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MERRY CHRISTMAS



MERRY CHRISTMAS — Santa brings Christmas cheer to students of St. Dominick's Elementary School, located on 73-75 Lenox Ave. in the Village of Harlem, during Create Inc. Children Annual Party
(Photo: Gideon Manasseh)

...and Happy New Year



Maya Angelou and Common

‘N’ word use irks poet Maya Angelou

Common’s new album, “The Dreamer, The Believer” features a poem written and recited by the legendary poet Maya Angelou. But she performed it not knowing that Common uses that dreaded word. So, clearly Maya doesn’t listen to hip-hop or something.

“I had no idea that Common was using the piece we had done together on [a track] in which he also used the ‘N’ word numerous times,” Angelou said.

Angelou said she never knew Common used the “N” bomb at all, calling it “vulgar and dangerous” to the black community.

“I’m surprised and disappointed. I don’t know why he chose to do that. I had never heard him use that [word] before. I admired him so because he wasn’t singing the line of least resistance.”

Common tried to squash the squabble, insisting that he’s

spoken with Angelou about his use of the “N” word — and claiming they have agreed to disagree.

“She knows I do use the word,” he told The Post. “She knows that’s part of me.”

But he admitted he never bothered to tell her he’d be using the word on the track she worked on.

“I told her what ‘The Dreamer’ was about and what I wanted to get across to people,” he says. “I wanted young people to hear this and feel like they could really accomplish their dreams.”

So who’s to blame? Should Maya have asked to listen to the song before it got released or should Common have told her? It’s kind of Maya’s fault for not asking to hear his lyrics. But it’s also Common’s for throwing a bunch of N bombs on a track with Maya Angelou. We just hope this means she drops a diss poem for the ages.

Don’t ride against Maya Angeezy!

Gingrich idea exploits stereotypes reminds us of Reagan and Nixon

By Dwight Ott
Special to the NNPA from the Philadelphia Tribune

GOP hopeful wants to instill work ethic in poor children by putting them to work — as janitors. Poor kids, especially in projects and inner city neighborhoods, should be hired as part-time janitors for neighborhood schools.

So was the declaration of Republican presidential frontrunner Newt Gingrich in brainstorming recently about ways to lessen unemployment and economic decline in urban areas.

Clarifying remarks he made last month in a speech at Harvard, he said redesigning child labor laws to allow 14- and-15-year-olds to work would help curb the lack of a work ethic in many poor neighborhoods. It would also allow schools to give such mid-teens part-time jobs as janitors or janitorial assistants.

Gingrich said that successful people he knows started work early by doing small jobs like



Newt Gingrich

babysitting and shoveling snow. Such simple answers to complex questions have some likening Gingrich to the Grinch who stole Christmas. His comments have gained weight as he has risen in the polls in the last two weeks ahead of Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney. Speaking with the pomp and authority of a child

study expert, Gingrich diagnosed the unemployment problems in inner cities as a kind of self-perpetuating cycle of lack of work leading to more lack of work and more Americans being crippled by a merry-go-round of poor work ethic.

Sizing up the problem as such, Gingrich immediately offered his

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Student sues school district for punishment over homosexuality

The Thomas More Law Center filed a federal lawsuit yesterday afternoon against the Howell Public School District located in Howell, Michigan, and teacher, Johnson (“Jay”) McDowell, for punishment and humiliation heaped on a student after he expressed his religious belief opposing homosexuality when asked by the teacher during class.

The student, Daniel Glowacki,

a junior at Howell High at the time of the incident, was specifically asked by McDowell about his feelings on homosexuals. Daniel responded that as a Catholic he was offended by the gay and lesbian lifestyle. Because of his answer, Daniel was ordered to leave the classroom under threat of suspension.

As news of the incident spread, homosexual activists across the

country hailed McDowell as a hero and vilified Daniel and his family, as “bigots”, referring to Daniel’s religious objections to the homosexual agenda as “hate” speech. McDowell is head of the school’s teachers union. The Michigan Education Association, the state teachers’ union, supported McDowell’s actions.

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U.S. Supreme Court brazing for tense times ahead

By Charles D. Ellison
Special to the NNPA from the Philadelphia Tribune

With many preoccupied by the holiday season, making ends meet and the clowning of the endless Republican primary debates, few are paying close attention to what’s been happening in the Supreme Court lately. As if the Court is brewing up a 21st-century remake of the Civil War, the august body of for-life judges have decided to review three of the most volatile cases you could pick to review during a presidential election year.

It started with the announcement that the High Court (also known affectionately as SCOTUS) would review the Affordable Care Act, a lightning rod law of political animus and controversy since the heated Health Care Reform Wars that, literally, cost Democrats their House majority in 2010. Derisively picked on by Republicans as “Obamacare” — one of the GOP’s most widely used talking points — the law has been re-

peatedly poked at by everyone from conservative think tanks and legal experts to state’s Attorneys General and political candidates looking for an election year base booster.

Many states scoffed at the Constitutionality of the individual mandate inserted in the law, accusing the Obama Administration and the federal government of overstepping bounds. The Administration barked back and now, after much political wrangling and changing of the guard on Capitol Hill, it’s up to the SCOTUS to cast final judgment.

But, they didn’t stop there. Along comes the infamous Arizona state immigration law, technically known as “S.B. 1070” for its state legislature designation. Republican Governor Jan Brewer’s masterpiece of questionable and virtually unenforceable immigration detention became the cause of a Latino community already under siege from increased deportations. The law caused a national firestorm over how far authorities could go in seizing illegal immigrants and whether police identi-

fication by race was even legal. After many boycotts, national outrage and Brewer’s face on dart boards, Arizona suffered a huge economic setback from S.B. 1070 and became the poster kid for racism in the United States.

Now, it’s under SCOTUS’ review. But — wait — there’s more. Going further down south in the big state of Texas is where current Republican Governor Rick Perry, R-Texas, also a fledgling GOP primary candidate, pushed an appeal against a lower court which refused to let the state use state and congressional legislative maps drawn by an even lower court. While that court found the new Census-driven maps suspiciously drawn to diminish the influence of Black and Latino voters in the Lone Star state, Perry argued that the judges should have kicked it to the state legislature which is, incidentally, dominated by Republicans.

Observers worry that the High Court is taking on politically and emotionally charged cases during an election year that prom-

ises to be as hot as the previous Presidential cycle in 2008. Healthcare, immigration and redistricting also touch on sensitive issues of access, race...and more race.

The healthcare debate is immersed in a murky mix of Constitutional arguments and spicy political hand-to-hand, a key issue Republicans plan to use against Democrats, specifically President Obama, in 2012. How the Court decides on the Affordable Care Act could tip the electoral scales in dramatic fashion.

As could the immigration issue and redistricting. The Arizona immigration law on one hand placed an uncomfortable law enforcement spotlight on the problem of illegal immigration in the southwest United States. But, it also galvanized the awakening of a sleeping Latino political giant that could prove lethal for Republicans — especially depending on which way the legal winds blow on the SCOTUS case.

The Texas redistricting case, one of the few to come before the Court in quite some time, could

have the effect of deciding the fate of Black and Latino political power, particularly as populations of color move southward. SCOTUS’ review of the case is already causing anxiety amongst civil rights advocates, lawyers and many African-American politicians worried that this is just one new chance, next to the increasing presence of voter ID laws, for Republicans to undermine minority votes typically leaning Democratic. All three cases are volatile. All three have the potential of stirring up conservative and mostly South-based Republican constituencies in 2012, in red state ways detrimental to President Obama’s re-election. And all three appear to exacerbate boiling North versus South electoral tensions that could radically alter the political landscape beyond the elections.

“The North/South divide is always just beneath the surface in American politics. People thought it odd that Bill Clinton, in 1992, selected another southerner, Tennessee’s Al Gore, to be his VP. Rick Perry’s nomination is troubles,

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Malikah Shabazz

Malcolm's daughter held on probation violation

According to the New York Post, is due back before a New York City judge on Jan. 6.

She was arrested at her home in Mars Hill, N.C., in February and later extradited to New York.

She was sentenced to five years of probation in July for stealing the identity of a family friend to run up credit card bills.

She pleaded guilty and was freed from jail in June and ordered to pay back the amount stolen.

Prosecutors in New York say Shabazz opened credit cards in the name of a 70-year-old woman whose late husband was one of Malcolm X's bodyguards.

