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Baltimore Singer and 'The Voice' Contestant is Living His Best Life



Devon Fleming just came off a whirlwind experience as a contestant on "The Voice" where he remained a so-called J Hud team member for the duration. It was almost immediately evident that Davon was going to be special. Eleven seconds into his first song, the judges had all turned their iconic red chairs around indicating they were vying for him to join their team, Photo: The Voice -- "Live Top 12" Episode 1317A Davon Fleming. (See article on Page 8) Photo Credit: Tyler Golden/NBC

Navigating the three stages of retirement

News & Experts— People often view retirement as just one more stage of life. However, that's not exactly the case. Retirement isn't just one stage; it's at least three— although all three do share something in common.

"Every stage of retirement requires planning," said Jack Teboda, president of Teboda & Associates, a financial services firm. "Otherwise, you could end up running out of money, or your health might take a turn for the worse and negatively impact your retirement savings because you hadn't planned for it in those early years of retirement."

It's not easy to put exact ages on each of the three stages of retirement. That likely will vary from person to person, depending on their finances, health and family situation.

Here's what to look for in each stage:

•**Stage 1**, adjusting to a new lifestyle. Many new retirees brim with excitement when retirement begins. They can golf, visit museums, play with their grandchildren, travel or catch up on their reading. Not everyone adjusts well, though. It's not easy to flip the switch overnight after you've spent several decades reporting to work every day. Also, if your retirement income is largely dependent on your savings you'll want to be careful that you don't spend too much in those initial years. "Your adviser should be able to help you come up with a plan that will give you income for life so you don't have to worry about running out of money," Teboda says.



•**Stage 2**, staying socially connected. As the years pass, many retirees move closer to their children or move into a retirement community because it makes them feel more socially connected. "Sometimes at this point, especially if they haven't planned well, people may start to have even more worries that they will outlive their money," Teboda says. "One way they address that is to cut back on expenses. Some people even decide to get a part-time job to bring in extra money, and working becomes another way to stay connected."

•**Stage 3**, realizing you may need assistance. More than 70 percent of Americans older than 65 will need some form of long-term care at some point in their lives, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "When people map out their retirement," Teboda says, "they need to plan for that possibility because the cost of long-term care can be devastating to your finances."

He says people need to consider a number of factors— taxes, longevity and market risks, among others— to improve the odds of a joyful retirement, which is one reason Teboda says his firm takes a team approach to advising, using financial professionals with different areas of expertise. For example, one team member, Amanda Jager, is an

Associate Financial Adviser, and another, Kevin C. Sanders, while also an Associate Financial Adviser, is an attorney specializing in estate planning. "In each stage of retirement," Teboda says, "it's important to confer regularly with your adviser and to be ready to adjust your financial plans if necessary."

Jack Teboda, president and founder of Teboda & Associates has more than 35 years experience helping people pursue financial independence through personalized investment strategies. His firm takes a team approach to providing advice to clients on retirement concerns and other financial planning issues. For more information, visit: www.teboda.com.

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"What will tomorrow hold for our youth"— Proverbs 3:6

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Guest Editorials/Letters

The food industry needs to stop hiding nutrition information

By *Mindy Haar*

Nearly four in ten American adults are obese. That's an all-time high.

The Food and Drug Administration proposed two rules to help combat this epidemic. The first would require chain restaurants to include calorie counts on their menus. The second would update the Nutrition Facts Label—the black-and-white nutritional content box.

Some food manufacturers and restaurant groups are working to defeat these rules. Deploying their lobbyists, these firms have pressured regulators to delay implementation of the regulations.

Americans can't afford these delays. The obesity epidemic is taking a toll on our waistslines—and our wallets. Obesity puts people at risk for many diseases, including diabetes, cancer, stroke, and heart disease. Those four illnesses kill nearly 1.6 million Americans every year, and cost almost \$700 billion.

Many believe the solution is to eat healthier. And yes, choosing less-processed foods and ones prepared at home is one step. But that isn't as simple as it sounds.

People can't make healthier choices if they don't know the content of their food. In one survey of 3,400 fast food customers, on average, respondents underestimated the number of calories in their meals by about 200. More than one in four underestimated by more than 500 calories. That's 25 percent of an average person's daily recommended calories.

