratic Faith Working Group. Follow him on Twitter at @Clyburn.

Editor's Note: The Open Enrollment period for Marylanders to sign up for insurance through the federal Affordable Care Act has been extended to Friday, December 22, 2017. HealthCare Access Maryland has navigators who can assist consumers in locations throughout the region. Consumers can find all locations and extended hours at www.hcamaryland.org, or by calling 410-500-4710 or 855-288-3667. Spanish-language assistance is available. Consumers can also go onto the state's online exchange to learn about and sign up for insurance: Maryland Health Connection (<https://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov/>)



Community Affairs

FAFSA Forward Workshop to help City Schools Seniors and Families with College Financial Aid Process

Baltimore— Demystifying how to pay for college and how to access financial aid is the goal of a free workshop, which will be held Saturday, December 16, 2017 at the War Memorial Building, 101 N. Gay Street in downtown Baltimore from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This free event for parents and high school seniors is sponsored by the Office of the Mayor of Baltimore, Baltimore City Public Schools, the Fund for Educational Excellence and Baltimore's Promise.

Baltimore City Community College along with Coppin State University, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola University, Maryland Institute College of Art, Morgan State University, the University of Baltimore and the University of Maryland, Baltimore, will have representatives on site.

"We are doing everything we can to create opportunities for our young people. I want every high school student in Baltimore to know you can go to college

and cost does not have to be a barrier," says Mayor Catherine E. Pugh. "The FAFSA Forward workshop is the first step to helping students and parents complete federal financial aid forms, and learn about colleges and resources available to them as Baltimore City residents."

The event focuses on educating and assisting parents with the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form, which colleges and universities use to determine how much financial aid applicants qualify for. Students and families can meet with financial aid officers and volunteers to get answers to questions and help with completing FAFSA forms. Participants should bring documentation that includes both their taxed and untaxed income for 2016 in order to complete the FAFSA form.

March 1, 2018 is the priority deadline for determining how much aid applicants can receive from the State of Maryland. A panel discussion on paying for college and the college application process will be facilitated by the Fund for Educational Excellence.

For more information, visit <http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/FAFSA>.

Racism in the workplace and the whitewashing of the #MeToo Movement

By **Julianne Malveaux**
NNPA Newswire Columnist

Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) was the first member of the Congressional Black Caucus to leave his job after the “MeToo” hashtag galvanized women to speak up about sexual misconduct, harassment and more. Too bad that impetus did not float up to the top, where an avowed grabber of women’s genitals occupies the White House.

It’s also unfortunate, that members of Congress have paid sexual assault accusers out of a taxpayer-funded slush fund have not been unmasked. We know some of the names. Texas Congressman Blake Farenthold (R-Texas) arranged to have his former communications director paid \$84,000 (a fraction of the \$27,000 Conyers is said to have paid). Farenthold has not resigned, nor have Congressional Republicans called for his resignation, including Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wis.). Farenthold said he will pay the money back. Yeah, right.

As a woman, I am cheered by the #MeToo movement, although I am also

annoyed by the myopia about women of color and sexual harassment, assault and rape. In 1944, Recy Taylor was viciously raped by seven white men who never paid a price. Civil rights icon Rosa Parks was an NAACP investigator in this case, as chronicled by Danielle McGuire in her book, “At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power.”

by the you know what, etc.) makes me wonder when there will be a similar groundswell against racism and racial harassment in the workplace. Numerous cases of nooses being displayed in workplaces have been reported in the last decade, so many that a law journal published an article titled, “Does One Noose in the Workplace Constitute a Hostile Work Environment? If Not, How Many?” One isolated incident is not enough, the article opines. What about

amazing, as documented by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. Surely, there is no shortage of highly qualified African Americans and Latinos who could work on Capitol Hill. Why aren’t members of Congress calling each other on their racial myopia?

Perhaps racism and racial harassment are a little more complicated than sexism and sexual harassment. Half of the population, after all, is female, and while women make the slow climb up the hierarchy in corporate America, politics, the media and entertainment, the pace has been steady enough that powerful women are now able to call men out on their misbehavior, with women demanding resignations of (some) misbehaving men. However, too few white women and men have been willing to apply the same “zero tolerance” to employment matters regarding race.

There should never be another noose laid on a black employee’s desk or displayed in a workplace. There should never be another intimidating Confederate flag flying in a black person’s face. There should never be another opportunity for an employee (or fellow student or faculty member) to talk about picking cotton. There should never be another blackface performance, anywhere; and there should never be another person who talks about zero tolerance around workplace sexism to accept any whisper of workplace racism.

Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, and Founder of Economic Education. Her latest book “Are We Better Off: Race, Obama and Public Policy” is available at amazon.com. For more info, visit: www.juliannemalveaux.com. Follow Dr. Malveaux on Twitter @dr-jlastword.