Shabazz's lawyer did not immediately return a call for comment Thursday.

Barron for Congress supporters slate Kwanzaa gala fundraiser

By Amadi Ajamu

Charles Barron for Congress supporters will celebrate Kwanzaa Kujichagulia (self-determination) with a fundraiser for the campaign war chest. The event will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2011 at 7 p.m. at For My Sweet Jazz Club, 1103 Fulton St.

(between Claver Place and Classon Avenue), in Bedford Stuyvesant Brooklyn.

The campaign team coined the slogan "Our Voice" because Charles Barron is unafraid to speak out on Black and Latino issues and is known as a fighter for the people. For more information contact 347-858-9049.

Public Advocate writes to mayor and Speaker on Living Wage Bill

Public Advocate Bill de Blasio has sent a letter to Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Speaker Christine Quinn, urging passage of Living Wage legislation in order to leverage New York City's economic development dollars to support working New Yorkers and reduce income inequality. The mail said:

Dear Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn,

I urge you to move forward on passing and signing into law a Living Wage bill for New York City's larger economic development projects. Our city is in the midst of a prolonged economic crisis that has battered the middle class, driven down wages and led to unacceptably high rates of unemployment. Underlying these problems is a rising income inequality that threatens our social fabric and economic future. New York City must move aggressively to address rising income inequality—and I firmly believe that the Living Wage bill represents one of the most immediate and important steps our City can take to do this.

The most recent U.S. Census data tells a troubling story. Almost half of Americans are living in or near poverty. In New York, the story is no better. While some in the city have done well over the last four years, median family income has fallen – by 4 percent for those with bachelors' degrees, and even more for those without. Between 2009 and 2010, a further 75,000 New Yorkers fell below the poverty line. New York City's working class is staring in the face of a profound income crisis.

In light of these facts, we should view the economic state of affairs in New York City as both a failure and a call to action. Over the last decade, we have not done enough to grow the prospects of all New Yorkers. Government must assert itself as a force on the side of the middle class, using all tools to encourage economic activity that creates jobs, and ensure that workers experience the benefits that are associated with that economic activity. This has not been the City's approach to date in its contracting process, pension investments, or in the regulation of businesses. In no place is the potential for that



Mayor Bloomberg



Bill de Blasio



Christine Quinn

role stronger, and the missed opportunity greater, than in the case of the economic development subsidies that the City dispenses through the Economic Development Corporation.

The City's economic development agencies distribute discretionary subsidies to companies that promise to invest and grow in New York City. The process of getting economic development aid from the City is not easy. Nonetheless, companies work within the City's process and compete with each other to gain the City's support because of the promise that doing business here provides. While we do not have complete control over the economic prospects of all workers in our city, we do have the right—and the obligation—to fight for the best possible outcome for those who work in City development projects, funded with our tax dollars. And by the same token, we must accept a measure of responsibility for all those working at projects subsidized by the City who nevertheless earn wages insufficient to provide for themselves and their families.

In other cities, a Living Wage is an integral part of the standards that companies agree to when they accept discretionary support from local government. In Los Angeles, in San Francisco, in Pittsburgh – corporations that accept large public subsidies are required to do more than the minimum by paying a Living Wage. The provisions that these localities use for economic development subsidies have numerous positive economic impacts. They increase the income of workers in the projects thereby increasing the multiplier effect for the local economy; they reduce employee turnover resulting in higher productivity; and they ensure that workers in City-funded projects are less dependent on social services and pose fewer indirect impacts on their local budgets.

In the months since City Council Members Koppell and Palma introduced their Living Wage bill—leadership for which they deserve enormous credit—there has been heated debate. Detractors have made numerous claims of the negative out-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

Cuomo launches holiday giving drive to benefit flood victims

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has launched a statewide holiday giving drive to benefit families in flood affected communities. The giving drive is part of the Governor's "NYGives" campaign, a statewide effort to encourage charitable giving and generosity throughout the holiday season.

"NYGives" connects businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and those seeking to give with organizations that directly serve New Yorkers most in need. The campaign will continue through the end of 2011.

The Governor invites businesses and individuals to donate toys and other supplies to be distributed among families in communities hard hit by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm

Lee. The Toy Industry Association has already pledged to donate 250 toys.

"This giving drive will bring some holiday cheer and household supplies to families and children in areas devastated by the late summer storms," Governor Cuomo said. "This is what New Yorkers have always done best: stand together and look out for our neighbors. I invite all New Yorkers to support those in need this holiday season."

Carter Keithley, president of the Toy Industry Association, said, "The Toy Industry Association and its members are pleased to participate in Governor Cuomo's initiative. The toy industry is deeply committed to bringing joy and play to children in need, especially during the holiday sea-

son."

Here are some ways New Yorkers can help:

- * Bringing in unwrapped toys or supplies to Office of General Services (OGS) offices across the state, or mailing to OGS Mail Room, Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza P1, Dock J, Albany, New York 12242. OGS will arrange for these items to be distributed through charitable organizations.

- * Donating to the United Way of New York State or other charitable organizations that benefit the flood regions. Volunteering or bringing supplies to local food pantries (a list can be found at: www.foodbankassocnys.org/find-food-bank.cfm) The drive will also include a series of regional events hosted by Lieuten-

ant Governor Robert Duffy and members of the Governor's Upstate Storm and Recovery Task Force. Next week, the Governor will visit communities in flood regions to deliver toys and other donated supplies.

For New Yorkers wishing to make a financial contribution to affected communities, donation of funds can be directed to charitable organizations that support flood relief efforts, such as the United Way of New York. Contributions may be made by sending a check to the Hurricane Irene Recovery Fund c/o United Way of New York State, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, New York 12110-2424 or by visiting www.uwnys.org and clicking on the link on the home page to make a secure donation via credit

card. All contributions to the United Way of New York will receive an acknowledgement. 100% of all donations go directly to flood victims, and no administrative costs are taken out.

Susan Hager, president of United Way of New York State, said, "The need remains great in communities hit hard by the flooding. We appreciate all donations, no matter the size, which we are using to help fund continued long term recovery efforts. We applaud Governor Cuomo's leadership and hard work to make sure those affected by these storms have all they need to rebuild. United Way thanks all New Yorkers who have contributed to the Fund for their generosity. We will continue to distribute proceeds to those in need for as long as that help is needed."

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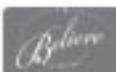
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6 Sullivan Honors bestowed on former Presidents of Ghana and Nigeria

An excited crowd of Africanists gathered Thursday night, along with members of the African Diplomatic Community, Heads of State, Congressmen, and Senators for the Leon H. Sullivan Honors event at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.. Known as the "Sullivan Honors" and named for the late Reverend Leon H. Sullivan, the event highlights the achievements of individuals and entities that have provided exemplary service to the cause of humanity on the continent of Africa.

"A Bridge to Africa," the theme of the evening event and the focus of the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation, has been instilled in and is created through the work of the organization. The organization develops projects and programs through its unique "Sullivan Summits" that focus on eradicating poverty and promoting economic development. Mrs. Hope Sullivan Masters, president and CEO of the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation stated yesterday, *"Tonight, we honor Africa...we celebrate all of Africa...and we celebrate very significant sons of Africa this evening."*

The 2011 distinguished Honorees were H.E. John A. Kufuor, former President of Ghana; H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria; and the African Union. Each "Sullivan Honor" was awarded as a way to signify the honorees' efforts in championing human rights, democracy, good governance, poverty eradication, and a commitment to solving Africa's ailing issues in economic development.

On a special note, US Agency for International Development Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah was also in attendance and gave a speech stating, *"We (USAID) remain committed to making sure we engage with the continent and its leaders and its entrepreneurs, its women farmers, its medical doctors, its patients, in a manner that is respectful, in a manner that prioritizes partnerships, in a*

manner that respects the great innovation and incredible success of so many African economies, that even during this challenging time for the global community are growing at 7, 8, 9, or 10%."

The role of development: promoting economic growth, eradicating poverty, and creating an environment of hope, is one in part of the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation's ideals. Dr. Shah went on to say, "We stand with you in a spirit of real partnership and support, and we seek to learn as much from our engagements on the continent as we have to offer..."

Distinguished guests of the night included members of congress such as Congressman Bobby Rush, who was honored with the title of "Sullivan Soldier"—a title that is given to individuals for their commitment toward building community service projects and providing a voice to individuals who have none. Other Sullivan Soldiers included Reverend Peter Mathews, Reverend Tony Lee, and Ralph Perkins.