Even when foods have a nutrition facts label, Americans have trouble interpreting the information. Half of Americans can't make out a food's sugar content. Many struggle to calculate nutrition information when a package is divided into servings.

When consumers are provided with nutrition information, they make healthier choices. Restaurant-goers who were given the calorie content of their meals plus information about recommended daily intakes consumed 250 fewer calories than those given no information, according to a Yale study.

Transparency doesn't just empower consumers to make healthier decisions. It prompts the food industry to eliminate unhealthy ingredients. In 2006, the FDA required manufacturers to label foods that contained trans fats. In response, food companies cut the levels of trans fats in their products by 80 percent.

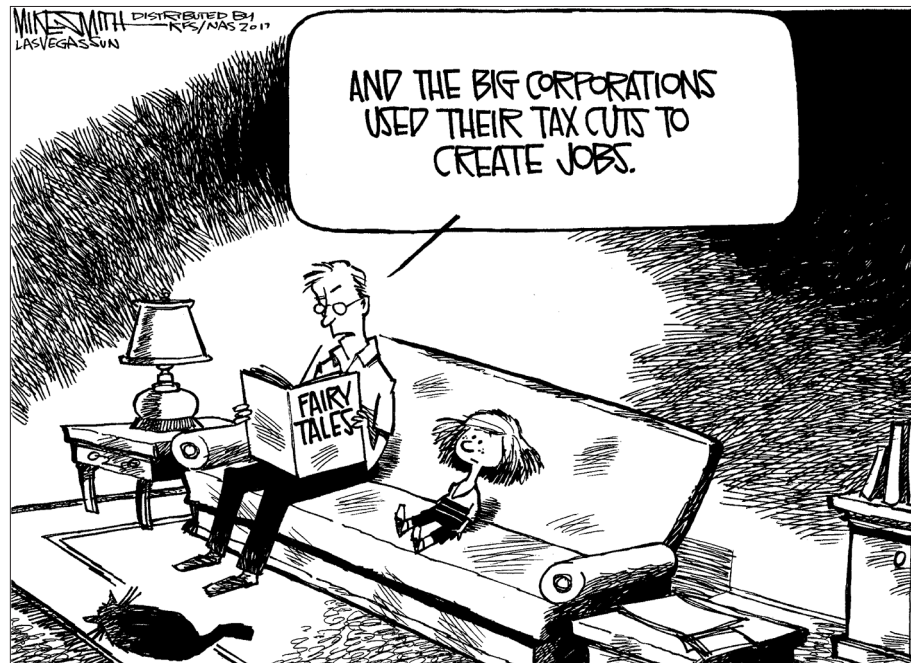
The food industry has been fighting to block calorie counts on menus for years. The FDA first proposed the menu rule in 2010. The agency originally set the compliance date for the end of 2015. The National Grocers Association, the Food Marketing Institute, and the American Pizza Community claimed the rule would be too costly. They pressured the FDA to delay it three times.

In November, the FDA issued new guidelines for the rule, so it appears it will take effect in May 2018. But the agency is accepting comments about these guidelines, which may allow the food industry to push for watered-down regulations or another delay. That would be a mistake. Since officials started crafting the rule, the obesity rate has shot up 12 percent.

The FDA's second proposed rule would require manufacturers to print nutrition labels with realistic serving sizes and easy-to-read calorie counts. Previously, serving sizes didn't reflect how much the average American actually eats. The FDA also added a line for "added sugar." It's recommended that people shouldn't consume more than 50 grams of added sugar a day, but many popular products exceed that.

Regulators wanted the rule to take effect in 2018. But big trade associations have pressured the FDA to delay implementation. The obesity epidemic will worsen if regulators cave to the food industry. It's time for restaurants and manufacturers to tell Americans what's in their food.

Mindy Haar, Ph.D., a registered dietitian, is assistant dean, Undergraduate Affairs, for New York Institute of Technology School of Health Professions.