I’m not ever, ever, ever going to excuse sexual perfidy and more in the workplace, but I do wonder why we can wink, nod and grin about racial workplace misbehavior while we stand our ground about gender. I wonder why so many say accept the “just kidding,” or “I didn’t know” excuse when people are racially insensitive but are now willing to hold press conferences and speak out against sexism in the workplace.

The first case in which the Supreme Court ruled that sexual harassment was a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was brought by Michelle Vinson, an African American woman, in the case Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson (1986). The high-profile, white women who are talking about workplace sexual harassment and assault really need to acknowledge the many ways that African American women have been systematically abused, and systematically ignored (and sometimes conspired against) by their white “sisters.”

Perhaps I quibble, but this overwhelming stand against sexual misconduct and beyond (getting nude in front of your staff, forcible kissing, grabbing women

one unwanted kiss or one abusive grope? Why do nooses get to be seen as “jokes,” while unwanted kissing is seen as an occurrence of zero tolerance?

I’m not ever, ever, ever going to excuse sexual perfidy (and more) in the workplace, but I do wonder why we can wink, nod and grin about racial workplace misbehavior while we stand our ground about gender. I wonder why so many say accept the “just kidding,” or “I didn’t know” excuse when people are racially insensitive but are now willing to hold press conferences and speak out against sexism in the workplace. If you look at the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, the paucity of people of color as senior staffers is

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times

2513 N. Charles Street

Baltimore, MD 21218

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

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Bearded Brothers of Baltimore create calendar to benefit cancer survivors

By Andrea Blackstone

According to “Statistics at a Glance: The Burden of Cancer in the United States” from the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health, an estimated 1,685,210 new cases of cancer would be diagnosed in the United States, and 595,690 people would die from the disease in 2016. Additionally, the number of people living beyond a cancer diagnosis is expected to rise to almost 19 million by 2024.

Reportedly, the overall cancer death rate has declined and the number of cancer survivors has increased.

When individuals are diagnosed with cancer, some patients may benefit from hearing the stories of survivors who understand the emotional or physical difficulties that they face.

Professional photographer and videographer from Baltimore, Milton Lawrence, Jr. is trying to bridge this gap by connecting cancer patients with positive stories, where survival and courage are intertwined.

Lawrence has made a noteworthy career out of documenting and capturing untold stories— in locations near and

far— with creativity and detail. Beyond Lawrence’s day-to-day clients, he utilizes his skill set to support cancer patients through his nonprofit organization, “Lyfesavers.”

Through The Lyfesavers Project, he combines photography, video and interviews with makeovers to uplift individuals who have been personally touched by cancer. The overall mission of the nonprofit is to highlight the stories of current cancer survivors in an effort to inspire other cancer sufferers to continue the fight, according to Lawrence.

“The Lyfesavers Project was designed to create makeovers for terminal and stage IV cancer sufferers. The makeovers are for both men and women [but] to date, we’ve only done (makeovers and interviews of) women,” Lawrence said. “Lyfesavers started off as a project for about five years, and now it is an official nonprofit 501(c)(3).”

Lawrence further explained that the stories of cancer survivors are told by utilizing a video “docuseries” style and the features are presented through YouTube and Facebook. A creative team handles hair, makeup and wardrobe, while he photographs the subjects and

serves as producer.

Lawrence says that he wants to produce at least one show a month.

To support The Lyfesavers Project, a 2018 calendar release and gallery showcase fundraiser will be held at 235 Holiday Street in Baltimore City at Studio 4, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on December 28, 2017. As a part of the event, Lawrence, a “bearded man” is capitalizing on the facial hair fashion trend by highlighting other men who want to help to do something good in the community.

“The Bearded Brothers of Baltimore are a group of bearded men entrepreneurs [who] have teamed up with me to help me to raise funds for The Lyfesavers Project, and so we’ve produced a 2018 calendar,” Lawrence said. “Our goal is to use this calendar to raise funds so that we can continue to do more makeovers for The Lyfesavers Project.”

Stage IV colorectal cancer survivor Trina Taylor explained that she used the Lyfesavers platform to tell her story and to give others hope.

While scrolling through Facebook, Taylor found another survivor’s story featured by Lyfesavers. She wanted to know more about the organization, so



Professional photographer and videographer Milton Lawrence, Jr. of Baltimore is the founder of The Lyfesaver Project
Courtesy Photo

she sent a message to Lawrence through Facebook. He replied and was excited about becoming a vessel for her to give life to her cancer story through photography and videography. She felt empowered and renewed, in addition to gaining some peace from sharing her story.

“Lyfesavers afforded me an opportunity to be a voice for others having a hard time keeping their faith and hope. The circulation on social media of my Lyfesaver’s video exposed me to numerous opportunities, such as speaking engagements, photo shoots, magazine articles, panel discussions and the list goes on,” Taylor said. “The Lyfesavers beauty makeover and photo shoot reinvented my spirit [and helped] me feel whole again. I finally was able to show the world my ‘new normal’— living with cancer. It was so much more than a photo shoot— it was a new beginning.”

