

Stars and creators reflect on arrival of 'Black Panther' movie



Marvel's historic first black superhero film, "Black Panther," follows T'Challa/Black Panther's journey in the aftermath of his father's death, leading his technologically advanced, black-ruled nation, Wakanda. Reportedly, the creators Jack Kirby and Stan Lee took the name from the all-black U.S. Army 761st Tank Battalion of World War II dubbed, "the Black Panthers." (Left to right) Okoye (Danai Gurira); Nakia (Lupita Nyong'o); and Ayo (Florence Kasumba) of the female warriors known as the Dora Milaje who protect the king.
(Story on page 18)

Photo Credit: Matt Kennedy ©Marvel Studios 2018

Teen Dating Violence: How to Recognize and React

By Elisa Gallagher, MSW, LGSW

This article is part of the #STCPreventionMatters campaign from the University of Maryland Medical Center. For more information about the campaign and the Center for Injury Prevention and Policy, visit: www.umm.edu/Prevention-Matters.

Melanie* is the mother of a smart and confident daughter named Cassie.*

Looking at Cassie now, you would not guess that a year ago, she was the victim of teen dating violence. Cassie's boyfriend never hit her, but verbal and emotional abuse left her devastated and, what's worse, feeling responsible for what was happening to her.

Melanie shared, "I was able to get there before it became physical, and I'm thankful every day."

Parents of abused or abusive teens often wonder how they could have missed the signs, and what they should do now. Teen dating abuse can be easy to miss. Emotional abuse is almost always a precursor to physical abuse,

but it's not often recognized.

According to the CDC, "psychological and emotional dating violence occur when a partner harms or threatens the victim's self-worth." These abusive acts can be obvious, such as insults and threats, or more subtle, like teasing and jealousy. Unfortunately, many of these warning signs are accepted as common teen-aged behavior. Teens see it in their own and their friends' relationships regularly, and most don't think it's a big deal.

Research tells us otherwise. A 2015 study from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) showed that most women who experience psychological abuse showed symptoms of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Melanie shared that Cassie spent months recovering after her abusive relationship ended, even though he never hurt her physically. What's more, "verbal/emotional [abuse] was found to be the most common form of abuse in teen dating relationships for both boys and girls"



according to another study from the National Institute of Justice, with 64 percent of girls and 45 percent of boys admitting to doing it to a boyfriend or girlfriend.

So what can concerned parents do? A helpful but difficult step is to lead by example. Children already see more than enough unhealthy behavior in the media and among their peers, so parents can make a difference by modeling healthy relationships at home. Parents can also have open, non-judgmental talks with their teens about healthy and unhealthy relationships. If you are unsure of how to have these conversations, you can visit some of the websites below for tips and educational materials.

Next, parents can be supportive if their teen does tell them about abuse. The worst way a parent can respond is with judgement, such as "I told you I didn't like them!" Instead, reassure your child that you are sorry they are hurting, and willing to help in any way you can. Make sure they understand that this is not their fault, and they are not deserving of the abusive treatment. Finally,

reach out for professional help! There are domestic violence hotlines, counseling, and support groups widely available. This is, unfortunately, a common and far-reaching problem, so get connected with people who know how to help.

Melanie says that today, Cassie is much more sensitive to controlling or possessive behavior, because her experience has taught her to recognize the warning signs.

"I'm so proud of her resilience, and so glad that I stepped in when I did," Melanie said.

For more information, visit: loveisrespect.org; joinonlove.org; mnadv.org; or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-787-3224.

*Name has been changed

Elisa Gallagher is MSW, LGSW, is a Domestic Violence Intervention Specialist with the Bridge Program at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma. The Bridge Program's mission is to break the cycle of intimate partner violence in Baltimore City and its contiguous counties.

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Stronger citizenship role can help rid rogue police

By Regi Taylor

"Are we @%*#^&! cops, or are we in a gang? Which one is it? You can't have it both ways," was the fearful and frustrated response of former Baltimore City police detective, Joe Crystal, dreading physical harm and pleading to a Police Benevolent Association official for help.

In 2012, officer Crystal found a dead rat under a wiper blade of his car's windshield after reporting the vicious beating of a handcuffed suspect by cops he'd accompanied on a buy and bust drug operation, and their subsequent false incident report.

When police become perpetrators, the domino effect of their behavior has a negative ripple across the law enforcement institution, the local government, the community and society-at-large. The consequences are social, economic, cultural and political.

The recent pleas and the guilty verdicts returned in the corruption trial of rogue cops from the Gun Trace Task Force have had strong reverberations in all these areas for the City of Baltimore. As in the case of Detective Crystal, the perception of police as societal protectors and servers was severely damaged—again.

More than a Blue Wall of Silence, in a role reversal, the long-held complaint of law enforcement that citizens could play a larger role in battling crime by reporting what they know has been turned on its head because the "Stop Snitching" ethos of Baltimore police, in part, abetted the scope and ferocity of corruption that came to light during the recent trial. The hypocrisy of criminal's "policing" has terribly eroded the social fabric.

The corruption trial, while particularly heinous, should not distract from the more systemic misbehavior of a minority of Baltimore's roughly 3,000 police officers, evidenced by the U.S. Justice Department's consent decree enacted one year ago. The eye-opening economic impact of police misconduct in Baltimore, nearly \$20 million in payouts in five years between 2010 and 2015—averaging \$11,000 per day—is untenable.

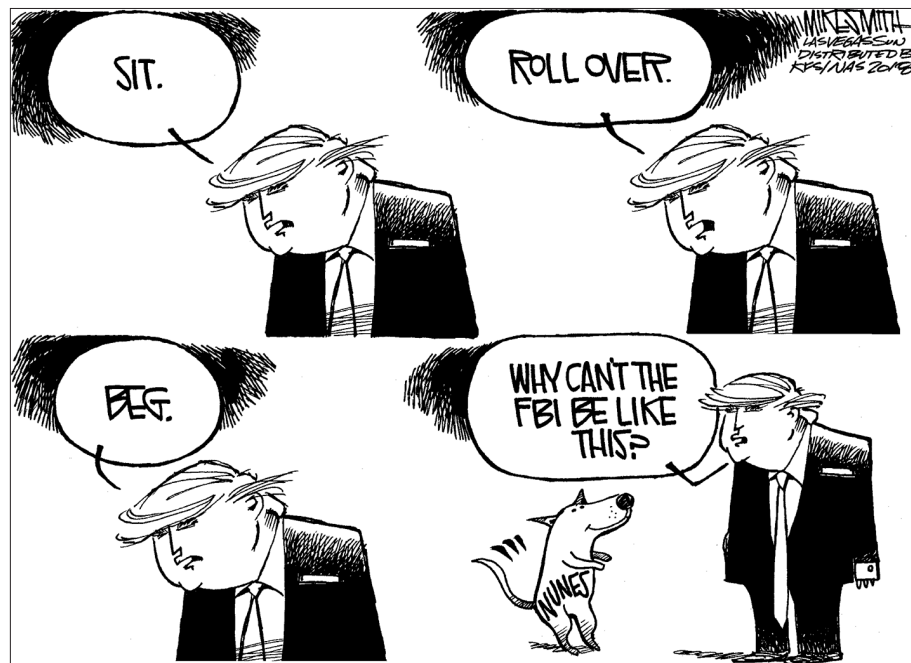
The damning effect of police as perpetrators on Baltimore's culture is quite daunting as well, demonstrated by the anarchic scene of legions of well-armed police facing off against thousands of enraged citizens. Although officers accused of Freddie Gray's death were acquitted, the reputation of officers as perpetrators of violence against citizens, made an epic confrontation inevitable and portends future square-offs without strong, immediate redress.

Politically, the effect of police as perpetrators in Baltimore is a two-edged sword. Mistrust of the police by citizens, precipitates a lack of confidence in the leadership and perceived lack of ability of City Hall to effectively govern. This disillusion by the electorate discourages voter participation and routine civic engagement.

Unfortunately, lack of civic engagement and voter participation are part of the problem. The police were never intended to police themselves and City Hall was never intended to administer government—without the consent of the governed. While Mayor Pugh won office handily with 57 percent of the votes cast, 234,055, 36 percent of the electorate didn't bother to vote—131,453.