Letters to the Editor

Editor:

With Trump's latest nasty and sexist attack on Senator Gillibrand, the disgusting-STENCH continues to emanate from the entire Trump Administration as well as the right-wing Conservative-Libertarian-Republican Congress where many Senators and Congresspeople have finally admitted to the public that they want to and intend to make deep cuts in Social Security Retirement benefits, Medicare, and Medicaid.

Many of these Republicans in Congress are actually "survival-of-the-fittest" Social Darwinists who will not be satisfied until there are Americans in the streets dying of starvation and lack of medical care. In time, they will also try to abolish Food Stamps, Student Loans, Unemployment Insurance Benefits, etc.

Stewart Epstein
Rochester, New York

Editor:

Reports indicate that each prescription of Ozempic, the newly approved diabetes drug that is injected once weekly, could cost \$676. Yikes!

There is no need to blow your retirement fund, or your kid's college tuition

money, trying to control your diabetes.

The disease typically afflicts overweight people and those who eat foods that are high in saturated fat, cholesterol, and/or "heme" iron, i.e., meat, eggs, and dairy products.

So, try eating tasty vegan foods instead. In general, vegans have lower body mass indexes, or BMIs, than vegetarians and meat-eaters alike. A study at the University of Eastern Finland confirmed that people who eat diets high in plant protein rather than ones high in animal protein have a significantly lower risk of diabetes. Researchers have even found that diabetics who eat low-fat vegan foods are able to stop taking medications—or at least take fewer of them—to manage the disease.

Vegan foods are a lot tastier than diabetes medication, too, and versatile vegan staples are relatively inexpensive—especially when compared to Ozempic and other diabetes drugs! If you want to get healthy and save some money, visit www.PETA.org for a free vegan starter kit.

Heather Moore
PETA Foundation
Norfolk, VA

Black women and girls deserve more respect, visibility in the #MeToo Movement

*By Ed Gray, North Dallas Gazette
NNPA Member*

This has been a monumental year for the reaffirmation of women's rights in the workplace and the ballot booth. This is long overdue. The battle for the rights of women, and specifically black women and girls, has gone on for centuries. In America, the spotlight on this fight for women's rights shines brightly on White women, while Black women, who have often fought more vigorously for equality and justice, are largely consigned to the shadows of the movement.

TIME magazine placed "The Silence Breakers" on their cover, noting that the tenacity and courage of the women's voices could be heard over the walls of systemic oppression.

Still, in the stories of Dajerria Becton, a teenager who was violently handcuffed and thrown to the ground by an overzealous McKinney, Texas police officer and Sandra Bland, who was arrested and died in police custody in Prairie View, Texas, that oppression seems unsurmountable.

Most acts of extrajudicial violence and aggression towards black women never become national headlines and many black women suffer in quiet silence as their complaints of sexual harassment are ignored and discounted, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Mainstream America labels black women as angry Jezebels unfit for normal, social interactions. Black American pop culture hypersexualizes our young girls while condemning them for being too fast. There is a deafening silence in

*Talkin' to some n**ga 'bout his car
I guess he said he had a Lexus, what's next?*

You headin' to his car for some sex

Today, some people would criticize Shakur for slut-shaming, while others would applaud him for telling it like it is.

White women have been applauded for coming forward to tell their stories of sexual assault and harassment under the #MeToo flag. The movement would be much stronger and more credible, if its

in the name of justice with respect for our black mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. This respect must begin in the black community; we must clean our own house, first. We must elevate our women from social media hashtags to highly-valued and respected members of the global community.

In "Keep Ya Head Up," Shakur offers a critique on the exploitation of women in the black community:

*And since we all came from a woman
Got our name from a woman and our
game from a woman*

*I wonder why we take from our women
Why we rape our women, do we hate
our women?*

*I think it's time to kill for our women
Time to heal our women, be real to our
women*

*And if we don't we'll have a race of
babies*

*That will hate the ladies that make the
babies*

*And since a man can't make one
He has no right to tell a woman when
and where to create one*

*So will the real men get up
I know you're fed up ladies, but keep
your head up.*

Black women and girls are sick and tired of being sick and tired; it's time for us to heed Shakur's advice and heal our women and be real to our women.