Congressman Bobby Rush, in the opening of his speech, paid tribute to the late Rev. Sullivan stating that, *"Dr. Leon Sullivan was a visionary who saw beyond our problems and recognized our potential, he saw beyond our differences and recognized our distinction, he saw beyond our poverty and recognized our prosperity. Let me remind you that the Sullivan Principles are the proven pathways for Africa and the diaspora..."*

The night's event ended with R & B singer Tyrese and remarks by John Hope Bryant, who serves on President Barack Obama's Presidential Advisory Council on Financial Capability. The evening's Master of Ceremonies was Dr. Mark Hill, a leading Hip-hop intellectual, Columbia University professor, TV Host, and writer for the Washington Post, Essence Magazine, and the New York Times.

Other distinguished guests included President Teodoro Obiang of Equatorial Guinea, who had the opportunity to speak, and Prime Minister



President John A. Kuffour chats with Cong. Bobby Rush



Nigeria former President Obasanjo speaks to the press



Present at the ceremony were Hope Sullivan Masters, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Dr. Julianne Malveaux and Ambassador Andrew Young

Guillaume Soro of Ivory Coast. Former President of the World Bank and former Under Secretary of the Department of Defense Mr. Paul Wolfowitz was also present.

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Black unemployment crisis requires federal intervention, says EPI report



Ramona Africa

Ramona Africa speaks about Mumia Abu Jamal

By Amadi Ajamu

After almost 30 years of fighting, US political prisoner, Mumia Abu Jamal's death sentence has been overturned.

Ramona Africa issues a warning to the supporters. "First of all Mumia is an innocent man and should be released. His being taken off death row and given life in prison is not a victory. Mumia remains in prison because of who he is and what he does for our people. I see Mumia's move to the general population as being very dangerous."

Jamal, a renown journalist, political activist and former Black Panther, was convicted shooting police officer Daniel Faulkner to death on Dec. 9, 1981, as he laid critically wounded by Faulkner's service weapon. "Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams and Maureen Faulkner (widow), portray this as Mumia being cut a break with a life sentence. Being in prison when you know you are innocent, and being messed with so much, no physical contact - can't touch anybody, is a living hell," Ramona Africa continued.

"We cannot afford to sit back. The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) control the prisons. These are the same people who dropped a bomb on me and my family, killing eleven people including our children, and put me in prison. Maureen Faulkner has no interest in who really killed her husband, she is a puppet for the FOP and the government who are her



Abu Jamal

ventriloquists. We must demand the release of Mumia," she concluded.

Mumia Abu Jamal's case has garnered international support and exposes the persistent racism in the US criminal justice system. Human rights activist Lateefah Carter said, "The decades of work people have done made this important step possible. Through the years we gone through fierce battles in the courts and in the streets and we will never give up. We will keep on fighting until Mumia is free."

Keedra Gibba, an educator and activist explained, "I'm not ready for cheers. I don't see how life in prison is acceptable. There was no physical evidence of Mumia involvement in the shooting of the officer. The prosecutors know a new trial would be risky for them."

NYC Councilman Charles Barron declared, "There will be no dancing in the street until Mumia is in the street!"

In a new Economic Policy Institute report, A jobs-centered approach to African American community development, Algernon Austin, director of the Race, Ethnicity and the Economy program, explains that jobs are essential to improving African American communities. The report identifies jobs as the backbone of community development and outlines a plan for the federal government to ameliorate joblessness within black communities.

The plan has three components: the creation of public sector jobs, job training with job placement programs and wage subsidies for employers.

"Our economy should be one in which everyone who wants to work can find a job, but this goal has been elusive for African Americans in good times and bad," said Austin. "A concerted national program is needed to reduce racial disparities that leave African Americans twice as likely as whites to be unemployed."

The report concludes that federal intervention to aid black community development is necessary for the following reasons:

* African Americans still reside mainly in separate and unequal communities. In 2010, in the 100 metropolitan areas with the larg-

est African American populations, 62.5 percent of African Americans would have had to move to achieve full African American-white integration.

* Unemployment rates for African Americans have been far higher than those of whites for the past 50 years, even in good times. In fact, since 1960 the African American unemployment rate has been about twice the white rate. Had African Americans had the same unemployment rate as whites in 2010, an additional 1.3 million African Americans would have been employed.

* Parental unemployment, and not simply low income, has negative effects on children's educational outcomes. African Americans are twice as likely as whites to have had 10 or more spells of unemployment over their prime working years.

* Joblessness, although by no means the only factor producing higher crime rates in African American communities, appears to play a significant role.

* Neither educational advances nor suburbanization by African Americans has translated into reductions in the African American-white unemployment rate ratio.

* If a bold new approach is not

developed to address the racial unemployment disparity, it is likely that African Americans will be condemned to unemployment rates that are twice those of whites into the foreseeable future.

The federal government should implement this three-part plan in counties and metropolitan areas of 25,000 people or more that have experienced unemployment of more than 6 percent every year in the previous 10 years.

The proposed program is at a scale large enough to produce a significant reduction in unemployment, and the effects of the proposed program are likely to be felt for several years after it is phased out. It is hoped that positive experiences with African American workers reduce employer biases, possibly leading them to institutionalize the outreach and hiring of African American workers.

Austin notes that since the policies would be applied to any community with persistently high unemployment, it would provide benefits to Latino, American Indian and some white communities.

The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that researches the impact of economic trends and policies on working people in the United States.

Message to Alabama Gov. Bentley: See the light or feel the heat

By Eliseo Medina
SEIU International Secretary-Treasurer

MONTGOMERY, AL — Across the narrow street in front of the Alabama governor's mansion on Saturday, NAACP President Benjamin Jealous delivered a message to its current occupant, Republican Gov. Robert Bentley.

"We are here today to tell Gov. Bentley that his job is to protect families, not tear them apart. To make sure kids are well educated, not scared of school," Jealous said. "We don't have time to wait for you to regret what you did as governor."

The powerful message to repeal Alabama's anti-immigrant HB 56 law was more than words.

Jealous had just marched to the mansion with 2,500 protestors including other African American and Hispanic civil rights advocates and labor leaders such as SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry and myself. We walked more than a mile, from the steps of the state Capitol to the mansion, on the Montgomery streets that still echo the footsteps of civil rights unrest of more than 50 years ago.

The presence of the NAACP president was a poignant measure of the progress that has been made in civil rights and of the obstacles we still face.

The march showed unity, strength and widespread commitment to repeal Alabama's unconstitutional law, which legalizes racial profiling, judges people based on the color of their skin, and promotes a culture of hatred and fear.



Gov. Robert Bentley

At the state Capitol, we heard the tearful story of Joselin de la Cruz, a young teen whose mother returned to Mexico because she feared the Alabama law. "I was left here to follow my dreams and not give up," the Alabama student told the thousands gathered.

State Sen. Billy Beasley spoke of the great social and economic harm to the state because of the law. The lawmaker urged that HB 56 be repealed, not just cosmetically changed as the governor suggested after two foreign auto industry managers were detained under the law for not carrying the required legal documents.

True Justice is not conditioned on where one is born or a person's immigration status, nor it is it conditioned on the color of one's skin, the principle on which civil rights battles were waged a half Century ago.

Alabama's promise to leave behind its racist past was instrumental in the state's redevelopment campaign to draw foreign investment to the state.

There is no doubt that HB 56 takes Alabama back to the dark days of racial hatred and division; days that we had prayed had been left in the past.

Instead of marching backwards in time, Alabama should be looking towards a future that is inclusive and that recognizes and respects everyone - - regardless of the color of their skin. The state must repeal the law.

Until the governor and state Legislature see the light, they will feel the heat. People of conscience from all walks of life will continue to vigorously oppose the measure - in the courts, in the court of public opinion and in the streets. HB 56 cannot, and must not stand.

Editorial

New York Beacon

Walter Smith: *Publisher & Editor-in-Chief*

Miatta Haj Smith: *Co-Publisher & Executive Editor*

William Egyir: *Managing Editor*

Occupy the dream

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA Columnist

The issue of income inequality in the United States demands our attention and social action. In particular in the African American community, the economic inequities are so real and institutionalized; we are more and more aware of how the devastating impact of income inequality continues cause a downward spiral of the quality of life African Americans and others who are entrapped in the deep mire of poverty, pain and hopelessness. The dream of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is just as relevant today as we move into 2012 as it was back in 1963 at the March on Washington.