Taylor’s testament sums up the potential impact of Lawrence’s positive vibe and beat cancer movement.

To learn more about the upcoming fundraiser featuring the Bearded Brothers of Baltimore, or to purchase tickets, visit: www.beardedbrothersofbaltimore.com.

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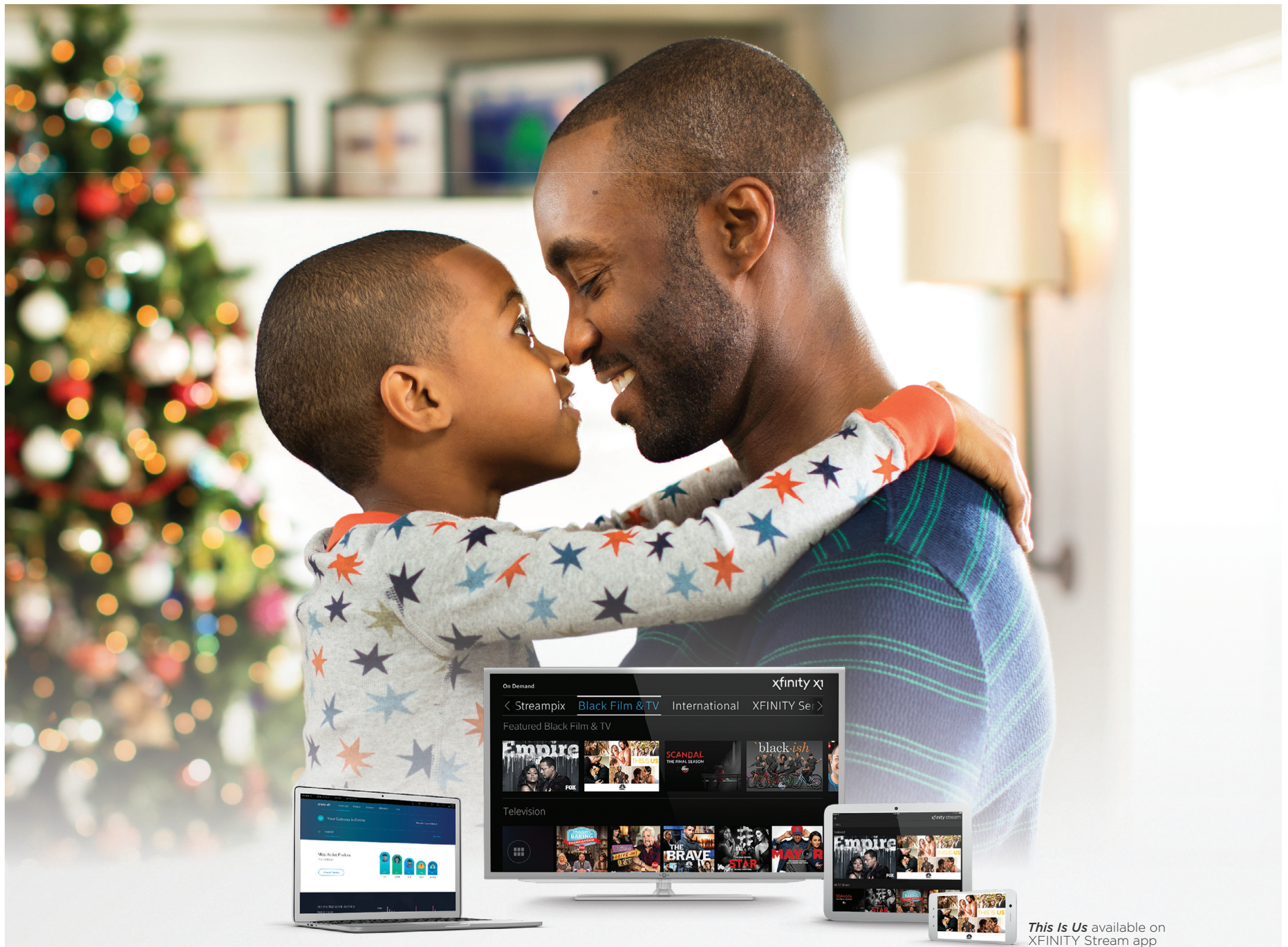
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Def Jam Records signs Baltimore Trio, Riplay

By Stacy M. Brown

They are young sisters from Baltimore with a very mature and universal message. Marshaye Hebron, aka “Shay,” younger sister A’laiza Hebron, aka “Lay,” and Kiya Hawthorne, aka “Ki,” who are between the age of 15 and 17, have joined together to form the music group, “Riplay.”

The trio is on a tour of schools in Baltimore, Virginia and Washington to help encourage other young individuals about the dangers of bullying and the importance of building self-esteem.

Shay, Lay and Ki also are Def Jam Records newest artists, having signed with the legendary label this year after extensive training and preparation under the tutelage of executives from Phantom Boyz Records in New York.