Detective Crystal asked the right question about whether the Baltimore Police Department is a gang or a law enforcement agency. We must ask ourselves: do we fight the power or become The Power? To influence City Hall and police the police, we must participate in our democracy. Vote intelligently!

Regi Taylor is a West Baltimore native. The married father of four is an artist, writer and media professional specializing in political history.



Community Affairs

Governor Hogan declares 2018 as "Year of Frederick Douglass"

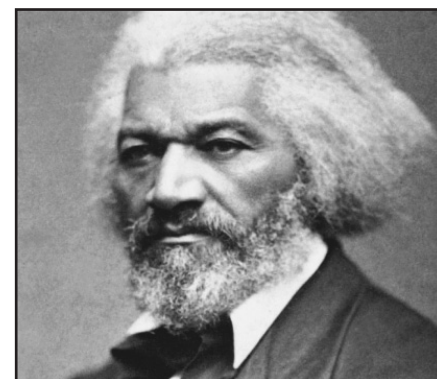
Maryland celebrates Bicentennial Anniversary of the birth of Frederick Douglass

Annapolis—Governor Larry Hogan issued a proclamation declaring 2018 as the "Year of Frederick Douglass."

The announcement comes in celebration of the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of renowned abolitionist and Maryland native, Frederick Douglass.

"Frederick Douglass' contributions to society transcend race, nationality, or religion, and his fight for human rights and equality still resonates to this day," said Governor Hogan. "I want to encourage all Marylanders to attend the events and programs that are planned in honor of the official Year of Frederick Douglass in Maryland."

Born in Talbot County, Maryland in 1818, Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, later known as Frederick Douglass, achieved international prominence for his work to abolish slavery and bring social reform. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, Douglass met with government



leaders, penned editorials, made public presentations, and published a number of newspapers advocating for abolition. His first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*, published in 1845, is noted as one of the most influential pieces of literature in the American abolitionist movement.

In celebration of the "Year of Frederick Douglass," the Banneker-Douglass Museum, Maryland's official museum of African American history, heritage, and culture, has announced partnerships with various organizations to host educational seminars, celebrations, and events across the state.

To see a full list of events visit: <http://bdmuseum.maryland.gov/events/>

There's more to Black History than slavery

By Marilyn M. Singleton, M.D., J.D

Black History Month is a time to celebrate Americans whose accomplishments are sometimes overshadowed by the eye-catching negative news stories.

It was discomfiting to watch the State of the Union address while black congresspersons churlishly sat with their arms crossed even as President Trump announced that black unemployment was at its lowest recorded rate. This sort of behavior does nothing except promote the notion that rudeness and incivility is accepted congressional protocol. The employment news could have been a great segue into Black History Month. These “resisters” could have transformed a statistic into an opportunity to let their unquestionably loyal constituents know that ordinary black people can rise to the top.

Black leaders should help dispel the myth that the only money in the black community is in the hands of sports figures and entertainers. Maybe they should read “Why Should White Guys Have All the Fun?,” the autobiography of Reginald Lewis. Lewis attended college on a scholarship and Harvard Law

School, worked his way up in the financial world of leverage buy-outs and in 1987 bought Beatrice International for \$985 million. Renamed TLC Beatrice, this snack food, beverage and grocery store conglomerate was the largest black-owned and managed business in the U.S. Lewis's philanthropy built the Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture. The first major facility at Harvard named in honor of an

Lieutenant William J. Powell, a decorated World War I veteran, wrote, “Because of Bessie Coleman, we have overcome that which was worse than racial barriers. We have overcome the barriers within ourselves and dared to dream.”

Congresspersons, tell your constituents that prior to the Reconstruction there were black legislators, such as Matthias de Souza of the Colonial Maryland Legislature, 1641-1642 and Alexander Twi-

detailed discussion about treatment choices can allay such fears. This is impossible in a seven-minute visit. Additionally, offices' requests for insurance information made patients feel like money was the prime concern. This perception could be invalidated by instituting government policies that encourage medical care on a charitable basis—something physicians have happily done since the days of Hippocrates.

The key factor engendering distrust was poor “interpersonal competence,” with participants complaining, “physicians barely spoke to them, did not examine them, and immediately took out a prescription pad.” Sadly, this is becoming the norm for all patients—black and white. The way to rid the health system of disparities is not give everyone the same level of robotic treatment. We physicians can contribute our time and use every patient encounter to let patients know they will be treated with respect and dignity.

And as for our ornery congressional “resisters,” they should rent the film, “Remember the Titans,” take its message of receptivity and cooperation to heart, uncross their arms, roll up their sleeves, and join the winning team.

Dr. Marilyn M. Singleton is a board-certified anesthesiologist. She is also a Board-of-Directors member and President-elect of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS). While still working in the operating room, she attended UC Berkeley Law School, focusing on constitutional law and administrative law. She interned at the National Health Law Project and practiced insurance and health law. She teaches classes in the recognition of elder abuse and constitutional law for non-lawyers.

“Congresspersons, tell your constituents that prior to the Reconstruction there were black legislators, such as Matthias de Souza of the Colonial Maryland Legislature, 1641-1642 and Alexander Twilight of the Vermont Legislature, 1836-1837. And as early as 1783 an ex-slave, James Derham, could become a skilled and respected physician with a successful practice, treating both black and white patients.”

African-American was the Reginald F. Lewis International Law Center.

Instead of stirring the racial and gender identity victimization pot, black leaders should display the qualities that we would want to develop in our children.

Take persistence in achieving one's aspirations, exemplified by Bessie Coleman. She was the daughter of sharecroppers who became the first black American female pilot and the first black American to have an international pilot license.

Denied admission to American flight schools because she was black and refused private training because she was a woman, Coleman was undeterred. She learned French and in 1921 went to a Paris flight school. She first appeared in an American air show in 1923 at an event honoring veterans of the all-black 369th Infantry Regiment of World War I. Before she could fulfill her dream of starting a flying school, she died in 1926 while practicing for an air show.

light of the Vermont Legislature, 1836-1837. And as early as 1783 an ex-slave, James Derham, could become a skilled and respected physician with a successful practice, treating both black and white patients.

None of these successes denies the reality of social and health issues affecting the poor and some ethnic minorities. Despite the Affordable Care Act (ACA), non-elderly black Americans, among others remain significantly more likely than whites to be uninsured. Disturbingly, a degree of fear and distrust of medical care exists in some black Americans. A public hospital focus-group study found several contributing factors, including an expectation of racism. In today's climate where some black leaders imply that white Americans are racists, only personal experiences can slay that fire-breathing dragon.

Another determinant was fear of experimentation noting the infamous Tuskegee syphilis study. Only a deep,

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Miss Black Maryland USA featured in Lifetime's new women's campaign

By Stacy M. Brown

Baltimore attorney Saidah Grimes is part of Lifetime's new online campaign, "Her America: 50 Women, 50 States." Grimes says she is using her platform as Miss Black Maryland USA to help shine a light on the inequality experienced by African Americans and women in the state. She also wants to remind young women that not only is black beautiful, but that brains and beauty go hand and hand.

"As a practicing lawyer, I wanted to choose a platform that combined my passion for legal advocacy and desire to help others. It's a privilege to advocate for those who often feel voiceless and invisible both as a lawyer and as a beauty queen," said Grimes, who last year was named a "Rising Star" by Super Lawyers magazine.

Grimes graduated magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina Moore School of Business where she quadruple majored in international business, corporate finance, global supply chain and operations management and marketing.

She minored in Spanish and, as a law student, Grimes interned at the Office of the Public Defender for the Juvenile Division in Baltimore where she advocated for youth who were arrested and accused of crimes, winning her first criminal trial prior to graduating law school.

She has said that being Miss Black Maryland USA presents a chance to advocate for young people who find themselves on the wrong side of the law.

Grimes' Miss Black Maryland USA platform called "Plug the Pipeline" aims to educate parents and legislative officials on the inherent link between school-based arrests and school disciplinary policies and the growing number of youth in the justice system.