Dr. King's dream was the American dream of freedom, justice and equality for all. Yet we all should be reminded that by the beginning of 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was very concerned and focused on the questions of poverty and systemic economic injustice. The Civil Rights Movement, with the historic coalition between the Black church, organized labor, liberal whites, Latinos, students and peace activists, and many others from a diversity of organizations, had reached a transformative stage in its evolution. The time had come to expose and challenge the diabolic connection between racial injustice and economic inequality.

The Southern Christian Lead-

ership Conference (SCLC) under Dr. King's leadership boldly called for a "Poor People's Campaign" to plan a massive "occupation" of Washington, DC in 1968 to challenge the prevailing and pervasive stranglehold of economic injustice not only for Black people, for all of "God's children." Rev. Andrew Young at that time was one of Dr. King's most trusted assistants. With respect to the call for the Poor People's Campaign, Young stated, "We intended to arouse the conscience of the nation around the issues of poverty as we had challenged the nation to reject segregation. We hoped the process of training and mobilization would empower poor people in a new social movement that transcended race."

Today, in just a few months time since their initial demonstrations, the Occupy Wall Street movement has been successful in staging major non-violent civil disobedient protests from New York City to Los Angeles and throughout the United States around the issues of income inequality and economic injustice. But beyond the growing number and size of the Occupy Wall Street protests, their greatest accomplishment thus far has been the raising of awareness on a national level about the contradictions of present-day income inequities and injustice.

That is why I am so grateful for the vision and responsible outreach of Russell Simmons, Rev. Dr. Jamal Bryant, Zach McDaniels,

Bishop John R. Bryant, Rev. Dr. Carroll A. Baltimore, Sr., and many other Black clergy leaders from across America who have affirmed, "Occupy the Dream" as ecumenical coalition of church leaders who are joining with the brothers and sisters of the Occupy Wall Street movement to push for economic justice for all in the legacy of the dream of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We are part of the 99% who are challenging the 1% who increasingly control the wealth and future prosperity of the nation.

The Black church in America continues to be the backbone of the Civil Rights Movement and all successful movements for change in this nation in last 100 years have involved the presence and the visionary activism of the Black church.

Now with the increasing poverty, disproportionately high home foreclosure rates and loss of property, unemployment, the lack of the best quality education for our children, absence of good health care delivery, discriminatory and unjust intergenerational incarceration, fiscal crisis for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); deterioration of our communities and business, and a growing sense of despair among millions of our youth, it is imperative that African Americans should not wait passively for someone else to speak out

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

New generation of Black women politicians emerging

By Marc H. Morial
To Be Equal

"Fearlessness is what it takes for a woman to run for elective office, especially a black woman."—Dayo Olopade, journalist, writing in *The Root*

Only 30 African American women have served in the United States Congress since Shirley Chisholm became the first in 1969. Today, of the 100 largest cities in America, only one has an African American woman mayor.

But the impact that African American women have had as political leaders has far exceeded their numbers. In addition to New York Congresswoman Chisholm, our nation has been greatly improved by the service of women like Representative Barbara Jordan of Texas, Senator Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois, and Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio. Today, a new generation of Black women leaders is picking up the gauntlet and making their voices heard. Let me introduce you to just three of them.

On Dec. 6, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake was sworn-in for a full-term as Baltimore's 49th Mayor, becoming only the second African American woman mayor in the City's history. Rawlings-Blake had served as City Council President since 2007, before her appointment in February, 2010 to finish the uncompleted term of the previous mayor.

In 1995, at the age of 25, she became the youngest person ever elected to the City Council. Recently, the National Congress of Black Women named Rawlings-Blake a Shirley Chisholm Memorial Award Trailblazer.

In her inauguration speech she outlined an ambitious agenda for a city that is struggling to attract both jobs and citizens in these tough eco-

nomics times. She said, "Our number-one goal in the next ten years must be to grow Baltimore—strengthen our neighborhoods, create new jobs, and attract new people"

In November of 2010, Kamala Harris won a hotly contested state-wide election to become the first woman and the first African American Attorney General in California history. Prior to the election, she spent virtually her entire career as a courtroom prosecutor. In 2003 she became the first woman District Attorney in San Francisco. She is a recognized expert in criminal justice reform and is currently a leading voice in the national fight to require mortgage lenders to restructure underwater loans for homeowners facing foreclosure.

Donna Edwards became the first African American woman to represent Maryland in the U.S. Congress in 2009. She represents Maryland's 4th District which includes portions of Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties. A lawyer and long-time community activist, Edwards previously served as executive director of the Arca Foundation and co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. It was there that she led the fight for the passage of the Violence Against Women Act which was signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1994.

Andrea Dew Steele, founder of Emerge America, a non-profit devoted to training more women for elective office says, "We don't feel as qualified as men; we're not recruited in the same numbers; we feel turned off by the mechanics; we have persistent family barriers; and we don't have the same networks as men." Despite these obstacles, women like Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Kamala Harris and Donna Edwards are fearlessly breaking through.

Marc H. Morial is the President and CEO of the National Urban League.

Child Watch: A prayer for this holy season

By Marian Wright Edelman
Child Watch Column

God help us to end poverty in our time. The poverty of having a child with too little to eat and no place to sleep, no air, sunlight and space to breathe, bask, and grow.

The poverty of watching your child suffer hunger or get sicker and sicker and not knowing what to do or how to get help because you don't have another dime or a car, money, or health insurance. The poverty of working your fingers to the bone every day taking care of somebody else's children and neglecting your

own, and still not being able to pay your bills. The poverty of having a job which does not let you afford a stable place to live and being terrified you'll become homeless and lose your children to foster care.

The poverty of losing your job, running out of unemployment benefits, and no other help in sight.

The poverty of working all your life caring for your own children and having to start all over again caring for the grandchildren you love.

The poverty of earning a college degree, having children, opening a day care center, and taking home \$300 a week—or a

month—if you're lucky.

The poverty of loneliness and isolation and alienation—having no one to call or visit, tell you where to get help, assist you in getting it, or care if you're living or dead.

The poverty of having too much and sharing too little and having the burden of nothing to carry.

The poverty of convenient blindness and deafness and indifference to others.

The poverty of low aim and paltry purpose, of weak will and tiny vision, of big meetings and small actions, of loud talk and sullen grudging service.

The poverty of believing in nothing, standing for nothing, sharing nothing, sacrificing nothing, struggling with others for nothing.

The poverty of pride and ingratitude for God's gifts of life and children and family and freedom and home and country and not wanting for others what you want for yourself.

The poverty of greed for more and more and more, ignoring, blaming, and exploiting the needy, and taking from the weak to please the strong.

The poverty of addiction to more and more things; drugs, drink, work, self, violence, power, fleeting fame, and an un-

just status quo.

The poverty of fear which keeps you from doing the thing you think is right.

The poverty of convenient ignorance about the needs of those around you and of despair and cynicism.

God help us end poverty in our time, in all its faces and places, young and old, rural, urban, suburban and small town too, and in every color of humans You have made everywhere.

God help us to end poverty in our time in all its guises—inside and out—physical and spiritual, so that all our and Your children may live the lives that you intend.

Opinion

Occupy doesn't have a platform — it is a platform

By Kevin Carson

The Occupy movement comes under frequent attack from the institutional Left (and, it goes without saying, from the liberal establishment) for not offering a clear list of official demands — for, in other words, not offering a platform.

But that criticism misses the point. Occupy doesn't have a single platform, in the sense of a list of demands. But it is a platform — a collaborative platform, like a wiki. Occupy isn't a unified movement with a single list of demands and an official leadership to state them. Rather, Occupy offers a toolkit and a brand name to a thousand different movements with their own agendas, their own goals, and their own demands — with only their hatred of Wall Street and the corporate state in common, and the Occupy brand as a source of strength and identity.

Although the ends are quite different, the model of organization is much like that of al Qaeda: An essentially leaderless organi-

zation, a loose network of cells, each of which adopts the al Qaeda brand or franchise for its own purposes. It's a much more effective use of resources to provide a common platform and then let a thousand flowers bloom.

A conventional, hierarchical activist institution wastes enormous resources on administrative apparatus and endless negotiations just to get everyone on the same page, before anyone can do anything.