*This is Ed Gray, and this is straight talk.
Ed Gray, the host of The Commish
Radio Show airing Saturdays 1-3 p.m.
on FBRN.net, can be reached at
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***“Mainstream America labels black women as angry
Jezebels unfit for normal, social interactions.
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them for being too fast. There is a deafening silence
in the black community that is complicit in
the degradation of our black women.”***

the black community that is complicit in the degradation of our black women.

When we do speak, instead of a healing, sometimes our words just cause more wounds.

One of the most influential hip-hop artists of all time, Tupac Shakur spoke directly to black women in "Wonda Why They Call U Bytch":

*You leave your kids with your mama
'cuz your headin' for the club
In a skin-tight miniskirt lookin' for
some love*

*Got them legs wide open while you're
sittin' at the bar*

leaders forced mainstream media to also carry the stories of black women on their morning shows and popular websites.

Black men must bear some of the blame for mainstream media's ignorance and apathy towards the plight of black women. We band together, as brothers, ignoring the anguished cries of our sisters. We must stop, look and listen.

We must reject R. Kelly for his alleged abuse of black women and girls with the same unanimity that black voters in Alabama rejected the alleged sexual predator Roy Moore.

We must step in the name of love and

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Twelve-year-old spreads holiday cheer, celebrates moving adoption story

By Andrea Blackstone

For many people, Christmas is a joyous time to celebrate the birth of Christ and to reconnect with family and friends. However, sometimes children whose stories begin in crisis situations are left hoping to build new traditions with loving adults who will claim them as their own.

According to The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) 2015 Report, nearly 428,000 children in the United States live in foster care.

Miguel Coppedge is a 12-year-old sixth grader who defies those statistics. The honor roll student, author and philanthropist is already building a bright future with the help of his adoptive mother, Yolanda Coppedge.

Before entrepreneur Yolanda Coppedge who works with children in the fitness industry through her company called "No Obesity Family Fitness, LLC" took Miguel into her home, he was being cared for at the St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home, now called St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families.

Miguel now gives back to St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families (St. Ann's), a faith-based organization in Hyattsville, Maryland, which operates transitional housing programs for pregnant and adolescent mothers, a high school and a day care facility.

On December 22, 2017, Miguel delivered coats that he collected for the place that was his homes since he was approximately a five-day old infant.

"I sometimes give them (St. Ann's) checks or money, or I just give back to them," Miguel said. "It is important to me because they really took care of me there. I just wanted to give back for everything they've done for me."



On December 22, 2017, Miguel Coppedge (middle), delivered coats that he collected to the St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families in Hyattsville, Maryland, which was his home before his adoption. The 12-year-old author supports the organization with a portion of the proceeds from the sale of his books.

Courtesy Photo

Yolanda Coppedge was introduced to Miguel when a friend asked her to take care of the two-month old as a foster mother. Her friend was already taking care of Miguel's older brother and she didn't have any more room in her home.

Yolanda embraced the idea of caring for Miguel temporarily and became certified to legally be able to do it. Ironically, she found out that could not have her own biological children due to reproductive issues a few months before Miguel was born. A pre-school teacher at that time, Yolanda ultimately moved forward with a petition to adopt Miguel when he was six months old. Yolanda and Miguel have officially been a

mother and son team ever since.

"I feel great because she (my mother) really takes care of me, and she really, really, really loves me," Miguel said cheerfully.

Yolanda describes her son as a loving, caring child with a magnetic personality. She added that he does have issues—such as ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder) and a mood disorder but none of that has stopped Miguel from earning recognition as a young philanthropist and the author of three books. Miguel began a self-published book journey when he was just nine years old. His favorite hobbies are playing video games, basketball and writing.

"I want to keep on writing when ideas come to me," Miguel said, mentioning that it feels great to have books of his own.

In addition to "The Adventures of Fire Man" and "The Adventures of Fireman and the Case of the Stinger," Miguel penned his third book, "Friendly Officers." He heard children talking about being afraid of police officers, and he didn't want them to be fearful.

Miguel crafted a plan to help St. Ann's through selling his books. Yolanda added that St. Ann's was ecstatic about Miguel's idea to give back to the organization. They were happy and proud of how far he has come.