She says she dreams of starting a non-profit focused on helping kids learn



Baltimore attorney Saidah Grimes is featured in Lifetime's new online campaign, "Her America: 50 Women, 50 States." Last year, Grimes was named a "Rising Star" by Super Lawyers magazine. Courtesy Photo

effectively advocacy skills to inspire the next generation of prospective attorneys. Currently, she is excited about the Lifetime campaign, she said.

"The most encouraging aspect of the Lifetime campaign is showing that beauty comes in different shades, sizes and talents. This campaign shows that there is no such thing as the typical woman," Grimes said. "We are all different and unique and have the power to inspire others through our stories."

The Lifetime campaign went live on February 5, 2018 with a web promotion that included clips of a police officer, seamstress, professional horse rider and

others who served to emphasize the broad scope of women in America.

By sharing stories of 50 different women, Lifetime officials say they hope to bring women closer together and amplify the voices that go mostly unheard and unrecognized.

"Following the 2016 U.S. presidential

election, at a time when our country seemed more fractured than ever, Lifetime set out to capture the truth about women's lives in America, bringing them closer together," according to an official news release. "As one of the country's most powerful, preeminent female entertainment channels, this February 12, Lifetime [made] a commitment to represent real women through 'Her America.'"

The ultimate impact of the campaign will be shattering stereotypes regarding conventional beauty and traditional roles for women, Grimes said.

"Women all over the globe are making a difference, and I feel honored to be one of the featured stories in the Lifetime campaign," she said.

Grimes says she is inspired by other strong, women lawyers like Democratic California Senator Kamala Harris, whom she noted she would love to meet one day.

"We are at a critical time. Women are demanding long-deserved respect, and men are listening," Grimes said, when asked specifically about the #MeToo movement that has swept through Hollywood and the boardrooms of corporate America.

"Minorities are fighting for equality in our justice system, and the country is listening. How we come together now will define a new order of dignity and respect for all irrespective of race, sex, gender identity or socioeconomic status," she said. "I am humbled to know that I am helping to build a better future for the next generation."

For more information about Lifetime's "Her America" campaign, visit <https://www.heramerica.com/>.

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For registration and event details, visit Baltimore.org.






I Believe

By Jean Claude (J.C.) Louis-Charles III
The Nucleus Team,
Positively Caviar, Inc.

Something as simple as believing in yourself can have a profound impact on the rest of your life. There is so much untapped opportunity out there and sometimes you may feel it's out of your reach, but all you have to do is choose to make a difference.

The mind is a powerful machine that can be used to push us past perceived limits to reach new heights in life.

Now is the time to take action, now is the time to believe, now is the time to work. If there is something you want to do or be, then start today on making that dream a reality; even if it's only for five minutes.

There is a compound effect when you decide to work hard on something that you truly desire. You get the satisfaction of completing a new task that intrigues you while learning more about that thing, whatever it may be.

Time will not wait on you to scrape together the energy or courage, time will continue on because that is what life does. Life goes on, and you can either decide to take the reins or sit back and hope the ride is enjoyable.

This is something we all should strive for, to be better than we were yesterday and to never stop learning. If you believing in yourself, it's something that other people can feel—it's a silent courage.

In today's America, we must not let ourselves be distracted by all of the noise around us. The noise I'm referring to is the social media, the news, or even friends and family. You must be the one to have the final say—you must decide what type of life that you want to live. Nobody else can decide this for you, and you should never give anyone the power to do so. Your freedom or choice is a superpower that every one of us possesses and many of us give it away.

Another superpower that we all have is the ability to uplift those who are trying



Jean Claude (J.C.) Louis-Charles III
Member of The Nucleus Team
Positively Caviar, Inc.
Courtesy Photo

to believe in themselves. A kind word, a smile, a hug, all these things hold the power to change the course of someone's day, the power of human connection is greatly underestimated.

We may never truly know just how vast the power of the human mind and spirit is but at least we know the power exists. If you don't believe me, take a second to think about the fact that your brain contains approximately 9,000,000,000 nerve cells all working together to allow you to pontificate the wonders of the universe. Once you have finished thinking about this, I hope you can accept this challenge. I challenge you to be better than you were yesterday.

How you choose to complete this challenge is up to you but even if you don't yet, I believe in you.

Positively Caviar, Inc. is a non-profit organization focused on intensifying the message of positivity and optimism in our digitally centric lives in the Mid-Atlantic region. To learn more about our organization, the nucleus team or how you join our positive movement, visit: staybasedandpositive.com

Please send all community calendar events
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Bethesda company receives cyber security grant

By Stacy M. Brown

Cybersecurity is an important and growing concern—one that touches every economic sector and is essential for national security, according to Max Shuftan, the program director of SANS CyberTalent at the SANS Institute in North Bethesda.

Shuftan says cybersecurity affects the financial health and wellbeing of the global business community and consumers alike.

“We are more connected to the internet than ever before. It’s not just computers that store valuable data and are connected to networks—when we use our smart phones, cars, wireless apps and a host of other devices, we put ourselves, our businesses, and/or governmental organizations at risk,” Shuftan said.

The SANS Institute— noted by many as the world’s leading provider of cybersecurity training and certification—has been awarded an Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) implementation grant by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

The \$500,000 award, which is for the period of January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019, will be used by SANS to develop and launch the SANS Cyber Workforce Academy – Maryland.

The Department of Labor and SANS will provide 80 qualified Maryland residents with full scholarships to a fast-track career in cybersecurity.

Training will be held at various locations throughout the state in conjunction with online classes. Applications are now open and will close on March 8, 2018. To apply, visit: www.sans.org/cyberworkforce-md.

“Organizations are fighting hard to prevent costly breaches that have the power to tarnish a brand’s reputation as well as lead to losses of data, IP, consumer PII, and more,” Shuftan said. “The past years have seen breaches of notable organizations such as Equifax, Target, Yahoo, Anthem, and Home Depot. The negative impacts extend beyond the business to include customers and the nation at-large. The need for skilled cybersecurity professionals has never been more para-



Applications are now open and will close on March 8, 2018. To apply, visit: www.sans.org/cyberworkforce-md. Training will be held at various locations throughout the state in conjunction with online classes. Courtesy Photo

mount and the constant talent shortage is a serious issue for all employers.”

Funding from the grant allows for a three-to-four month accelerated cybersecurity training program that offers students advanced technical training, industry-recognized certifications and hands-on cyber defense and incident handling skills that most Maryland employers seek.

The Academy will place an emphasis on veterans and women, according to a news release. SANS is collaborating with industry and nonprofits to support applicant recruitment and post-graduation job searches.

The USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore and the Women’s Society of Cyberjutsu will help academy graduates blend their newly acquired technical skills with soft skills like communication and leadership, to increase their attractiveness to employers, SANS officials said.

Established in 1989 as a cooperative research and education organization, SANS has more than 50 different courses at over 200 live cyber security training and online events.

“The [grant] will provide scholarships for 80 individuals in Maryland coming from non-cybersecurity backgrounds and participants will receive cyber de-

fense and incident handling training, and a pathway into the workforce,” Shuftan said, noting the full commercial value of the scholarships is over \$1 million.

Shuftan says EARN counts as an inno-

vative, industry-led initiative supported by the state that helps businesses cultivate the skilled workforce they need to compete while preparing Maryland residents for meaningful careers.

“The program, which has been recognized as a national best practice in workforce development, awards funding to strategic industry partnerships comprised of employers, nonprofits, higher education, local workforce development boards, and local government,” Shuftan said.

The initiative also means more minorities will be assisted, he said.

“Yes, SANS and its partners are committed to increasing diversity in this fast-growing industry. We will serve minorities through this Workforce Academy program through Veterans’ scholarships, Women’s scholarships, and general jobseeker scholarships,” Shuftan said. “SANS is launching a separate Minorities scholarship program later this year, building on our existing Veterans’ success and Women’s Immersion Academies, as well.”

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Documentaries explore life of former D.C. Mayor Marion Barry and others

Washington, D.C.—Three documentaries scheduled for release during Black History Month are being touted as thought provoking and powerful. One looks at the life of the late former Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, while the others explore Kofi Adu Brempong, a disabled Ghanaian graduate student attacked by University of Florida campus police and the state of black males.