A common platform allows any number of movements, made up of voluntary aggregations of individuals with shared goals, to build on it on a modular basis, and to act without waiting for permission from the headquarters of the One Big Movement. And whenever they do anything that seems to work well, any other node in the network can adopt that tactic as its own without asking anyone's leave.

That's why the global Occupy movement is throwing off innovations like a fission reaction throws off neutrons. If anything, it's done so even more since the wave of shutdowns in the U.S. divorced it from occupation as a primary tactic and

scattered its seeds to the wind.

But let's go back a ways. The Pentagon Papers weren't published

pursuant to an official decision by a nationwide anti-war movement, and Woodward and Bernstein didn't try to found a national political movement to impeach Nixon. In both cases, the immediate actors simply published the information, and allowed anyone who would to leverage that information. They thereby created a free platform that could be developed by any number of antiwar and anti-Nixon activists for their own ends.

Fast forward to Summer 2010. Julian Assange simply published the cable dump at Wikileaks. Every single activist movement that piggybacked on that platform, starting with the uprising in Tunisia, did so on its own initiative, making — its own judgment — the best use of the free, common platform offered by Assange. So it's gone from Tunisia to Egypt, to the Arab Spring, to Madison, to the demonstrations in Britain and Spain and Greece, to Occupy

Wall Street, and back out to the global Occupy movement in hundreds of cities around the world.

Now, with the Occupy movement (thanks to Bloomberg et. al) no longer wedded to occupying public squares, the wave of innovations seems to roll in on a weekly basis. First Occupy Our Homes, and now Occupy the Ports.

According to Lester MacGurdy at Oakland Occupier, Occupy Oakland has begun to deal with police evictions by retreating, waiting until the cops are gone, then going back. Police are essentially heavy infantry who move slowly and ponderously into place, and can move only as quickly as their bloated logistical train moves with them. Protestors are light infantry who can disperse and reconcentrate on short notice.

"The tactical evolution that evolved relies on two military tactics that are thousands of years old — the tactical superiority of light infantry over heavy infantry, and the tactical superiority of the retreat over the advance." You can bet this will be standard procedure for every Occupy group in

America in a week's time.

The corporate state and its thugs in black uniforms and kevlar are big, impressive, and make lots of loud noise — just like a T. Rex blundering into a tar pit. The resistance is small, agile and resilient — just like a swarm of piranha. And in the end, we'll hang their bleeding heads on our battlements.

In the immortal words of Bob Marley: "The stone that the builder refused shall be the head cornerstone."

C4SS (c4ss.org) Research Associate Kevin Carson is a contemporary mutualist author and individualist anarchist whose written work includes *Studies in Mutualist Political Economy*, *Organization Theory: A Libertarian Perspective*, and *The Homebrew Industrial Revolution: A Low-Overhead Manifesto*, all of which are freely available online. Carson has also written for such print publications as *The Freeman*:

Ideas on Liberty and a variety of internet-based journals and blogs, including *Just Things*, *The Art of the Possible*, the *P2P Foundation* and his own *Mutualist Blog*.

Remembering Ron Walters at Christmas

By George E. Curry
NNPA Columnist

Around this time every year, shortly before I leave to visit my mother in Augusta, Ga. for Christmas, I attend a party at the home of Pat and Ron Walters in Silver Spring, Md. I attended the annual party Saturday night with one noticeable difference — it was held without Ron, an enormously talented strategist and political scientist. Ron died of cancer Sept. 10, 2010 and to her credit, Pat decided to hold the party this year because she knew that's what her Ronnie, as she calls him, would have wanted. It's also what his friends wanted. We wanted to let Pat know that although her Ronnie has passed from this earth, we still feel his presence.

I wrote shortly after Ron died that he was a one-man civil rights movement. And he was. More than that, the distinguished professor who served at Howard University and the University of Maryland taught us how to use our professional skills to improve the plight of our people. In that respect, he was very much like W.E.B. DuBois, who like Ron, did his undergraduate work at Fisk University in Nashville.

Ron was quoted more than any other political scientist of his time. He could have opted to teach his university classes and be a talking head on national TV, but he didn't. He felt obligated to do more, which explains why he quietly advised the Congressional Black Caucus on a variety of issues. It explains why he

served as Jesse Jackson's presidential issues adviser in 1984 and 1988. Those of us who covered that first campaign witnessed how Ron prepared Jesse Jackson for TV debates. Ron would be hovering above and Jackson, outstretched on the floor in blue jeans, would listen to Professor Walters, process the information, and then restate it in his own unique way. Those prep sessions were so detailed that Jackson never had a Rick Perry-like oops moment in any debate. Unlike some public intellectuals, he was not enamored with rap. He didn't record a rap CD, like Cornel West, or teach a course on Jay-Z, like Michael Eric Dyson. When it came to the empowerment of African-Americans, Ron Walters was serious. Very serious.

Above all else, Ron Walters was consistent. It didn't matter if Bill Clinton, George W. Bush or Barack Obama was in the White House. You could count on Ron holding them all to one standard: What have you done for Black people? And he wasn't content with words, he wanted to measure how well policies had helped — or harmed — people of African descent.

His take-home tests for political leaders, Black and White, usually covered 10 subjects: health disparities, police brutality, equal access to education, voting rights enforcement, racial profiling, housing, equal employment, ex-offenders' voting rights, access to credit, and economic justice.

And Ron didn't believe President Obama should be allowed to skip the test or be judged any differently from anyone else who occupied the White House.



Ron Walters

As serious as Ron was, he was also a person who enjoyed a good laugh. I thought about him Saturday night as I was replaying a Dick Gregory joke for my friend Joe Madison, the activist and talk show host. Joe and his wife, Sharon, were sitting on kitchen stools when I asked Joe if he had heard what Dick Gregory had said at Troy Davis' funeral. As you know, protesters objecting to Davis being put to

death in Georgia carried signs and wore T-shirts proclaiming, "I am Troy Davis."

Dick Gregory being Dick Gregory said at the funeral service for Davis that a bill collector had telephoned his house and asked for Dick Gregory. When asked if he was Gregory, Dick claimed to have replied, "I am Troy Davis."

Joe buckled in laughter. We both agreed that only Dick Gregory could come up with that joke.

Returning the favor, Joe had me laughing uncontrollably after he proposed that we start our own mega-church in Prince George's County, Md. and I would be the pastor. I think Joe was joking. He had it all figured out down to the big rings I should wear on my pinky finger, the type of limo I would be chauffeured in, and carefully demonstrated how my cape would be removed.

He even told me about a church in his native Detroit that had such divided loyalties that two pastors preached on Sundays at the same time, one addressing his followers on one side of the church and the other preaching to his supporters on the other side. I don't know if Joe was telling the truth, as he claimed.

But when you're laughing hard and having a good time at the Walters residence, it doesn't matter whether it was true or a product of Joe's fertile imagination.

When we finished laughing, we kissed Pat goodnight, and headed for the door. We had carried on just as if Ron were still there.

And we pledged to not only continue laughing like we did when Ron was around but to be as serious about advancing the cause of our people as Ron was. If we can contribute half as much as he did, we will not betray his legacy.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine and the *NNPA News Service*, is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. He can be reached through his Web site:

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African Scene



Jacqueline Moudeina (Courtesy of Global Information Network)

Chadian lawyer gets prized 'Right Livelihood' Award

By Brooke Smith
Special to the NNPA from the GIN

(GIN) - A "Nobel prize" for activists was awarded this week to Jacqueline Moudeina, a fearless human rights lawyer from the north African nation of Chad. Moudeina was commended "for her tireless efforts at great personal risk to win justice for the victims of the former dictatorship in Chad and to increase awareness and observance of human rights in Africa."

The Right Livelihood Award, also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, honors and supports those "offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today." Moudeina's signature

work has been her effort to bring former Chadian President Hissene Habre to justice. He left Chad over 20 years ago to live a life of luxury in Senegal. It is estimated that 40,000 political killings took place under this watch.

In her acceptance speech at the ceremony this week, Moudeina said: "I cannot bear injustice...The fight against impunity which I lead and which I will win by the Grace of God, is the result of my decision to take the side of those who suffer and whose cries continue to be ignored by the decision makers."

Awarded with Moudeina were: Huang Ming of China, GRAIN International and Ina May Gaskin of the U.S. for her work advocating safe, woman-centered childbirth methods.