Their new single, “STATUS,” has been among the most downloaded songs this year, underscoring the unique talent that’s allowed them to quickly rise in the ultra-competitive music business.

“Things are going really great and we’re enjoying every bit of this,” said Lay, who noted she is inspired by Erykah Badu and Beyoncé. “I think it’s great for other young girls to see how far we’ve come especially now that we’ve signed with Def Jam because they can see that, if we can make it from Baltimore, they can too.”

Ki, who says she is inspired by the late Whitney Houston and singer Kehlani, noted that their music contains messages of inspiration for others.

“We want to help people. There’s a lot of bullying going on and it’s a lot that people still need to know,” Ki said. “There’s still a lot of people who don’t want to be alive because of bullying and because of being picked on and a lot of



R&B girl group, Riplay from Baltimore has been lauded by Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh for their Anti-Bullying and Self-Esteem campaign with a special certificate for their work. (Left to right) Lay, Ki and Shay. Courtesy Photo/Riplay

our songs are about what we’ve been through and we want people to know that we also have gone through things and still go through stuff so they can relate to us.”

Reviewers have already chimed in. Some say that Shay brings a style of hip hop to the group that reflects one of her idols the late Lisa “Left Eye” Lopez while Lay brings a soft soothing sound that sets the tone for the group and with her funky image she makes a bold statement.

Ki is known by the group to bring the soul in the power behind the sound. As a group, Riplay aims to recreate the blueprint of some of the girl groups before them that they mirror such as TLC and SWV, said another reviewer.

“Their charming rapport is hard to

miss, and the result is a nostalgic, radio-friendly sound that’s a winning balance of sweet and street,” a music expert at SKOPE Magazine wrote. “They’ve had no problem finding an audience, either, with their videos racking up millions of views online.”

Riplay was discovered by Ivory of Low Key Music Group and he brought the group to Melvin “Official” Watson, CEO and founder of Phantom Boyz Music.

Since signing with Phantom Boyz, Riplay’s video “Strange,” has gone viral netting more than 3.2 million views on Facebook.

Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh has even lauded the group’s Anti-Bullying and Self-Esteem campaign, awarding them a special certificate for their work.

The group has also been featured in various urban magazines and on television in Washington.

“We started off practicing and just writing songs, and we kept writing and kept practicing and Phantom Boyz worked with us to help develop us and brought us to Def Jam and now we’re just excited to be doing this together,” Lay said.

The group also promised to “keep it real” and not stray from their anti-bullying and self-esteem message.

“It’s so important because we can relate,” Ki said. “It’s also important that our message to women who might look for the attention of men as a way of validation is that we just want them to know that it’s important that they love themselves first.”

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Meet Consultant Karenthia A. Barber:

Helping Organizations Run More Efficiently

By Ursula V. Battle

There is an old saying, "Behind every man is a good woman." However, when it comes to organizational development, one local entrepreneur has her clients saying, "Behind every good business or manager is a 'Karenthia A. Barber.'"

"I help organizations and individuals become more efficient," said Barber. "People do the best they can with what they have. However, sometimes people just don't have the support, training and development they need to be successful. That's where I come in."

Barber is highly sought after for her expertise in the areas of leadership; supervision; conflict; communication; customer service; community engagement; cultural competency; change management; strategic planning; teambuilding; and workplace violence prevention.

"I have been doing this for 25 years," said the consultant. "The goal is to get an organization that has a high level of chaos, and see that it becomes a high-functioning organization. I believe God has gifted me to be able to access situations and develop remedies and strategies."

Barber provides a wide range of organizational development and training services, including workshops, facilitating focus groups, seminars, motivational speaking, staff retreats and coaching for corporate and non-profit organizations around the country. According to Barber, she has a long list of state and federal clients, which include the Social Security Administration, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and US Postal Service.

Marcel Malloy serves as superintendent for the Real Operations Control Center (ROCC) for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

"In 2014, I was promoted to Lieutenant and Assistant Superintendent in the ROCC, which is considered as the second largest transportation system in America for commuting," said Malloy. "I wanted some training in mid-level management, and was able to get Ms. Barber as my coach. At that time, I was



Karenthia A. Barber is a consultant, and provides a wide range of organizational and developmental services for corporate and non-profit organizations around the country. Courtesy Photo

responsible for 30 direct personnel reports. I needed help getting my message across effectively. Ms. Barber helped me to take a step back, and access all I was dealing with and how to address it."

Malloy added, "She helped me and my team by coaching me to be an effective manager and leader. I disseminated the coaching and leadership she provided me down to the team. She really showed me how to redirect my skills from being a manager to being a leader and team player with compassion for those you manage. That all helped me to become a great leader in the organization."

Since that time, Malloy says he has been recognized as a safety manager, received numerous awards, and several promotions leading up to his most recent post.

"All of that came about as a result of the assistance of Ms. Barber," said Malloy.