Indieplex Festival plans a February 20, 2018 release on DVD of “The Nine Lives of Marion Barry,” “In His Own Home,” and “The Vanishing Black Male.” All three films are being offered together for \$59.95.

In a news release detailing the film about Barry, who died in 2014, the filmmakers recount the man known as “Mayor for Life,” his rise, falls, trials and reemergence.

“Hailed as a civil rights champion and defender of the poor, he transformed Washington D.C. from a sleepy southern town into a political stronghold of black America,” the filmmakers noted.

Barry’s soaring achievements, catastrophic failures and phoenix-like rebirths made him a symbol of mythic indestructibility. From the Mississippi cotton fields to the corridors of power, Barry weathered drug and alcohol addiction, cancer, four marriages, jail time and political extinction to dominate politics in the District of Columbia for more than 40 years.

With unprecedented access, “The Nine Lives of Marion Barry” tells the continuing saga of this despised, beloved and resilient politician. “It’s a potent story of race, power, sex, and drugs; the tale of a complex and contradictory man who is the star of one of the most fascinating and bizarre chapters of American politics.”

Before Michael Brown and Ferguson, Missouri, the headline-making killing

INDIEPIX FESTIVAL FAVORITES: VOL. 3

THE NINE LIVES OF
MARION BARRY

IN HIS OWN HOME

THE VANISHING
BLACK MALE

of Trayvon Martin and the death of Eric Garner at the hands of New York City police officers, there was the shocking 2010 shooting of Kofi Adu Brempong. And, though few media outlets outside of Gainesville reported the story, the powerful, hot button documentary featurette, “In His Own Home,” recounts the events of that fateful March day and the aftermath.

There is live video of the police attack on Kofi’s apartment along with accounts of those who marveled at the number of snipers “ready to shoot at any time” as they surrounded the apartment of a lone student, as well as from fellow students who attest to Kofi’s peaceful demeanor.

“Underlining a pattern of racism and police brutality, as well as the frightening militarization of campuses nationwide, ‘In His Own Home’ speaks to widespread and pervasive issues in our country that will, for the time being, remain among our most controversial and disconcerting,” the filmmakers said.

In “The Vanishing Black Male,” actor Melvin Jackson, Jr. speaks with African American men of all walks—doctors, politicians, college students, teachers, law enforcement personnel and others—to determine the state of the black man in America.

Edited by award-winner Alfred Santana, the timely exploration is interwoven with music, art and a series of monologues.

Macy's celebrates innovators and visionaries during Black History Month

Black PR Wire— This February, Macy's celebrates Black History Month by welcoming a host of innovators in fashion, entertainment, art, music, literature and technology, who are pioneers in their industries. Innovation is one of the cornerstones of black culture, helping to propel trends, widely influencing pop culture, and changing the face of history.

From music to science, black culture has created a wave of change that has helped drive the country to new heights. With innovation comes an extraordinary opportunity to push boundaries, challenge the status quo, and make unprecedented waves.

This year, Macy's special guests will discuss how they blazed their own paths and how the connection to their heritage helped inspire their success. Macy's will also celebrate those making a difference and impacting their local communities, while helping to pave the way for future generations.

As part of Macy's Black History Month celebrations, actress, writer and producer Issa Rae will appear at Macy's Baldwin Hills in Los Angeles. Macy's will also welcome Emmy® -nominated actress and equal rights advocate, Laverne Cox, at Herald Square in New York City. Both will participate in moderated conversations about Black history, their inspirations and innovation in showbiz.

"These upcoming Black History events serve as wonderful opportunities for Macy's to bring bold, ground-breaking black innovators into our stores and to our communities," said Kristyn Doar-Page, Macy's vice president of Diversity & Inclusion Strategies. "As a retailer committed to celebrating trailblazers, Macy's is thrilled to open a space where

our community can engage with these artists as they share their life stories and inspirations."

Issa Rae's rise from web series creator to one of Hollywood's It-girls is nothing less than remarkable. Rae's content has garnered millions of views online and two Golden Globe® nominations for Best Actress for her hit show, HBO's Insecure. Issa's web series, The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl was the recipient of the coveted Shorty Award for Best Web Show, and her first book, a collection of essays, is a New York Times Best Seller. Issa has graced the cover and pages of major national media outlets including Essence, The Hollywood Reporter, Vanity Fair, The New York Times, CNN, VOGUE and TIME with appearances on The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, Good Morning America, The View, and more.

"I am excited to be working with Macy's during Black History Month to celebrate those young and old whose innovation and talents are transforming American culture and making undeniable contributions to art and entertainment," said Rae.

Laverne Cox is a two-time Emmy-nominated actress and Emmy-winning producer best known for her work on the critically acclaimed Netflix original series Orange Is The New Black, where she plays the groundbreaking role of Sophia Burset. Her work as an actress and advocate landed her on the cover of TIME magazine as well as two Emmy nominations, back-to-back SAG Awards for "Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series," a Critic's Choice nomination, and consecutive NAACP Image Award nomina-



During Black History Month Macy's welcomes local change makers at eight stores nationwide, highlighted by special appearances by Issa Rae (left) in Los Angeles and Laverne Cox (right) in New York City. Cox will be at Macy's Herald Square in New York City on Thursday, February 22, 2018 at 6 p.m.

Courtesy Photos/Macy's

tions. Cox is a renowned speaker and has taken her empowering message of moving beyond gender expectations to live more authentically all over the country.

Her work as an advocate landed her a coveted spot as one of Glamour magazine's 2014 Women of the Year. She is the recipient of the Dorian Rising Star Award, the Courage Award from the Anti-Violence Project, The Community Leader Award from the LGBT Center of New York City, was named one of The Griot's 100 Most Influential African Americans, one of the Top 50 Trans Icons by the Huffington Post, one of Out

magazine's Out 100, was ranked number 5 on the 2014 Root 100 list and is a part of Ebony's Power 100.

"I am grateful to be working with Macy's during Black History Month to contribute to powerful conversations about the transformative work being done by young innovators," said Cox. "There is never a better time to discuss the contributions made by the black community, and what an inspiration it is to be among those fighting for change."

For additional information about Macy's Black History Month festivities and special guests, visit: macys.com/celebrate.

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Harold and Carolyn Young

Nearly 50 Years of Marriage and Counting

By Ursula V. Battle

This is the third of three Valentine's Day feature stories published in The Baltimore Times highlighting local couples whose marriages have spanned several decades.

Nearly 50 years ago, a handsome young man by the name of Harold D. Young gave a beautiful young woman named Carolyn Syphax his Omega Psi Phi fraternity pin.

"After college, I had no money, and gave her my pin," recalled Young with a smile.

Carolyn added, "After he pinned me, my mother said, 'You do realize, you are now engaged.'"

To Carolyn's family, the giving of Young's prized fraternity pin meant he was asking for her hand in marriage. "I didn't know that at the time," said Young with a laugh. "But we got married on November 29, 1968."

On November 29, 2018, Harold and Carolyn Syphax-Young will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. Young is an attorney, while his wife is a realtor. The two have known each other since they were children.

"We have been knowing each other for 64 years," said Young. "We first met on a playground in Arlington, Virginia. 'I was nine and she was seven. We went to school together. At that time, schools were segregated. I passed by her house going home.'"

The couple talked about the longevity of their marriage, and their upcoming Golden Anniversary. They have two children and three grandchildren.

"We are always doing things together, whether antiquing or buying things," said Young. "When we had our children, they became our primary focus. They are now grown, and are still involved in their lives. We are a very close-knit family. Carolyn and I both grew up in the church, and brought our children up in church."

The two are long-time members of Providence Baptist Church, where the Rev. Marcus Garvey Wood and the Rev. Dr. Reverend Doctor Douglas E. Summers serve as co-pastors.

"As members of the Christian faith, we understand there are boundaries," said Young. "It teaches you to approach things in a loving, caring, and supportive way. It also becomes a part of who you are, and how

you treat people. Our spirituality has really played a major part in our lives."

Syphax-Young added, "Harold's right. I remember the time when we both took a motivational course and had to write down our goals as an exercise. At that time, we had been married for about five years. We didn't show each other what we had written down. But one night, we read our goals to each other. As it turned out, they were similar in where we wanted to be. We were pushing in the same direction."