Tiny African country to host largest U.S. base

Special to the NNPA from the GIN

(GIN) - With the departure of U.S. troops from Iraq, Djibouti - a major U.S. ally - will be the "central location" in fighting terrorism, according to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta during his visit this week to the north African nation. The U.S. base in Djibouti, which borders Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, has more than 3,500 military personnel, most of them assigned to combat terrorism in Somalia, Yemen and other flash points. "We've made a hell of a lot of progress," Defense Secretary Panetta told the troops this week in Camp Lemonnier Thunderdome.

In addition to ground troops, American drones are launched from Djibouti against Al-Qaeda operatives in the region, according to Globalsecurity.org. The country was an active participant during the Bush years in the detention and rendition of detainees, and held prisoners until U.S. intelligence agents determined where next to send them, according to testimony by the International Crisis Group before the African Commission for Human and Peoples Rights.

This month, Washington announced the opening of a new multi-building embassy for Djibouti, constructed by Caddell Construction Company of Montgomery, Alabama. The \$147 million project generated jobs in both the United States and Republic of Djibouti, according to the press release.



Omar Guelleh

Meanwhile, Djibouti's president, Ismail Omar Guelleh, in a recent interview with Jeune Afrique, a French language magazine, defended his regime from critics who cite the absence of a free press, TV or independent radio. He also disputed charges by the International Federation of Human Rights of "all-out repression" and the ex-

istence of political prisoners in Djibouti jails.

Finally, U.S. advisors are believed to have been piloting a plane belonging to the Uganda People's Defense Force that crashed near the Dem. Rep. of Congo this week where a military offensive against the Lord's Resistance Army is underway. There were no survivors.

Africans demand climate justice at confab in Durban

Special to the NNPA from the GIN

As the U.N. climate change conference in Durban drew to a close, thousands of Africans, international activists, and various environmental groups held marches for justice, organized workshops and held side conferences in nearby areas.

On Saturday, dubbed the "Global Day of Action," demonstrators urged politicians worldwide to take serious action against climate change. "We are asking for 100 percent change. Today will be the beginning of a strong movement that is going to challenge the rich nations of the world," said local leader Desmond D'Sa.

"This is not a dress rehearsal," added Kumi Naidoo, director of Greenpeace International. "Those who are not interested in saving lives, economies and environments, like the U.S., must now stand aside and let those with the political will move forward."

Meanwhile, climate negotiators from more than 190 nations were meeting at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Conven-

tion Center to advance progress on earlier climate accords such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Bali Action Plan, and the Cancun Agreements.

Amidst all the activity, environmentalist Nnimmo Bassey, executive director of Environmental Rights Action in Nigeria, assessed the possible outcomes of the world conference in an interview with Amy Goodman of the news show Democracy Now.

"We came to Durban hoping that the rich, industrialized, polluting nations will for once step up and take responsibility by making a commitment to cut emissions at the source, not by continuing pollution and then believing that carbon stocks elsewhere in the world will offset their polluting activities," said Bassey. He sounded a note of scepticism.

"From what we've seen over the past week, there is no chance that we're going to have any kind of agreement that will show any level of seriousness that will indicate that politicians understand that this is a planetary crisis and not just an opportunity to do business or to pat each other on the back."

On the U.S. proposal to begin



Global day of action

regulating toxic emissions in 2020, Bassey responded grimly: "Eight years from now is a death sentence on Africa... For every one-degree Celsius change in temperature, Africa is impacted at a heightened level. So this is very much to be condemned."

Zaid Shopeju, executive direc-

tor for Youth Vision Alliance Network, a youth-led organization based in Lagos that empowers youths with leadership skills, added: "For over 20 or 30 years, the government has been protecting the polluters to the detriment of the people... These are people that are messing up the

livelihood, the life of people living in this place. And our government is not standing up for us. So it's high time that we, as youths and concerned citizens, need to rise up to this occasion."

"We have to step up, and we are doing that already," said Shopeju.

FAMU drum major's death ruled a homicide

Special to the NNPA from the Florida Courier

Florida A&M University drum major Robert Champion's death was ruled a homicide on Friday. An autopsy conducted by the Orange-Osceola

Medical Examiner's Office "revealed extensive contusions of his chest, arms, shoulder, and back with extensive hemorrhage."

The results of the autopsy showed that Champion, 26, died because of blunt-force trauma suffered during a hazing incident. Even though there were no broken bones to 26-year-old Champion's internal organs, there was "a significant rapid blood loss" due to the injuries he suffered, the report further stated. The medical examiner added that Champion died as "the result of hemorrhagic shock due to soft tissue hemorrhage, incurred by blunt force trauma sustained during a hazing incident."

The Orlando Sentinel reported Friday that sheriff's investigators said they will meet with the State Attorney's Office soon to determine what, if any, criminal charges will be filed.

Champion died after the annual Florida Classic football game between FAMU and Bethune Cookman on Nov. 19. Authorities have said the drum major died after an apparent hazing ritual on a parked band bus.

Champion's mother, Pamela, reached at her Georgia home late Friday, said she's "still trying to come to terms and absorb" the information contained in the report, according to The Orlando Sentinel.

FAMU's Board of Trustees will hold a conference call on Monday to discuss President James Ammons' status. Florida Governor Rick Scott met with Ammons in a 45-minute closed-door meeting on Friday. Ammons said he would let the FAMU Board of Trustees decide on Monday whether he should step aside. According to the Tallahassee Democrat, Ammons was joined in the meeting with the governor by former state Sen. Al Lawson and



FAMU drum major Robert Champion

FAMU trustee Marjorie Turnbull. A crowd estimated at approximately 2,000 people, mostly students of Florida A&M University, Florida's largest historically Black university, staged a nonviolent, spontaneous nighttime protest march on the home of the governor on Thursday night, demanding that he rescind his decision requesting that FAMU's Board of Trustees immediately suspend Ammons.

"Gov. Scott's looking out for the best interest of the university, and still strongly feels that Dr. Ammons should step aside until the investigations are completed," Scott's deputy press secretary, Jackie Schutz, wrote in an e-mail to the Sentinel. "The Medical Examiner's findings speak for itself."

A joint statement issued by Dr. Solomon L. Badger III, chairman of the FAMU board, and Ammons, called the autopsy information "extremely upsetting for all of us, even though it confirmed what we suspected."

"We again convey our deepest condolences to the Champion family. We will continue to cooperate with all agencies looking into the matter and are committed to creating a safe environment for the entire FAMU community and ensuring that this never happens again at FAMU."

Orange-Osceola Medical Examiner officials said the autopsy found no evidence of a natural cause for Champion's death, including disease, sickle-cell trait,

drugs or alcohol.

"Immediately after the hazing incident, he complained of thirst and fatigue; minutes later, he noted loss of vision" and soon suffered cardiac arrest, the medical examiner said.

Gainesville lawyer Christopher Chestnut, who is representing Champion's family, said, "It confirms our suspicions."

The family is distraught, he said, and wants to put an end to hazing. The Champions have already filed notice of intent to sue the school, although they do not know who was involved, what was done or where. In a separate case, three FAMU students were charged Monday with beating Bria Hunter during a hazing ritual

a few weeks before Champion's death.

Tallahassee police said that on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, Hunter was beaten with fists and a metal ruler to initiate her into the "Red Dawg Order," a band clique for students who come from Georgia. Hunter told police that days later the pain became so unbearable that she went to the hospital. Besides her broken thigh bone, she had had blood clots in her legs.

Sean Hobson, 23, and Aaron Golson, 19, were charged Monday with hazing and battery, and James Harris, 22, was charged with hazing.

Information from The Associated Press and The Orlando Sentinel were used in compiling this report.

New York Pass helps City Harvest feed more than 50,000

New York Pass, New York City's premiere money-saving attraction pass for Manhattan and the outer boroughs, announced that it has made a \$14,632 donation to City Harvest, the world's first food rescue organization, dedicated to feeding the city's hungry men, women, and children. The donation, collected from a portion of online sales throughout the month of November, will help City Harvest feed over 50,000 hungry New Yorkers this holiday season.

"With the holiday season drawing so many visitors to our website and to purchase passes, we realized that we could not only make a significant donation to City Harvest, but that we could also help to educate and inspire others to share their blessings," said Ken Barrows, vice president,

New York Pass.