Since 2008, Barber has served on the Board of Trustees for the Maryland Au-

tomobile Insurance Fund (MAIF). In 2014, she became MAIF's first female chair. She recently received the 'Gold Leadership Award' from Leadership Maryland for her leadership in the state.

"I was humbled and honored to receive this award," said Barber. "Service is part of my DNA. It's a tremendous honor to be recognized for the things I do naturally. It is so important for those

of us who have been tremendously blessed to do our part to make a difference in our communities."

Barber received her undergraduate education at the University of Pittsburgh and completed her graduate studies at Penn State University. Last year, the *Daily Record* named her as one of its 'Top 100 Women'. She is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., The Baltimore (MD) Links, Inc., and serves as President of the Ednor Gardens-Lakeside Civic Association and as Second Vice-Chair of the Baltimore Democratic Central Committee.

"My 92-year-old-mother was very active in the community, and is my role model," said Barber. "As a child, she always had us handing out something. That was the inspiration and the blueprint for me."

Barber's memberships include the American Society For Training and Development, Women In Communications, and National Association of Female Executives.

"I believe the true measure of success is helping others," said Barber. "While I have impacted the lives of thousands of people through training and consulting, there are many more lives for me to touch. There is so much need out there. The climate right now in this country has given rise to a lot of that. Companies need someone like me to come in and to do some introspection to get them where they need to be."

To contact Barber, call (410) 963-6166 or send an email to kbmotivator4u@aol.com.

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Fashion Mogul Rolls out Dress Campaign for Girls

By Stacy M. Brown

For the next few months, Sam Sisakhti will be traveling around the country delivering holiday dresses to underprivileged girls while also bringing in motivational speakers to lecture the recipients about cyber-bullying and positive body image.

The tour, which includes a stop in Baltimore, is part of “The Believe in Yourself Project,” a nonprofit founded by Sisakhti dedicated to providing new, unworn designer dresses for girls to wear to holiday affairs and later, to school-related functions.

“I operate a marketplace where fashion designers upload their products for sale on my site. Over the years I would receive samples from my designers and I used to give the products to celebrities but eventually I thought that I should make better use of the clothing,” Sisakhti said, explaining how he started the nonprofit.

Sisakhti, the founder of UsTrendy, the world’s largest fashion marketplace for young women and juniors, added that he started going into low-income areas and dropping off the dresses.

The organization targets low-income



Sam Sisakhti (center) founded “The Believe in Yourself Project,” a nonprofit dedicated to providing new, unworn designer dresses for girls to wear to holiday affairs and later, to school-related functions. Courtesy Photo

areas and works with after school centers and Boys & Girls Clubs to host events where the dresses are handed out.

Sisakhti says that he is seeking to raise

awareness for speakers and mentors who would want to contribute locally.

“We do this year round so we provide dresses for whatever maybe going on at the time,” he said. “In the fall, we did back-to-school dresses and homecoming dresses. In the winter, we do holiday dresses and New Year’s Eve party dresses and in the spring, we [will] do prom dresses.”

The efforts were appreciated, Sisakhti said.

“With the holidays coming up there is so much emphasis on shopping with little consideration for the fact that some families can’t afford an extravagant holiday shopping season, so I wanted to deliver holiday and New Year’s Eve dresses to underprivileged girls during holidays,” Sisakhti said.

Many female teens are up against unobtainable social standards, which are not only unhealthy, but oftentimes unaffordable, Sisakhti noted. In an effort to close that gap, the “Believe in Yourself” project is dedicated to the gainful advancement and strengthening of young women with a gift of confidence.

The organization believes that every

young woman should feel confident regardless of her physicality or financial circumstances and the project seeks to reverse some of the negative messages that are prevalent today and change them to one of positivity to help young girls believe in themselves, according to Sisakhti.

“Each shopping season, there is so much emphasis on shopping, with very little consideration for the reality that many girls from low-income families cannot afford to partake in extravagant shopping,” he said. “To combat this, Believe in Yourself donates brand new dresses to these families. We make donations all throughout the year for various special occasions coming up.”

Currently, Sisakhti purchases dresses from vendors who sell on his website and other retailers but he hopes that some of the businesses will simply donate dresses. The plan is to begin delivering as many as 10,000 dresses over the next year.

“We hope to come to Baltimore within the next few months. We are actively looking for speakers and mentors in the area, so if you are interested in speaking to the girls during the donation please reach out to us,” Sisakhti said.

Additionally, since Sisakhti has become increasingly concerned about cyber-bullying and wants to do something about that as well.

The rise in the number of incidences in cyber-bullying have inspired him to recruit speakers and mentors to be part of the ‘Believe in Yourself’ project. The mentors will provide the girls with tips and strategies to deal with cyber-bully and inspire and encourage them to pursue their dreams.

The plan is that the mentorship programs and online seminars will be interactive with open table discussions where influential women from the community will address topics like positive body image, cyber bullying, the importance of education and other life skills.