"When he wrote his first book, the first things he said is he wanted to give a portion of [the] proceeds to St. Ann's. I never said anything about giving back. That is something that just came right out of his mouth," Yolanda said. "I guess he kind of got that from me (giving back to causes and organizations), because I'm always giving to people."

Yolanda and Miguel can be spotted sporting ugly sweaters, while enjoying Christmas fun with family and celebrating the time that they now have to treasure each holiday season together.

Yolanda says she always saw something different in Miguel and she is glad that he ended up in her care. The nurturing mother would encourage other like-minded individuals to adopt children.

"If I had more room, I would adopt more kids," Yolanda said with joyous laughter. There are a lot of kids out there who need a loving home, and a lot of them are good kids. They might come from rough backgrounds but a lot of them just really need love."

To learn more about Miguel's books, visit <https://www.facebook.com/theadventuresoffireman>.



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Baltimore Singer and 'The Voice' Contestant is Living His Best Life

Davon Fleming's gift of song helps him spread hometown pride

By Nadine Matthews

People often reflect on the way that music has the power to metaphorically "take them to another place." For singers with abundant talent and ambition however, music really does transport them to many surprising settings. Baltimore native and recent *The Voice* contestant Davon Fleming is one such singer. His sonorous stylings, "I like to call it soul fusion," he says, "a little bit of this, a little bit of that, you know," have already taken him to such far-flung locales as Switzerland and Italy. In fact, Fleming had literally just landed in Los Angeles and gotten to his hotel, when we spoke.

Like many singers, Davon has a gospel background, singing from the age of three in church. He continued singing gospel in high school. Amazingly, he didn't attend the famous Baltimore School of the Arts. "They didn't choose me" he explains, his voice betraying no regret or resentment. "And I had nieces and nephews who went there, they shoulda got me when they coulda had me." He says jokingly. Instead, Fleming attended Northwestern High School. They didn't have a choir there so he would sneak to Milford Mill High School at the end of the day, jetting back and forth "leaving a little early just to get to their rehearsal."

Fleming just came off a whirlwind experience as a contestant on *The Voice* where he remained a so-called J Hud team member for the duration. It was almost immediately evident that Davon was going to be special. Eleven seconds into his first song, the judges had all turned their iconic red chairs around. Judge Adam Levine stood up during his entreaty to get Fleming on his team. However, Fleming was swayed by Jennifer Hudson's soulful and creative use of a sartorial accessory. Deeply moved by his singing, "Jennifer Hudson threw her shoe at me." He remembers, laughing. "She's very genuine, very sweet, just pure-hearted."

As to whether he holds any hard feel-



THE VOICE -- "Playoff Rounds" -- Pictured: (l-r) ShiAnn Jones, Jennifer Hudson, Noah Mac, Davon Fleming. Photo by: Trae Patton/NBC

ings about not winning the whole thing, Fleming expresses nothing but genuine gratitude for the experience. "This was a great ride. I ended up inspiring people not knowing that I would. I've gotten love and appreciation from people across the world."

Fleming is still in his twenties but can teach people of all ages a lot about achieving their goals and dreams. He says, "All ages, no matter if you're young or old, whatever you aspire to in life, never let fear and doubt stop you from what you want to do. You have to dream big, believe that you can do it and you have to know you're worth it. Stay focused encourage yourself sometimes."

One of the biggest perks of the experience was being mentored by singer and

actress Jennifer Hudson. The five foot nine songstress got her own start on a program just like this one, *American Idol* and came in a stunning seventh place. Since then however, she has had a solid career that includes winning an Oscar. Fleming, who says "What I love about Jennifer is that conversations were geared toward me as a person. Before anything vocally, she was concerned about my well-being as a person." Fleming not only appreciated Hudson's caring nature but also her wisdom Hudson. Among the things he says he learned from her was, "Nobody can dictate your dreams but you. Never let anyone dictate what you want to do."

Lately, Baltimore has achieved even greater levels of visibility and influence

partly because of cultural powerhouses who have come from and/or worked in the city. Fleming has just joined the ranks of the city's cultural ambassadors. He says, "I love my city because we are a city that's on the rise and if I can help inspire and be the face of change for my city, absolutely." He elaborates, "There's nothing like coming home to love and Baltimore is a place of love. Now with this platform, I can inspire children. I never thought I would be traveling to Italy and Switzerland or chilling at Jennifer Hudson's house, but here I am. The mayor of Baltimore wants to give me the key to the city. You know, a lot of stuff is transpiring all because I chose to believe and step out on faith."