"The need for food is definitely higher compared to that of recent years," says Jilly Stephens, executive director of City Harvest. "Agencies that receive food from us have reported an average increase of 25% in demand across all five boroughs in the city. So a donation like this is very much appreciated, and will help us feed many hungry families through the holiday season."

New York Cares, a quintessential New York volunteer organization, is the charitable partner for December. The \$80 New York Pass (\$55 for children) opens the doors to over 70 attractions — that would normally cost over \$1,000 to get into — including New additions like Dialog in the Dark, CSI: The Experience, and Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA) and classic favorites including Top of the Rock; The Met-

ropolitan Museum of Art; The Guggenheim; The Whitney; The Museum of Natural History; the Museum of Television and Radio; Bodies...the Exhibition, and MOMA.

Behind-the-scenes tours at Radio City; NBC studios; Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall. Free entry to parks and gardens, and places of interest like Madam Tussaud's; The Empire State

Building Observation Deck; New York Skyride, the Statue of Liberty and the Ellis Island ferry. The New York Pass also includes shopping discounts at stores like Macy's and Bloomingdale's — it even includes discounts on New York City helicopter rides and Broadway shows! (A complete list of attractions is available here.)

There are also two-day passes, \$125 for adults, \$105 for children;

three-day passes, \$155 for adults, \$135 for children; and seven-day passes, \$200 for adults and \$160 for children.

Every New York Pass comes with a free 170 page guidebook that includes detailed maps, hours of operation, tips and directions to every New York Pass attraction. The guidebooks are now available in English, German, Spanish, French and Italian.

Bklyn man gets 72 years for raping 11-year-old girl

Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes announced the sentencing of Gerald Hatcher, 47, to 72 years in prison for raping his girlfriend's 11-year-old daughter multiple times between October and November, 2008. He was convicted on Aug. 18 of rape in the first degree before Brooklyn Supreme Court

Justice Dineen Riviezzo.

During the time of the incidents, Hatcher was living with his girlfriend and her daughter in their Bedford-Stuyvesant home. While the victim's mother was at work, the defendant would enter the victim's room and rape her.

The case came to light when an

anonymous caller contacted ACS who then alerted police. Hatcher was arrested on Jan. 30, 2009.

The case was prosecuted by Elizabeth Doerfler, deputy bureau chief in the Sex Crimes Bureau and Assistant District Attorney Bridget Brodzinski from the Sex Crimes Bureau. Rhonnie Jaus is chief of the Sex Crimes Bureau.

Opinion

Ofield Dukes remembered as champion for the Black Press

By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Ofield Dukes, the public relations mogul known as a powerful mover and shaker in Washington political circles, is remembered this week - not only as a national PR giant - but as a champion for the Black Press.

"He was a remarkable, extraordinary individual whose presence will be missed beyond measure. He was probably the leading advocate of the Black Press and was one of the great pioneers," said Danny Bakewell Sr., immediate past chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, the Black Press of America, which Dukes served faithfully for decades. "He was always there when we asked him to do something. His legacy will be a light of truth and courage and undaunting pursuit of equality for Black people measured through the eyes of the Black Press."

Dukes died Wednesday, Dec. 7, at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, where he started his career as an award-winning columnist and editorial writer for the Michigan Chronicle from 1958 to 1964. He had returned to his home of Detroit in the latter part of this year, suffering with multiple myeloma, a blood cancer that affects the bones.

He was 79.

"While Ofield's accomplishments and accolades are varied and plentiful over the past four decades, the best adjective I can bestow upon him is true and loyal friend who was like a brother to me," said John B.

Smith Sr., publisher of the Atlanta Inquirer and two-term NNPA Chairman, a fete that he attributes to Dukes' support. "I will never be able to recount the many times we discussed various issues pertaining to the Black Press of America and his foresight and aptitude was always on point...Ofield was among the premiere communications strategists you could ever find."

A viewing was set for 9 a.m.-9 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the James H. Cole Funeral Home Northwest Chapel at 16100 Schaefer Highway in Detroit. The funeral was set for 11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14, at Tabernacle Baptist Church, 2080 W. Grand Blvd. in Detroit with interment at Woodlawn Cemetery, 19975 Woodward Ave. For more information on arrangements: Naomi R. Patton, 313-223-4485 or npatton@freepress.com.

A Washington, D.C. memorial service is being planned for Wednesday, Jan. 11.

Richmond Free Press Editor/Publisher Raymond H. Boone Sr., who has known Dukes for 50 years, remained in touch with him during his final months.

"We remained in constant touch until the last weeks before his death. In our last telephone conversation, he remained courageously upbeat while cherishing the blessings of his life as he faced the reality of his future," Boone said.

Boone met Dukes as a member of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration, which Boone was covering as a reporter for the Washington Afro American. "We immediately struck a lasting friendship in 1964," Boone recalled.

After Humphrey lost his presidential bid against Richard M. Nixon



In this NNPA Summer Conference 2006 photo, Ofield Dukes receives an award from then NNPA Foundation Chairman Brian Townsend and NNPA Chairman John B. Smith Sr. in appreciation for his years of service to the Black Press of America. The Conference was in Detroit that year.

in 1968, Dukes established Ofield Dukes & Associates, beginning a stellar PR career. The first African-American recipient of both the Gold and Silver Anvils, the highest awards of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Dukes was among the most highly sought after public relations executives in Washington. Motown was his first client.

Yet, he remained grounded, never forsaking his passion for the progress of Black people.

"As a standout in politics, education and business, his foremost concern was how he could help others and advance the cause of human rights," Boone said. "He knew the importance of the Black Press and was a strong advocate for its mission to give a strong voice to the voiceless."

Dukes organized the first Congressional Black Caucus Dinner in 1971 and worked tediously in his final years to keep the CBC and Black Press connected.

"He will be sorely missed for his many years of service to the Democratic party, the Congressional Black Caucus and The Black Press of America," says Dorothy Leavell, former NNPA president and former chair of the NNPA Foundation of which Dukes served as a board member for six years. "He loved the Black Press and he served it faithfully throughout his career. We shall all miss his service to the Fourth Estate."

Leavell specifically recalled Dukes' working for Black Press inclusion in briefings with President Clinton as well as the inclusion of the Black Press on advertising buys with the Democratic National Committee. Dukes was the architect of the collaboration between CBC members and NNPA's Wire Service to syndicate CBC op-editorials to NNPA's 200-plus member newspapers.

Among CBC stalwarts, Dukes was especially close to U. S. Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.).

"As a Member of Congress, I have been blessed to call many wonderful people my friend, but none more than Ofield Dukes. I am extremely saddened by the passing of such a great man who had significant impact in not only my life, but that of my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus, dating back to its founding," Rangel said in a statement. "Aside from his many accomplishments in business, politics and his personal life, Ofield was simply a true and kind person who sought to make our country a better place for all. I will forever miss his virtue, justness and sincerity."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

Leading Black decision-maker at Toyota to be honored

By William Reed
Business Exchange

When the 16th Annual Urban Wheel Awards convene in Detroit during the January 2012 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS), Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), USA, Inc.'s group Vice President and General Manager, Fletcher V. Davidson will receive the event's Executive of the Year Award.

"These Annual Urban Wheel Awards are our way of showing African Americans' appreciation for those auto companies that recognize and respect their buying power," said program founder Randi Payton. The Urban Wheels Awards started in 1996 as a feature of the African Americans on Wheels Magazine.

Occurring during the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS), the 2012 Urban Wheels Awards shows how the program has evolved into "the world-class show promoting diversity and inclusion in the automotive in-

dustry."

Payton said the 2012 winners of the Urban Wheel Company of the Year Awards "are being recognized for demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness in the areas of Workforce Development, Community Leadership, Minority Supplier Development, and Diversity Inclusion Leadership." The awardees are: Chrysler Group LLC - Workforce Development; General Motors Company - Community Leadership; Ford Motor Company - Minority Supplier Development (and Toyota Motor Corporation - Diversity Inclusion Leadership. Payton said "We are delighted to recognize Toyota Motors for its leadership in diversity and inclusion...and impressive record leading the industry with diversity initiatives and...internal leadership and commitment."

In fact, the people at Toyota have set a new trend in the industry and made strategic and measurable moves to reach Black buyers. A positive culture for people of color is emerging at

Toyota. People at the top in Toyota are valuing Blacks as consumers, vendors and team members.