For more information, visit <http://www.believeinyourself.org>

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Holiday Meals:

Invitation to Sedation, True or False?

By Mary Beth Sodus RD/LDN
Registered Dietitian & Medical
Nutrition Therapist, University of
Maryland Medical System Midtown
Campus

Holiday tables are loaded with traditional, family-favorite foods. Remarkably, it is the time of the year when the most calories are consumed! The downside is that with all its excess of fat, alcohol, and overeating, the holidays can easily become an ‘invitation to sedation.’ Reports suggest that the average person can ingest 3,500 calories or more per meal; that many calories in one meal can easily cause a ‘food hangover’ and weight gain. Studies state that many people gain 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year’s.

Isn’t it crazy that we continue to eat those yummy holiday foods long after our stomachs have begun to shout “ENOUGH?!”

The reason we do so is because our taste buds and brain short-circuit from the overload, causing us to eat more and more of that salty, sweet and fatty fare, until we are so stuffed that we cannot easily breathe, may feel suffocated, and our pants are just too tight!

Not only that, but family holiday meals are a social occasion, and when friends are overeating, we tend to overeat as well. Then we zone out, and what started out as a festive family affair soon turns into a failure to connect!

Let’s try to better understand what’s going on here, and come up with a game plan that will leave us happy, healthy and fulfilled, rather than just ‘filled up.’ Food hangovers have THREE main triggers: Fat, Alcohol and Overeating.

1. Fat: It takes a great deal of energy to deal with fat; blood flow gets diverted to the digestive system instead of the brain, and leaves one feeling sluggish and numb.

2. Alcohol: Downing too many fancy alcoholic drinks, especially the ones made with juice (like Aunt Mabel’s famous holiday punch), or even having a few glasses of sweet wine, will impair



one’s judgment and add a lot of sugar to one’s meal. Alcohol is also a depressant and can cause an unwanted feeling of drowsiness. Furthermore, alcohol is dehydrating, which may cause you to misinterpret thirst as hunger.

3. Overeating: Overeating can cause feelings of heaviness, fatigue, headaches, insomnia, and constipation. It is important to know that overeating is a habit and one that is easily passed on to our kids. Even if a child starts out with good eating habits, he or she will ultimately learn to ignore and mistrust his or her feelings of hunger and satiety when observing an adult ignoring their internal cues. The habits of overeating are as much learned as they are inherited. Be the positive example for your children!

We’ve seen what leads to the ‘invitation to sedation’ syndrome. Now let’s look at some creative solutions to the yearly problem.

How to avoid being “stuffed” during the holidays:

1. Before you eat: Check out all the enticing choices on the table and only choose foods that you can have once a year. Do not waste your calories eating foods you can have at any time. After all, you can enjoy corn in August at that backyard barbecue just as readily as you can now.

2. Make an agreement with yourself about portion control. Resist the temptation to go back for seconds. Make smarter choices by selecting foods that are lower in fat, such as white meat over dark, pumpkin pie over pecan pie. You can eat almost anything you like if the portions are small. And remember, leftovers are better the next day, so have one plate, and save room for dessert.

3. Respect your digestive system. Savor each bite of food; chew your food until soft, which will improve both enjoyment and digestion and give you a feeling of satisfaction from your meal.

4. Bring mindfulness to the table. Before your meal, decide what level of fullness you want to achieve by the end

of the celebration; satisfied or over-stuffed?

5. Do not arrive hungry. Saving up all your calories for just one meal leads to overeating and in the end produces a slower metabolism.

6. Exercise. It is essential to include daily exercise during the holidays to relieve stress and get your blood pumping and your energy up. Plan a 10-minute walk at lunch or a family hike or bike ride.

7. Remember, hydration before libation. Making sure that your cells have enough water will make a marked difference in how you feel and think during and after your holiday enjoyment.

Most importantly, create holiday celebrations that are an opportunity to connect with family and friends. Your celebrations can be free of the sedation that fat, alcohol and overeating create. Discover the true meaning of the holidays— a time to create moments of joy and feelings of kinship and connection.



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**'Hoppy Adams' Legacy
Continues to Help the Community**



Rosa Pryor Trusty

I remember the wonderful times that I had with a beautiful person who came into my life in 1973 in the form of Charles W. "Hoppy Adams, Jr. He was a distinguished radio personality and executive vice president with the radio station WANN located in Annapolis, Maryland. (He held that position for over 40 years). At the time, I was an entrepreneur, entertainment promoter, a licensed booking agent for local and national musicians and managed about five groups. I wanted to present a first class show in the Annapolis and Eastern Shore areas, so I asked "Hoppy Adams for his help to advertise my shows in these areas as well as to be the Master of Ceremony for all the shows. He agreed and we sold out every show.