Young shared another key to keeping their marriage locked in place.

"Carolyn loves being the boss," said Young of his wife, who is a graduate of Fisk University. "And I don't mind letting her be the boss. It is her nature to do things, make plans, and have things fixed. I get out of her lane and let her run with it."

He added, "You have to support each other. You have to step back and give each other a shot to develop a lifestyle for them-

selves. As an attorney, and with Carolyn being a realtor, it might have been easy to become prideful, but we never did. It's the quiet things that make all the difference. You have to have someone supporting you, and you have to support them."

Syphax-Young looked at her Valentine of more than 50 years and said, "We also love each other very much. We get along so well because we stay in our lane. At the same time, we support each other's strengths and support each other in our weaknesses. We supported each other in our own ways, and allowed the other to grow."

Their light-hearted sense of humor has also played a part in their marriage.

"I will never forget the time when I was about 14 when Carolyn put lipstick all over my pack of cigarettes," said Young with a laugh. "But then again, I wasn't supposed to have those cigarettes."

Syphax-Young added with a laugh, "And I wasn't supposed to have on that lipstick."

The couple feels they are the 'perfect match'.



Harold D. Young and his wife Carolyn Syphax-Young have been married for nearly 50 years. Courtesy Photos



Harold and Carolyn married on November 29, 1968.

"We complement each other very well," said Young. "Carolyn is very analytical and does the numbers. I do the reading and the spell-checking."

Syphax-Young looked at her husband with a smile and added, "And together, we are dynamite."

Back in the Day

Even when Baltimore was ‘separate,’ many things remained ‘equal’

By Stacy M. Brown

A half-century ago, African-Americans in Baltimore lived as happy and comfortably as their white counterparts.

No, blacks didn't have the material wealth as their white peers, but they enjoyed the comforts of a solid family structure, great food and entertainment, and a college access to Morgan State University, which could boast a level of education that matched nearby Towson.

"I'm so glad we moved past that idea of separate but equal nonsense," said retired social worker and long-time Baltimore resident Mildred Taylor. Back in the day we had Morgan State, which was a state school that black people went to and we had Towson, which was a state school for whites. When I go by Towson, I tell people this is what is known as separate but equal. They are separated by black and white but they're getting equal education."

Taylor, who grew up on the Eastern Shore and moved to Baltimore in 1941, offered further analysis.

"It's like going past the White House and then going past a house in Southeast, Washington, D.C. You know Towson was big and palatial and had everything while Morgan State was 'just ok,'" she said.

A graduate of then Morgan State College who later earned a master's degree from Howard University, Taylor recalled the time of segregation:

"In Baltimore, it was, everything was over here for blacks and over there for whites," she said.

But, that didn't stop African-Americans from enjoying life.

The nightclubs, restaurants and other establishments along Pennsylvania Avenue kept the community buzzing. It didn't matter what was going on in "the white side of town," Taylor said. "You didn't know any difference. You just enjoyed yourself and had a good time."

In the bygone era of chivalry and neighborhood unity, Taylor says there is little comparison today to the camaraderie shared in the black community during the early-to-mid 20th century.

"I think we were friendlier because we knew each other. Everyone knew their neighbors and we all went to school together," she said.

There were also just two schools for blacks— Frederick Douglass High School, which had previously been known as the Colored High and Training School; and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, which opened in 1918.

The two schools were part of the segregated "Colored Schools System," which was abolished in 1954.

"Those who lived on the east side went to Douglass and those who lived on the west side went to Dunbar and our neighbors helped our parents to keep us all in line," Taylor said.



Mildred Taylor with great-grandson, Andrew.

An alumni of two Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Taylor says the difference between today's HBCUs and in her youth is simple: "HBCUs were all we had," she said.

When seeking entertainment, Taylor and her companions strolled along Pennsylvania Avenue, visiting

began to change. Things like the closeness we had in the community," she said.

"The good from desegregation, though, included that we got to go to other schools and meet different people. If you were considered smart, you could go to a white school. If you were real poor or your parents didn't

know any better, you went to one of the black schools," Taylor said, adding that the Department of Education selected the top black students to attend white schools.

Taylor also recalled dining at the local YWCA, where many African-Americans

met regularly for entrees that included chicken, fish and pork chops.

"I know that I tended to stay with what I knew but as I started getting older and going out to different restaurants and became more sophisticated, I went for crab cakes, lobster, muscles and food like that," Taylor said.

What's similar today to the bygone era? Taylor says that's an easy question to answer.

"Baltimore has always been a crab town," she said. "So, going out to eat hard shell crabs was always a big thing and it's still a big thing!"

"Blacks didn't have the material wealth as their white peers, but they enjoyed the comforts of a solid family structure, great food and entertainment..."

nightclubs and enjoying big bands, jazz and doo-wop.

"I never wore an evening gown to go to the club, most of us wore what we called our Sunday clothes, nothing too flashy," Taylor said.

Although racism gripped America and African-Americans fought for equal rights and the desegregation of schools, there remained a peaceful enclave in Baltimore.

While desegregation deserved celebration, it also marked the beginning of the separation of the black community as residents knew it, according to Taylor.

"When they desegregated schools, that's when things

Back in the Day

Baltimore Times consultant recalls Park Sausages, corner stores and a hip scene

By Stacy M. Brown

Ackneil Muldrow, II spends much of his time consulting on issues of importance at the Baltimore Times. But, his history in Charm City far predates the newspaper and any involvement he's had in making sure that residents get news they can use.

Muldrow has received multiple honors for his work in leadership and board positions he's held at the Bon Secours' Foundation and the Baltimore Health System. Plain and simple, Muldrow has cemented himself as a fixture in Baltimore civic and community leadership roles for more than three decades.

And, he fondly recalls middle 20th century Baltimore — a heyday of sorts.

“Parks Sausage Company, led by Henry G. Parks, Jr. had over 200 employees and it was the first African-American owned business to go public on the stock market,” Muldrow said.

Other outfits like Supper Pride Super Market with its six stores and Baines Stop Shop & Save were among the favorites.

There were also businessmen and street-wise business men, according to Muldrow.

“William L. “Little Willie” Adams was Baltimore's leading African-American businessman. He made a fortune in the ‘numbers’ business, which was the fore-runner of today's lottery,” Muldrow said.

Adams became a financier of both Black and white-owned businesses despite the reluctance of banks to provide loans to African-American businesses, he said.

“He built a political empire and was a contributor to many positive actions and projects in the African community but he sought no public recognition for most of his projects,” Muldrow said.

By comparison, Muldrow noted, today most corner store businesses are owned by Asians in Baltimore, many of whom shy away from investing in the community.

While he reminisces about the days of old, Muldrow recognizes things weren't always good.

“There were some dark days of discrimination and unequal treatment,” he said.

“[However], people helped one another to overcome adversity and a dark and uncertain future. We had faith and family,” Muldrow said.

As president of the former Development Credit Fund Inc. (DCF), Muldrow helped to secure loans for many African-American business owners. Prior to the creation of the Community Reinvest Act of the 1980s, commercial banks made very few loans directly to Black-owned businesses.

However, six Maryland-based banks pooled their re-



Ackneil Muldrow, II

sources and created the \$7.5 million DCF. “The commercial banks didn't want to be forced to lend to socially and economically disadvantaged businesses,” Muldrow said.

“There were some dark days of discrimination and unequal treatment. However, people helped one another to overcome adversity and a dark and uncertain future. We had faith and family”

“DCF was one of the most successful organizations of its type. It was replicated in other communities. The DCF funded some significant projects that are still operating,” he said.

Today, there remains many obstacles to overcome for African-Americans in Baltimore and around the country, Muldrow said.

“I had hoped not, but I am a realist. We are rudderless as a people for the most part,” he said. “The family

structure is broken. I have served on many organization boards in Baltimore. I go to meetings and represent ‘my community.’

“Oftentimes, I am in conflict with others both Black and white. I make no apologies. I am only interested in the mission of organization.”

Muldrow has worked through the Baltimore Marketing scene for 37 years developing African-American talent in city business.

He's found that there's a lack of unity or structure in leadership that badly needs to be addressed.