Baltimore entrepreneur helping others reach new heights in business

By Stacy M. Brown

Baltimore-born Nicole Webb provides a unique service to both men and women in business. She serves as a career coach helping her clients who are in the midst of changing careers or life changes.

Webb also assists those who may file complaints with the Equal Opportunity Commission and helps employees to successfully navigate challenges in the workplace with supervisors and co-workers.

The Coppin State and University of Baltimore graduate also contributes to Black Enterprise Magazine, writing career advice articles.

“I became a Career Coach after dealing with my own struggles and then I landed what I thought was my dream job in Human Resources as an HR Client Partner, but it turned out to be my worst nightmare,” Webb explained. “I was making great money, had the fancy job title but I was actually unhappy. All I did was work and had no time to live my life. Instead of continuing in a position that made me miserable and complaining about it, I decided to resign and take time to plan out my next career move.”

Undaunted and motivated, Webb developed a plan of action and executed it.

After landing an opportunity as an HR Compliance Office, she began planning the launch of her own company, NK Webb Group, which specializes in career



Baltimore-born Nicole Webb (middle holding ball), owner of NK Webb Group, instructs participants during a client workshop. Webb specializes in career coaching for individuals and HR Consulting Services for small to midsize companies. Her company has scheduled a “Be the CEO of Your Career,” workshop for February 3, 2018, for full-time workers, business owners, entrepreneurs and the unemployed who might be in need of career guidance in Baltimore. Courtesy Photo

coaching for individuals and HR Consulting Services for small to midsize companies.

“My background in business and HR has added true value to my company’s success, and it’s still growing four years later,” Webb said.

Additionally, Webb teaches HR courses to undergraduate students at the University of Baltimore.

“I love the work that I do because it’s truly my passion. I enjoy seeing my client’s success and when they reach out

to me with updates on what they have accomplished, it motivates me to keep going,” she said.

Webb’s clients from places like Fresno, California; Columbia, South Carolina; Cleveland, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; the District of Columbia; and Baltimore include university deans and vice presidents, as well as everyday people.

Her friends and acquaintances say she is a natural leader with a strong determination to succeed. Recently, Webb appeared as an expert guest on the Roland Martin Show on TV One to provide insight on sexual harassment.

“I teach my clients about career ownership and why it’s in their best interest to make the decision to take full responsibility for their actions as it relates to their career pursuits,” Webb said. “Additionally, I teach them how to leverage their knowledge, skills and abilities to land career opportunities of their choice.”

Webb contends that the universe has aligned her with whom and what she needed at the right time.

“I have been able to connect with good people here in Baltimore, as well as out of state who are very supportive of my company and what I’m working to accomplish,” she said.

On February 3, 2018, Webb has scheduled a workshop titled, “Be the CEO of Your Career,” in Baltimore for full-time workers, business owners, entrepreneurs and the unemployed who might be in need of career guidance.

“My motto is, ‘Make your next career move your best career move’ whether you’re just starting out in your career, a mid-career professional or approaching retirement,” she said. “I encourage them to follow [their] instincts. It’s important to carve your own path so that you won’t have any regrets, never allow your admiration for someone else’s accomplishments to deter you from pursuing your own because you think you can’t be successful too.”

For more information or for tickets to the February 3 event, visit: www.eventbrite.com.

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Rambling Rose

*Happy Kwanzaa, Merry Christmas
and a Joyous New Year!*



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Kwanzaa Celebrations will be held at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum on Saturday, December 30, 2017 from noon to 4 p.m. Celebrate the Annual African American holiday with African dancing, storytelling, drumming performances, workshops and traditional crafts using fiber art. You will also be able to listen to quilter Joan Gaither discuss African American histories documented in her story quilts, which are part of the exhibit, "Freedom: Emancipation Quilted & Stitched," currently on display at the museum. Presenters at Kwanzaa celebrations, include: Sankofa Dance Theater, author food nutritionist Tambra Raye Stevenson from; I Am Wanda.org and community artist, Sallah Jenkins.