Mr. Adams started working at the radio station WANN in 1952. He spun records of rising R&B artists at the time, such as Otis Redding and James Brown, who would call in to his show. He brought in African-American artists to play in the Annapolis and Eastern Shore areas. "Hoppy Adams" who got the nickname from the Rev. John T. Chambers Sr. because of a bum leg, took him under his wing at Chambers Barber Shop where Mr. Adams learned to cut hair. He also drove a cab and later owned his own cab company in Annapolis.

Hoppy Adams was very active in the community and throughout his adult life found ways to raise money for a good cause. He was a philanthropist and gave money anonymously to those who needed it. He helped kids get through their first year of college, donated food to the homeless and helped musicians get a start by playing their first recording on the air.

Charles W. "Hoppy Adams", Jr. died May 1, 2005 from cancer at the Balti-

more Washington Hospital Center in Baltimore. In the following year 2006, the Charles W. Hoppy Adams, Jr. Foundation was founded by his son, Charles W. Adams III as a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization to fulfill the vision of Hoppy Adams, to promote and provide charitable, and educational services for youth and adults located in the Annapolis metropolitan area. The primary goal of the foundation is to communicate compassion and confidence in the community.

Each year more and more families are in need of a helping hand as it becomes more challenging and difficult for them to provide gifts, toys, and the joys associated with the holiday season. During this time the Hoppy Adams Foundation provides turkey, food, toys, clothing, coats and gift cards to these needy families. Unfortunately, they cannot do this without help and they depend on your partnerships to make these endeavors a success. They are asking you to help their "Hoppy Holiday Helpers" to bring a smile to an underprivileged child whose family may not have a Christmas dinner to enjoy or a toy or gift to open on Christmas. They hope that you will help them by making a donation to the Hoppy Adams Foundation. However large or small, any help towards these efforts would be greatly appreciated. Your donation will bring enjoyment during the holiday season that will last for a lifetime.

The Charles W. (Hoppy) Adams Jr. Foundation office is located 35 Old Solomon's Island Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. Contact Gordenia Henson, Executive Director at 410-266-6996.

If you need me, contact me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. Until the next time, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



Charles W. "Hoppy" Adams, Jr. died on May 1, 2005.



Charles W. Adams III, son of Charles W. "Hoppy" Adams Jr. the founder of the Charles W. "Hoppy" Adams Foundation.

Each year families are in need of a helping hand. Hoppy Adams Foundation provides to needy families during the holiday season.



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Attendees, participants talk strategy for New Year at Baltimore Times Event

By Stacy M. Brown

A Baltimore Times-hosted and PNC Bank-sponsored networking event brought out a who's who in the Charm City area to reflect on 2017 and to determine just how businesses and entrepreneurs can continue building their legacy in 2018 and beyond.

The gathering on November 30, 2017 titled, "Business & Building Your Legacy," an entrepreneurship and small business discussion and networking event, was held at one of Baltimore's first Minority Owned Business & Tech Incubators, the StartUp Nest.

The StartUp Nest founders Kyle O'Connor, Marcus Howard and Deonn Henderson, were on hand to share their vision for creating the tech incubator and the work behind entrepreneurship. They also provided tours of the venue.

"Baltimore is so rich, and bursting at the seams with untapped talent and brilliance. The Baltimore Times' work to bring the community together and provide a platform for connecting [and] learning, where we are empowered to

tell our stories as we build our legacy is so essential for not only small businesses but also to our community at large," said Cassandra N. Vincent of Vincent Media & Consulting, LLC. "This was really more than a networking event—more of a safe space for honest dialogue, learning and meeting our fellow neighbors."

Vincent who was the moderator of the panel discussion at the event says she enjoyed an "honest and lively" discussion with Kyle O'Connor of the StartUp Nest and Will Holmes of Will Holmes Consulting U.S.A.

"We discussed everything from doing business in the Baltimore market, how to build a business that matters and impacts change in our community, and we discussed ways to be effective in business," Vincent said.

More than 30 small business owners, entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs participated in the event.

Holmes shared insights on doing business in the city.



Brittany Young of B360 sharing about her business with panelists, Cassandra Vincent, Vincent Media & Consulting, LLC; Kyle O'Connor, one of the founders of The StartUp Nest; and Will Holmes, Will Holmes Consulting U.S.A. at the "Business & Building Your Legacy" Event. Photo by Dennis Roberts

"While on the panel, I stressed the importance of offering products and services that customers actually want to buy and utilizing free resources such as the Goldman Sachs 10K Small Businesses Program and the services offered by the city of Baltimore and the Small Business Administration," Holmes said.

"The audience's questions showed their eagerness to build strong, sustainable businesses and I was delighted to engage with them and I thank The Baltimore Times for inviting me."

Nicole Webb of NK Webb Consulting also said she was thrilled to have attended the event.

"I had an opportunity to attend and it was awesome," Webb said.

"It was nice to have a transparent conversation centered on business in the African-American community with those who have had business success," she said. "The speakers were knowledgeable, credible and transparent in sharing their successes and failures with attendees in order to teach and allow others to learn from their mistakes."