Looking back, Muldrow said his parents inspired him. His dad taught him to fight for what he thought was fair and equitable and his mother instilled the importance of kindness and being fair.

“Sometimes,” he said. “I get confused between the two philosophies.”

Baltimore Blast, the city's only winning team

By Timothy Cox

Each time the Baltimore Blast scores a goal, the public address speaker offers a resounding version of "Celebration," the Kool & The Gang classic hit song released in September 1980.

During a recent game between the Blast and their rivals, Harrisburg Heat, the song was played repeatedly, considering the Baltimore team's rout of the Pennsylvania capital's team, 12-5.

First-time visitors to the Blast game included 13-year-old James "JP" Townsend Jr. and his best pal, Ean McChesney, 14, joined nearly 4,000 spectators who filled the stands at the five-year-old SECU Arena on Towson University's sprawling campus.

The new venue holds 5,200 seats and offers luxury-box amenities for private viewing, similar to major sports arenas such as M&T Bank Stadium and Camden Yards and Nationals Park.

Until this season, the team played at Royal Farms Arena in downtown Baltimore, but changed locations to the more modern SECU Arena in November, after signing a three-year deal to experience more modern, but smaller facilities. Royal Farms held about 11,000 spectators.

"I really enjoyed it. Very exciting stuff," said eighth grade, home school student Townsend, who played soccer and learned game rules in elementary school.

Ean McChesney, a freshman at Milford Mill Academy in Gwynn Oak, Md., said he enjoyed watching the fast-paced game action and speed of the players.

According to Joe Moyer, a Blast spokesman, the local team is a nine-time champion of the MASL (Major Arena Soccer League), which includes teams from various parts of the country, including: the Florida Tropics, Syracuse Silver Knights, Cedar Rapids Rampage, Kansas City Comets, Milwaukee Wave, St. Louis Ambush, El Paso Coyotes, Monterrey Flash, Rio Grand Valley Barracudas, Sonora Suns, Ontario Fury, San Diego Sockers, Tacoma Stars and the Turlock Express. The Blast are coming off two consecutive titles, 2016 and 2017.

While the team has a winning-athletic



Baltimore Blast players along with Debbie Phelps (behind globe), with students at Perry Hall Middle School in keeping with the soccer team's theme, "Education is a Blast." Phelps is the director of Baltimore County Public Schools Education Foundation and the mother of noted Olympic swimmer, Baltimore's own Michael Phelps. Courtesy Photo/Baltimore Blast

presence in the community, Blast team officials proudly boast that their organizational priorities include expressing community support and commitment to education among Baltimore area youths.

"We believe in our motto 'Education is a Blast,' said team spokesman Moyer. "Our players visit local schools and discuss subjects like anti-bullying, exercise and health tips, and the value of getting good grades."

Mike Conway, the team's assistant general manager, mirrored Moyer's thoughts by adding, "We're always attending local area schools helping to promote education while signing autographs."

Deborah Phelps, director of Baltimore County Public Schools Education Foundation, is an avid supporter of Baltimore Blast's community-based efforts.

"I've never seen such a cohesive team of young men who are so supportive of our schools. They come and discuss various topics that are helpful to our young people," she said. "They support our anti-bullying campaign and promote values of staying in school."

She also applauded team president and GM Kevin Healey for his personal commitment to his players and the community at-large. For the record, Phelps is the mother of noted Olympic swimmer, Michael Phelps, also of Baltimore.

As of press-time, the Blast continues to enjoy another successful season with a 13-2 record. Their final regular season game is set for Sunday, March 4, 2018, but playoff times have not been sched-

uled yet, according to the team.

For more information about the Baltimore Blast, game schedules and tickets, call 410-732-5278 or visit: www.baltimoreblast.com.

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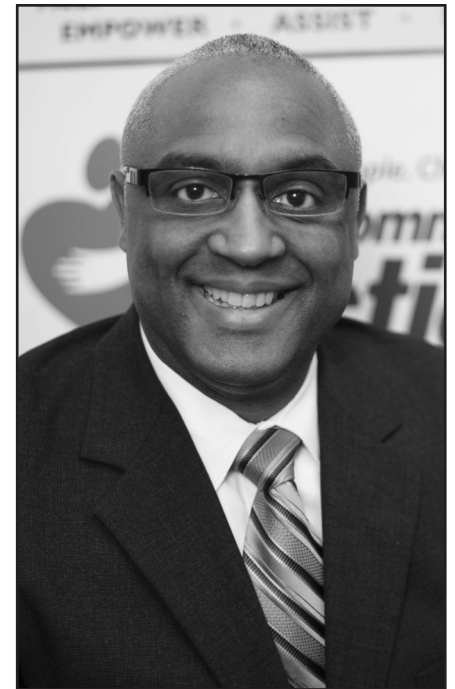
Community Action Agency Appoints New Chief Executive Officer

Annapolis— The Board of Directors of the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency, Inc. proudly announces the appointment of Corwin T. Macklin as the organization's new Chief Executive Officer. Macklin has been serving as the Interim CEO since September of 2017.

Macklin comes to Community Action with over 30 years of executive leadership and management experience, and a proven track record of delivering results. He has served at the highest organizational levels for nonprofits, state government, faith-based organizations and the U.S. Military. He is a transformational leader, seasoned nonprofit executive, and community developer. Corwin has broad-based experience as a nonprofit management consultant in organizational and leadership development, fund development, government relations, administrative operations, program/project management, human resources, and communications.

"As the Agency begins a new chapter in its mission to provide services to the residents of Anne Arundel County, the Community Action Board believes that Mr. Macklin's energy, professional skill set, and leadership experience will be a tremendous asset," said Leslie N. Stanton, president, Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency's Board of Directors.

Macklin recently served as Special Assistant to the President and CEO for Family Matters of Greater Washington, Executive Director of World Vision,



**Corwin T. Macklin
Chief Executive Officer
Anne Arundel County Community
Action Agency, Inc.
Courtesy Photo**

Inc. for the National Capital Area, National Director of Resource Development for World Vision – U.S. Programs, and Director, Faith-Based and Community Initiatives for the State of Arkansas.

"I am elated about this opportunity to be a part of this Community Action team serving our most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens in Anne Arundel County and City of Annapolis," said Macklin. "I look forward to working alongside our Board, staff, volunteers, community partners, and advocates in helping people and changing lives in breaking the cycle of poverty."

Macklin and his wife Regina live in Anne Arundel County. They have three sons and a grandson.

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UMB CURE Scholars: Raising Grades, Hopes

Princaya Sanders used to dream of being a professional wrestler. Now, she has her heart set on anesthesiology. Shakeer Franklin was a disruptive, inattentive middle school student. Now, he plans to be a psychotherapist. Nicholas Knight aspired to be an NFL football player. Now he sees a career in health care.

These are just three of the lives that have been changed by the UMB CURE Scholars Program, which for 2 ½ years has been taking young people from West Baltimore with an interest in science and molding them into future health care workers and researchers through hands-on workshops, lab experiences, and mentorship.

On Feb. 1, the UMB CURE Scholars Program's central leadership team received the Outstanding UMB Staff Award as part of the University of Maryland, Baltimore's Black History Month celebration.

When informed of the program's selection of this award, executive director Robin Saunders, EdD, MS, noted, "This program is truly a labor of love for all of us on the central leadership team. I am honored to work with a team of committed professionals who work tirelessly to positively impact and transform the lives of young West Baltimore students and their families.

"I am amazed at the progress of our scholars who were often overlooked and perhaps even written off due to the socio-economic status of their neighborhoods. This program demonstrates that when students have opportunities and high expectations, they can rise to immeasurable heights."

Launched in October 2015, the program has grown to include 80 sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders, not to mention the nearly 200 mentors from UMB schools recruited by CURE staff members. The UMB CURE Scholars, profiled by Maryland Public Television in "From West Baltimore," which will be rebroadcast Feb. 28 at 8 p.m., are the youngest ever to participate in the National Cancer Institute's Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE) national program. With the first cohort of UMB CURE middle schoolers entering high school in fall 2018, their improved grades, including math and reading scores, and stellar school attendance becomes all the more important.