Look, my friends, just for the fun of it, if you want to see something very special, please check out the 34th Street Lights. If you haven't seen them yet in Baltimore, you are really missing out on a Christmas treat. It is the most festive street in Baltimore. It is short and easily walkable. Just park your car and be amazed. The residents really go all out to ensure you leave their neighborhood smiling from ear to ear. "Miracle on 34th Streets Lights" are on display through New Year's Eve from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. at 720 W. 34th Street in Hampden. It is appropriately called "Miracle on 34th Street". This neighborhood has been doing this for 71 years.

There are a few New Year's Eve galas going on around town, if you haven't decided what you want to do yet, here are a few things you may want to consider:

New Year's Eve Gala out at La-Fontaine Bleue, 7514 Ritchie Highway in Glen Burnie— serving a deluxe buffet, open bar services and live entertainment on Sunday, December 31 from 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. Make your reservation by calling 410-760-4115.

New Years Eve Celebration is downtown Baltimore. The New Year's Eve Spectacular fireworks display over the Inner Harbor is the largest in the region. The fireworks show starts on the stroke of midnight. Prior to the fireworks, visitors can enjoy live music starting at 9 p.m. at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater with activities and entertainment extending area throughout Pratt and Light Streets.

How about a New Years Eve Cabaret? Yes! On December 30, 2017 at Gentlemen Ten located at 2135 Edmondson Avenue from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. with live entertainment featuring, "Shay." It's B.Y.O.B and cash bar, you can bring your own food, but they will also have food available for purchase, as well as dancing and parting! Call Tim at 443-845-1617 for more information.

My "Boo-Boo" and I are working New Years Eve. My band, "Signature Live" will be performing at Maryland Live Casino, come on down if you have no other plans. If you don't see me at the stage, I will be at the slot machines!

Well guys, I have to go now. I am out of space. Remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL NEXT YEAR, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS. "HAPPY! HAPPY! HAPPY! NEW YEAR"



There will be drumming at the Kwanzaa celebration at Reginald F. Lewis Museum



Miracle on 34th Street celebrates 71 years in Hampden section of Baltimore City. The lights are very entertaining, fun and amazing. They are lit up through New Year's Eve from 5 p.m. until 11 p.m.



Sallah Jenkins, a children's Arts & Crafts teacher will be at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum for the children on Saturday, December 30 from 12-4 p.m.



Kwanzaa Celebration at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum on Saturday, December 30, 2017 from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Study to look at new approach to alcoholism, other trauma affecting blacks

By Stacy M. Brown

More than six million African-Americans drink heavily, and many black Baltimore residents struggle with the problem and are unable to control their drinking, according to new research.

University of Maryland School of Medicine researchers say they have discovered that the problem is often related to psychological trauma.

The latest study by those researchers examines whether a new drug can help alleviate the related problems of alcoholism and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

To conduct the study, the school's researchers are using the medication, pregabalin, which they say has already been approved for use in epilepsy and some other kinds of pain.

However, some scientists believe pregabalin could be useful in addiction and trauma.

"Nearly 60 percent of individuals with PTSD have a comorbid alcohol use disorder. This comorbidity [simultaneous presence of two chronic diseases or conditions in a patient] is associated with more severe PTSD symptoms, higher rates of psychosocial and medical problems, higher relapse rates, and poorer treatment outcome," said Melanie Bennett, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

"There is a great need for treatments that are effective for both disorders," Bennett said.

Communities of color tend to experience greater burden of mental and sub-



For more information about the study by University of Maryland School of Medicine researchers or to sign up to be a participant in the study, call 667-214-2111.

Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

stance use disorders often due to poorer access to care; inappropriate care; and higher social, environmental, and economic risk factors, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Drinking tends to increase during the holiday season with statistics from

several organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealing that binge drinking and drunk driving increase "astronomically" from Thanksgiving eve through New Year's.

While the University of Maryland School of Medicine study has already begun, researchers said they plan to start

working with more patients from Baltimore City and the surrounding area in the next few months.