Ijeoma S. Nwatu, a digital freelancer and media consultant, echoed Webb's comments.

"The event was nicely done and brought a great mix of entrepreneurs and business-minded individuals. The StartUp Nest was a good choice and their founders had a compelling and insightful story," Nwatu said.

Vincent noted the importance of the sponsors who helped to make the event more exciting. She also noted participants— Christopher Harris Photography; Billie McCain of Be Bold Media; Cara Paige of Cover Paige Creative; and Kimberly Bracey of Painted Society; and, of course, PNC Bank.

"It was a fantastic event!" Vincent said.

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Six tips to protect your company's data from ransomware

News & Experts— Ransomware can quickly cripple a business and the problem appears to be growing, as evidenced recently when the U.S. government issued a warning about Bad Rabbit, a ransomware attack that spread through Russia, the Ukraine and other countries.

Such attacks can be costly for businesses because ransomware infects a computer, blocks access to computer files, and demands that money be paid before the computer is “released.”

If there's no data backup, the business could be in serious trouble.

“Most attacks are against financial, medical and retail business sectors,” says Penny Garbus, co-founder of Soaring Eagle Consulting Inc. (www.SoaringEagle.guru) and co-author of *Mining New Gold – Managing your Business Data*.

“The ransoms are usually \$1,000 and most companies pay it. In some cases these days, though, money isn't the goal. I think they are moving towards more terroristic attacks and are being paid simply to create havoc.”

Unfortunately, even paying a ransom is no guarantee a company's data will be freed because on occasion the perpetrators demand even more money, she says.

“The worst-case scenario, though, occurs when the attacker has so completely destroyed data files and infected hard drives that they are unable to get the data back,” Garbus says. “The cost



can run into thousands or even millions of dollars to get the company up and running again.”

So how does a business protect itself against ransomware? Garbus suggests a few precautions:

- Beware of viruses masquerading as virus protection. Do your research and make sure you're purchasing your virus protection from a reputable brand, Garbus says. Be careful of virus protection software that appears magically and tells you it detected a virus. If you don't recognize

the brand, ignore the findings. That notification may be a virus itself, Garbus says.

- Install firewall protection. Make sure your hardware and software are protected with firewalls and software that scans the environment for worms, harmful attachments and attacks.

- Set up procedures and protocols for data access. It's important to make sure access to data is limited. For example, the system administrator role should be handed out to a limited number of

employees who should not share log-in information with each other. Also, when an employee leaves, make sure their access is taken away and passwords changed.

- Have backups of all important data. If you have your information backed up in an offsite location, then you won't lose it to cyber kidnappers. “Whether it's large companies or small businesses, too often people forget to back up their data,” Garbus says.

- Be careful about Google search results. Sometimes a Google search itself makes you vulnerable. You don't want to download anything unless you know you are on the correct site. Garbus says the criminal hackers now have very sophisticated strategies to get you to click and download their malware and can infect your environment very quickly.

- Figure out what kind of ransomware you're dealing with. If your system is hijacked, know this; Not all ransomware is equal and you may not need to pay the ransom. One type of ransomware basically locks you out of your applications and processes. It may create a barrier between you and the computer's interface so you can't get past the ransomware attack screen. But the good news is this type of ransomware can be cleansed and your files restored without paying the ransom. A second type of ransomware is more insidious. It encrypts and renames your files so you don't have any access to them until you give in to the ransom demands.

“Businesses should review their security processes at least once a year,” Garbus says. “You may want to hire an outside source to review security and, if you believe it necessary, even hire a professional hacker to look for holes in your system.”

*Penny Garbus, co-founder of Soaring Eagle Consulting Inc. (www.SoaringEagle.guru), is co-author of *Mining New Gold – Managing Your Business Data*. She has been working in the data-management field since leaving college when she worked as a data entry clerk for Pitney Bowes Credit. She later ran the training and marketing department of Northern Lights Software.*

Give the Gift of Time or Service: 2017 Holiday Volunteer Guide

Give the Gift of Time or Service: 2017 Holiday Volunteer Guide Now Available—The Anne Arundel County Volunteer Center now has a Holiday Volunteer Guide listing volunteer opportunities through December 2018! Volunteering is a way to support your favorite cause. Gifts of time and in-kind donations can be pivotal at this time of year for the charities listed in the Holiday Volunteer Guide. You can receive a FREE copy of the Holiday Volunteer Guide via e-mail by sending a request to info@aacvc.org. This new Holiday Volunteer Guide is also posted on the Volunteer Center's Website: www.aacvc.org/Resources and can be downloaded for FREE. Why should you volunteer? To help other people, make new friends, brighten the holidays for the homeless, volunteer with your family, learn about our community, earn community service credit, and most important - HAVE FUN! Many of the organizations listed in the guide also have listed their wish lists for donations. For more information, please contact the Volunteer Center at 410-897-9207 or email: info@aacvc.org. or visit the website: www.aacvc.org.

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