After school on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, the scholars are transported to the Baltimore City Community College Life Sciences Institute at the University of Maryland BioPark for their training with mentors. On Saturdays, they meet at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy to take part in A Bridge to Academic Excellence, where they receive tutoring.

The UMB Writing Center also has held workshops to help prepare the students for the college application process. Field trips have included museums, mechanical engineering labs, pharmacy and dental school, anatomy class, planetary presentations. Summer camps have exposed the scholars to new discoveries as well.



Robin Saunders, EdD, MS, Executive Director, UMB CURE Scholars Program, pictured above with CURE colleagues Lauren Kareem, MEd, and Borndavid McCraw. Courtesy Photo

"I think it's amazing," said sixth-grade scholar Jazire Faw. "Last week we dissected a sheep's eye, and I thought that was really cool."

By enhancing that love of science from groups underrepresented in the biomedical and health care workforces, the University of Maryland, Baltimore hopes to create a pipeline that will see the scholars through college into rewarding careers — breaking the cycle of poverty so prevalent in West Baltimore.

"We've established that in these students we've got talent to spare, but now we have to make the opportunity," UMB president, Jay A. Perman, MD, said on Saturday, Oct. 14, as the third cohort of CURE scholars slipped on the program's signature white laboratory coats.


"We have to dismantle the barriers that separate our

young people from their potential and from their purpose. We have to give these students what they need to rise, because I've seen them rise, and it's beautiful to watch."

Each year at UMB's Black History Month celebration the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Diversity Recognition Awards are presented for individual and/or group achievements in the areas of diversity and inclusiveness. The recipients serve as models of the ideals epitomized by the life and work of Dr. King.

Saunders is proud the UMB CURE Scholars Program has taken its place among former MLK outstanding staff recipients.

"We are thrilled to be recognized for our challenging and complex, yet rewarding work," she said. "We are grateful to have been selected for this prestigious award named after a great man who gave his life to improve conditions for people who, like our scholars, are often overlooked, forgotten, and perhaps even written off. This award is a blessing and we greatly appreciate this acknowledgment on behalf of the many mentors, faculty, staff, and partners who support our important work, our amazing scholars, and our comprehensive program."





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Stars and creators reflect on arrival of 'Black Panther' movie

By Ronda Racha Penrice
Urban News Service

Fans, who bought a record-setting number of advance tickets, aren't the only ones anticipating the February 16, 2018, opening of "Black Panther," Marvel's historic first black superhero film.

"I've been waiting a long time. I was just so, so excited because this was a movie [where] we all felt a lot of ownership, that we thoroughly enjoyed making," said Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o during the film's January 30 press conference at the Montage Beverly Hills, the morning after its glitzy purple carpet premiere. Nyong'o plays Nakia, T'Challa/Black Panther's love interest.

Although T'Challa/Black Panther, whose superpowers include speed, strength, night vision, claws and more aided by his country's powerful metal, Vibranium, was first introduced in the "Fantastic Four" comic book series in 1966, months before the founding of the iconic freedom-fighting Black Panther Party, "Black Panther" is the character's first-ever live action film.

Reportedly Jack Kirby, who created T'Challa/Black Panther with Stan Lee, took the name from the all-black U.S. Army 761st Tank Battalion of World War II dubbed "the Black Panthers." Chadwick Boseman, well-known for his roles as such real-life heroes as Jackie Robinson and James Brown, is the first to ever play him on film, appearing in 2016's "Captain America: Civil War" to great enthusiasm. He returns in "Avengers: Infinity War" May 4, 2018.

"Black Panther" follows T'Challa/Black Panther's journey, in the aftermath of his father's death, to lead his technologically advanced nation, Wakanda, which the world believes is impoverished. Featuring black actors from the United States, England and various parts of Africa, "Black Panther" is the first Marvel film set in a black-ruled nation. As such, the film challenges the negative stereotypes in which the world typically views African nations. It also raises larger questions about what a successful never colonized African country might look like and what role it would play in today's global landscape.



T'Challa/Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman) and Erik Killmonger (Michael B. Jordan) fight as female warriors known as Dora Milaje who protect the king look on. Photo Credit: Matt Kennedy.©Marvel Studios 2018

The film's larger significance was clearly important to Nyong'o and her fellow cast members—who included Boseman; Michael B. Jordan (Erik Killmonger); Forest Whitaker (Zuri); Angela Bassett (T'Challa/Black Panther's step-mother Ramonda); "Get Out" Oscar nominee Daniel Kaluuya (W'Kabi); and more—during the Hollywood press conference where Marvel Studios head Kevin Feige and Ryan Coogler, the film's co-writer and director, were also present.

Jordan plays the main villain Erik Killmonger, who challenges T'Challa/Black Panther's ascension as Wakanda's king said he only truly grasped the film's importance after seeing it for the first time at the premiere.

"I couldn't describe that feeling before actually sitting down and watching that film and seeing yourself on screen, not just me personally, but people that look like me in power and having those socially relevant themes but in a movie that you want to sit down and watch and enjoy," Jordan said.

As someone from both the United States and Zimbabwe, Danai Gurira, who plays Okoye, leader of the female warriors known as the Dora Milaje who protect the king, had an even more posi-

tive response to the fictional Wakanda and its very real continent. Gurira shared that she appreciated the departure from the usual depictions of African countries as impoverished.

"You see the power and potential of where you're from, but you see how skewed it's viewed by the world and how misrepresented it is and how distorted it is or besieged by the world so often," she said. "[Black Panther] is] kind of a salve to those wounds to see this world brought to life this way and to see all the potential and power of all the different African culturalisms and aspects of our being that's actually celebrated."

"Black Panther" is also noteworthy for its elevation of black women in the superhero genre, be they strong like Gurira's Okoye, humanitarian like Nyong'o's Nakia, royal like Angela Bassett's Ramonda or STEM geniuses like Letitia Wright's Shuri who is T'Challa/Black Panther's sister. That elevation was also present behind the scenes through the work of production designer Hannah Beachler, Oscar-nominated costume designer Ruth E. Carter and hair department head Camille Friend.

"How it was written is that the men are always behind the women as well so no one is undermined," said Wright about

the film and her character. "The men are not like 'you shouldn't be in technology, you shouldn't be in math.' T'Challa is like 'go ahead sis, this is your department, this is your domain, like kill it.'"

Boseman attributes that gender balance to the vision that is Wakanda.

"The idea of the next generation being smarter, being better than you, is a concept that they would have evolved to," said Boseman. "So even though she's reared in the same generation, she's my younger sister, she benefits from whatever I have. So you want your sons and daughters to be better than you were. So that concept is a Wakandan concept."

Coogler, previously known for his independent social justice film "Fruitvale Station" and the latest installment of the Rocky franchise, "Creed," both starring Jordan, says he was cautious not to tamper too much with the "Black Panther" spirit, so well established by the comic books in the script he wrote with Joe Robert Cole.

"You can go through our film and see something in there probably from every writer that has touched T'Challa's character and the "Black Panther" comics, from Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's initial runs to Don McGregor to Christopher Priest, Reginald Hudlin, Jonathan Hickman and Ta-Nehisi Coates," he said, naming most of the franchise writers. "The character has got a long history and such rich stuff to mine and each writer left their own mark."

When the film's radicalism was singled out, Feige reminded those in the room that "Black Panther" was born radical. "Stan Lee and Jack Kirby and the whole Marvel bullpen created Wakanda and created T'Challa and created Black Panther and made him a smarter, more accomplished character than any of the other white characters in the mid-1960s," he said.

That integrity, Feige continued, guided this Marvel team. "If they had the guts to do that in the mid-1960s," he said, "the least we [could] do is live up to that and allow this story to be told the way it needed to be told and not shy away from things that the Marvel founders didn't shy away from in the height of the Civil Rights era."

Annapolis native serving aboard Navy warship in San Diego

By Mass Communication Specialist
1st Class James H. Green,
Navy Office of Community Outreach

San Diego— An Annapolis native and 2011 Annapolis High School, Old Mill High School graduate is serving in the U.S. Navy aboard USS Russell.

Ensign Demond Brown is an operations information division officer aboard the guided-missile destroyer operating out of San Diego.