The goal is to try and attack what the researchers said is a pressing problem in and around Charm City in what's being billed as an innovative attempt to solve the issues.

"We are studying African-Americans in order to have a diverse sample in order to test this medication," Bennett said.

Those who participate in the study are selected randomly and they're assigned to receive the drug or a placebo. The drug is then taken for 13 weeks.

"We have scientific reasons for believing this drug will work," Bennett said. "The drug has shown promise in reducing drinking and in reducing the symptoms of PTSD separately in small studies."

It also positively affects neurotransmitter pathways that are common to both disorders, which has led researchers to hypothesize that it will be effective for individuals with both diagnoses, according to Bennett.

Overall, the goal of the study is to determine whether or not this drug will be effective in this particular group, she said. Currently, there are no alternate plans or drugs in the study.

"There are, however, other drugs that are approved for the treatment of alcohol use disorders and two cognitive behavioral therapies that are evidence-based for PTSD," she said.

Researchers are still seeking participants for the study. For more information or to sign up for the study, call 667-214-2111.

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“Full Ride Scholarship” program for graduating high school seniors

One student will win a scholarship to cover all expenses to an HBCU of their choice, joining an impressive group of previous “Full Ride” Scholars

Dallas, TX — The Tom Joyner Foundation® announced the ‘Full Ride’ scholarship program that will cover all the expenses of one student planning to attend a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the fall of 2018.

“Our full ride scholars are outstanding,” said Tom Joyner, chairman of his Foundation and host of the top-ranked nationally syndicated Tom Joyner Morning show. “We’re looking for another amazing young person who already is changing the world, and wants to go to an HBCU where they can pursue their dreams.”

Students will receive full tuition and stipends for up to 10 semesters to cover on-campus room and board and books. Students must meet the required academic standards each semester to renew the funds each year. Graduating high school seniors can apply for the scholarship at the Tom Joyner Foundation website: www.tomjoynerfoundation.org.

Students must have their school mail their transcripts and recommendations to the Foundation at P.O. Box 630495, Irving, TX 75063-0495.

To be eligible, students must meet the following criteria:

- 1) A United States Citizen
- 2) Current high school seniors attending school in the United States (applicant must be anticipating completion of high school degree in the spring of 2018)
- 3) Minimum high school grade point



Applications must be postmarked no later than January 19, 2018 and interviews will occur in March 2018. For applications and more information, visit the Tom Joyner Foundation website: www.tomjoynerfoundation.org.

Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

average of 3.50 (on a 4.00-grade scale, excluding home school studies) and Minimum SAT score of 1400 (combined math essay and verbal score) or ACT score of 30.

- 4) Applicants must apply and be accepted to an HBCU by July 1, 2018.
- 5) Applicants must have demonstrated

leadership abilities through participation in community service, extracurricular, or other activities.

The applications must be postmarked no later than January 19, 2018. Interviews will occur in March 2018.

Past Full Ride Scholars have impressive backgrounds, including last year’s

winner, Z’Kijah Fleming of DeSoto, Texas, who is attending Howard University where she is planning to major in sports business; Morgan Taylor Brown, of Fayetteville, Ga., who is attending Spelman College, pursuing her interests to become a psychiatrist. In 2015, JoAnna Jones of Ashville, North Carolina’s Buncombe County Early College High School is attending Winston-Salem State University, where she is pursuing a degree in nursing. Another winner is Titus Zeigler, who was a top student at Atlanta’s Henry W. Grady High School. The future trauma surgeon was a member of the Junior ROTC program, tutored kids at a local middle school and volunteered at the Atlanta Food Bank. Blaine Robertson of Reserve, La. graduated from Howard University and he is pursuing his dream of teaching high school back home in Louisiana. Britney Wilson, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., also graduated from Howard University and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Wilson, who passed the New York Bar exam, is now a Bertha Justice Institute Fellow at the Center for Constitutional Rights. Another one of our Full Ride Scholars Cheyenne Boyce graduated from Spelman College, is completing her master’s degree in international peace and conflict resolution at the American University in Washington, D.C. The Detroit-native, who is fluent in Japanese, spent a year as a prestigious Fulbright scholar teaching English to families in Malaysia.

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