As a Navy operations information division officer, he is responsible for 16 sailors who track surface and air contacts to assist the ship in anti-air and anti-surface warfare.

"I have a lot of pride in my hometown, being in the Navy, and the work that I do," Brown said.

More than 300 sailors serve aboard the ship, and their jobs are highly specialized, requiring both dedication and skill. The jobs range from maintaining engines to handling weaponry along with a multitude of other assignments that keep the ship mission-ready at all times, according to Navy officials.

"The success of our Surface Force ships is measured by our ability to provide Fleet Commanders with combat naval power at sea and to project that power ashore where and when it matters," said Vice Adm. Richard A. Brown, commander, Naval Surface Forces. "It's hard work to ready ships for combat operations at sea— it takes the talent of an entire crew working well together. I'm extremely proud of the each and every surface warrior's contributions to the Navy's enduring mission of protecting and defending America, at home and around the world."

A Navy destroyer is a multi-mission ship that can operate independently or as part of a larger group of ships at sea. The ship is equipped with tomahawk missiles, torpedoes, guns and a phalanx close-in weapons system.

Brown has military ties with family members who have previously served, and he is honored to carry on the family tradition.

"My cousins joined the military, and there is a lot of pride in that they joined because of me," Brown said.



Ensign Demond Brown is an operations information division officer aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Russell operating out of San Diego.

Photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Isaiah Sellers

Brown's proudest accomplishment was earning the Officer of the Deck qualification in a short period of time.

"Serving in the Navy has made me a more disciplined person," said Brown.

As a member of one of the U.S. Navy's

most relied-upon assets, Brown and other sailors know they are part of a legacy that will last beyond their lifetimes.

"I am proud of my service to our country and the security I help provide," Brown said.

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BGE increases reward for recycling appliances during February

BGE residential customers can get \$75 for recycling their old working refrigerator or freezer

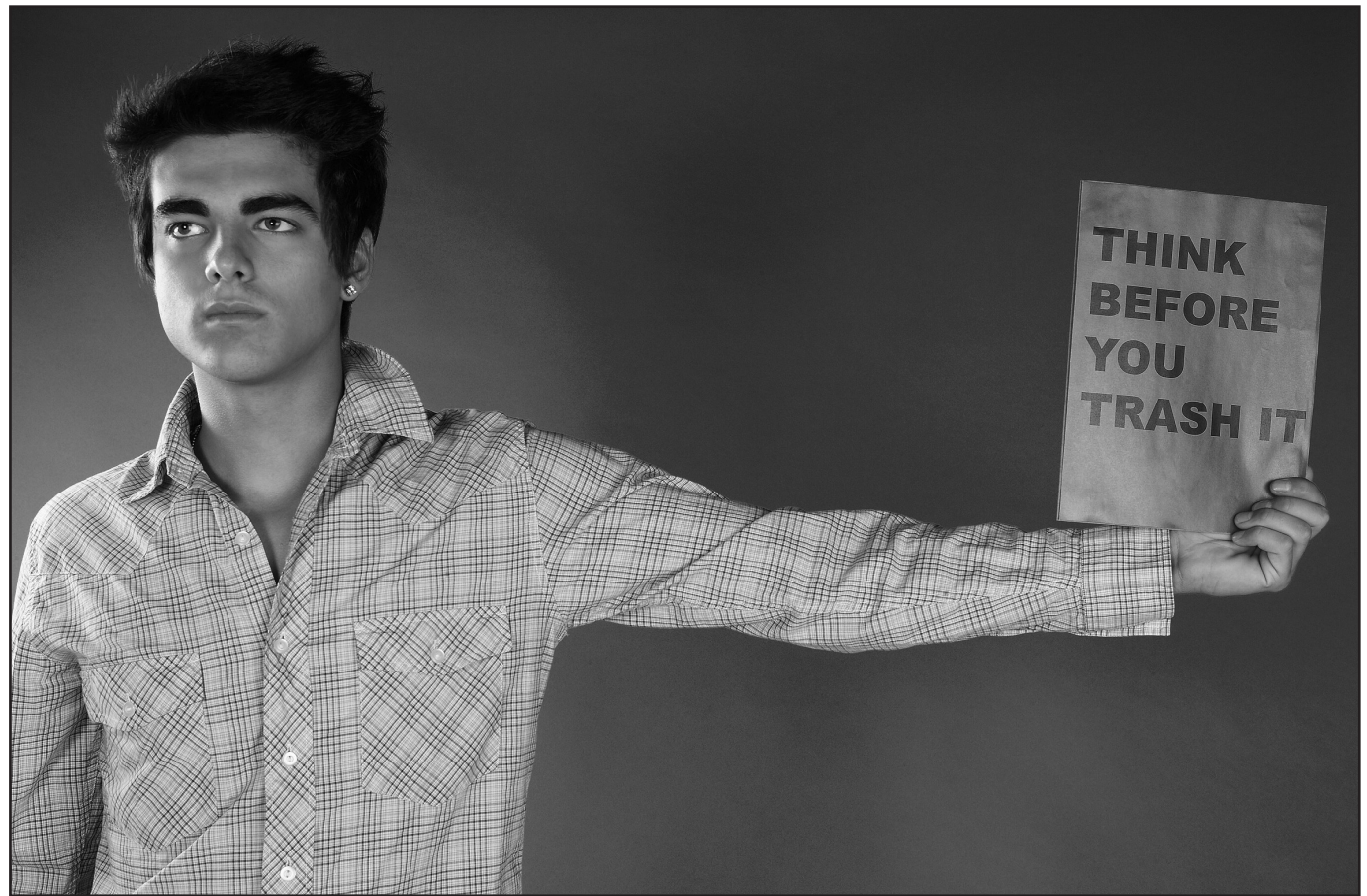
Baltimore— Appliance Recycling through the BGE Smart Energy Saver Program® helps customers recycle older, inefficient, refrigerators and freezers by offering a \$50 reward, and hauling away their old appliances at no additional cost. But in February, participating residential customers will receive a fifty percent bonus for a total reward of \$75 through February 28, 2018.

For some customers, a spare, running refrigerator or freezer could waste up to 1,200 kilowatt hours of energy and \$100 in electric costs every year.

Through BGE's recycling program, more than 95 percent of each appliance is recycled. By removing these older units from the energy grid and properly recycling them, BGE customers not only help reduce energy demand, but also help contribute to a vast reduction in emissions of ozone-depleting substances and greenhouse gases.

Since the program's inception, approximately 63,000 inefficient refrigerators, freezers, room air conditioners and dehumidifiers have been recycled, saving more than 82.3 million kilowatt-hours of electricity use, the equivalent of removing the greenhouse gas emissions of 13,126 passenger vehicles from the road for a year.

To participate, customers can simply visit BGESmartEnergy.com to schedule a pickup online or call 866-898-1901 to



To participate, customers can simply visit BGESmartEnergy.com to schedule a pickup online or call 866-898-1901 to schedule over the phone. To qualify for the \$75 limited time offer, customers must schedule a recycling appointment now through February 28, 2018, and have their unit picked up no later than March 24, 2018.

Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

schedule over the phone. To qualify for the \$75 limited time offer, customers must schedule a recycling appointment now through February 28, 2018, and have their unit picked up no later than March 24, 2018. Appliances must be in working condition and measure 10 to 30

cubic feet, which is the standard size for most refrigerators and freezers. Room air conditioning units and dehumidifiers may also be recycled through this program for an additional \$25 bonus, if picked up at the same time as an eligible refrigerator or freezer.

The BGE Smart Energy Savers Program is a suite of programs that enable customers to control energy use, leading to more efficient use of electricity and lowering energy bills from where they otherwise would be. Collectively, the

programs help contain the cost of energy and improve reliability. The programs also help to reduce peak demand and slow the growth in energy consumption to lessen the need for more power plants. BGE offers energy-saving solutions for renters, homeowners, large and small business customers, nonprofits and institutional customers.

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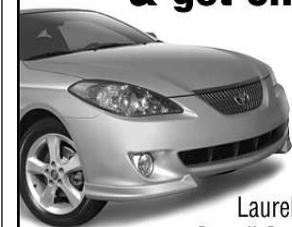


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