Toyota has an advertising agreement with Black publishers. In 2011, Toyota was named among the Best Companies for Diversity by Black Enterprise for its achievements in supplier diversity.

Founded in 1937 by Kiichiro Toyoda, the Toyota Motor Corporation of today appears to have, a different culture and perspective. Toyota Motor Corporation group companies are Toyota (including the Scion brand), Lexus, Daihatsu and Hino Motors, along with several "non-automotive" companies. Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), U.S.A., Inc. markets products and services through a network of nearly 1,500 dealers which sold more than 1.76 million vehicles in 2010. Toyota employs nearly 30,000 people in the U.S. In his executive role at Toyota, Davidson leads a team of 2400 associates who support \$3.5 billion in sales. Payton said that Davidson is

being honored for "proven success in management, specifically for his strategic leadership during the 2010 recalls and 2011 earthquake and tsunami" "I am honored to receive the Executive of the Year award. This award comes as supply is improving... and we are preparing to introduce 20 new products over the next few years" said Davidson. Toyota's record on diversity and inclusion is a result of the leadership and commitment of its Black executives. Ed Lewis, head of Strategic Communications & Media Relations, said "At Toyota, we believe an auto company can be a vehicle for change and a key element in strengthening community needs nationwide."

Since 1991, Toyota contributed nearly \$540 million to U.S. philanthropic programs that included the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and "Push for Excellence". Toyota's supplier-diversity program has more than 7 percent of Tier I (direct contractor) spending going to minor-

ity-owned businesses.

Toyota has a number of African Americans in high-level decision-making positions. Jim Colon is Vice President of Product Communications.

Christopher P. Reynolds is a group vice president and general counsel for the Legal Services Group. Jerome Miller is Vice President for Diversity and inclusion, and Wil James is president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc.

The Wheels Awards' agenda includes honoring Washington Post automotive columnist Warren Brown with a Lifetime Achievement Award as recognition for his being one of the nation's most influential auto writers since he started coverage of the industry in 1982. A special tribute will be made toward auto companies that made major contributions to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial by MLK Memorial CEO Harry Johnson. William Reed is publisher of Who's Who in Black Corporate America and available for speaking/seminar projects via BaileyGroup.org.

Texas minority voting power threatened

By Aswad Walker
Special to the NNPA from the
Houston Defender

The case of Texas redistricting took another dramatic turn recently as the U.S. Supreme Court granted state Attorney General Greg Abbott's request to temporarily block interim redistricting maps.

Some view the fallout from the decision merely as an inconvenience to Texas voters and aspiring candidates. Others, however, view the stay as a direct attempt to weaken Black and Latino voting power by dismantling critical provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

The Supreme Court's emergency stay means candidates now have until Dec. 19 to file for office. The stay could delay legislative and congressional primaries currently scheduled for March 6 until May. The groups involved in the redistricting battle are scheduled to make oral arguments before the court on Jan. 9.

The interim maps in question were drawn by a San Antonio court's three-judge panel after complaints were raised that the redistricting maps produced during the last Texas Legislative session bolstered the political power of Tea Party and Republican lawmakers while seriously damaging the voting power of minorities. Abbott contended that the lower

court's interim maps undermined the "will of the people" and asked the Supreme Court to intervene. The Supreme Court decision further complicated the redistricting issue. Prior to the high court's ruling, five Black Texas legislators publicly expressed concern that the lower court-produced maps negatively impacted voting power in historically Black districts. "From the perspective of the Texas Legislative Black Caucus we support the interim plans for the Congressional seats and the State Senate maps," said Houston State Rep. Sylvester Turner, one of the five initially voicing reservations. He was joined by Houston lawmakers Alma Allen, Harold Dutton, Borris Miles and Senfronia Thompson.

"We voiced our concerns but we never asked for a stay," Turner said. "We would have preferred the Supreme Court to stay out of this matter entirely, because you never know what's going on in the minds of Supreme Court justices. I hope they don't do anything to weaken or eliminate the Voting Rights Acts, specifically Sections 2 and 5." Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act contains a general prohibition on voting discrimination. Section 5 deals with the process of "preclearance."

"Preclearance is what protects Black and Latino districts around the country," said Coleman. "Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott wants to get rid of preclearance. 'Preclearance means when a map



Greg Abbott

is drawn the U.S. Justice Department has to give its opinion on whether or not it harms minorities and their voting power. Because you have to wait for preclearance before you can have an election, if you remove

preclearance, elections can be run on new maps even if they take away voting power from Blacks and Latinos," Coleman explained. "This stay is the worst thing that could have ever happened because Section 5 of the Voting

Rights Act is now in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, where there is no appeal of the rulings of the highest court in the land," said Coleman.

Coleman says he cannot predict how the current saga will play out, but believes there is ill intent behind Abbott's actions. "The goal of conservatives is to get rid of the entire Voting Rights Act; that's been their stated goal for the last five to 10 years," Coleman said. "But they can't get rid of it in Congress, so they go to the courts where they have the ability to win a case because the courts have conservative judges who agree with their point of view. 'A removal of preclearance doesn't just affect Texas, but every state. What the Supreme Court tells Texas to do becomes the law of the land. This stay is the most dangerous thing that ever happened with regard to the Voting Rights Act,'" added Coleman. The San Antonio court's interim maps were produced to allow Texas elections to take place as originally scheduled while lawmakers worked to achieve a final redistricting map resolution. "I can't say right now whether the Supreme Court's stay is good, bad or indifferent," said Thompson. "Everything's up in the air right now. People don't know when the elections are; they don't even know what the districts are."

Study: Early ART in recently HIV-infected patients preferable to delayed treatment

Among people recently infected with HIV, immediate antiretroviral therapy (ART) appears preferable to deferring treatment, according to a new study published in *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* and now available online. Although the benefits of ART during early HIV-1 infection remain unproven, the findings support growing evidence favoring earlier ART initiation.

Christine Hogan, MD, of the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, led a team of researchers from various institutions to investigate the effects of ART on individuals infected with HIV-1 within the previous six months. The multicenter clinical trial—the AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) Setpoint Study—enrolled 130 men and non-pregnant women who were at least 18 years old and had not received ART previously. Participants were randomized into two groups: In the immediate treatment group, patients were to receive ART treatment for 36 weeks, after which treatment was stopped; treatment was deferred for patients in the second group. All individuals were followed throughout the study.

The study's primary endpoint was the patients' virologic setpoint at 72 weeks. The researchers also sought to compare the virologic setpoint at 72 weeks for patients in the immediate treatment group with that of patients in the deferred treatment group at 36 weeks. Investigators found that the immediate treatment group had a better outcome than the deferred group. Individuals in

the deferred arm experienced higher than anticipated rates of disease progression, necessitating the start of HIV treatment before the study endpoint. Half of the participants in the deferred treatment group required treatment on medical grounds within 18 months.

According to Dr. Hogan and colleagues, the results suggest that "if immediate therapy is not begun, progression to meeting standard criteria for ART initiation may occur more rapidly than expected, especially with changing treatment paradigms."

In addition, patients who received treatment immediately ap-

pear to have been protected not only during treatment but for a brief period of time afterward. In an accompanying editorial, Harout Tossonian, MD, PhD, and Brian Conway, MD, of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, noted that "immune preservation and reduction in the latent pool of HIV-1-carrying CD4 T-cells seems to require intervention at the earliest possible time of acute infection." They noted that the advantages of immediate treatment appear to be achieved with little to no harm to the patient, either in terms of drug-related toxicity or emer-

gence of drug resistance.

"The initial course of 36 weeks of treatment may delay the need for re-starting it more than the 36 weeks spent on it from the time of initial presentation," Drs. Tossonian and Conway wrote. "Thus over the lifetime of the patient, there will be less cumulative drug exposure."

Dr. Hogan and her team suggest that the findings may be of interest to clinicians and patients struggling with when to begin ART. An additional sub-study is underway "to address whether immediate versus deferred treatment during primary HIV infection results in

improvements in markers of inflammation and immune activation, which may provide further insight into potential benefits of treating primary infection," the authors wrote. **Fast Facts:** 1) In a comparative randomized trial of immediate versus deferred antiretroviral therapy (ART) in early HIV infection, patients whose therapy was deferred experienced higher than anticipated rates of disease progression. 2) Participants who received treatment immediately appear to have been protected not only during treatment but also for a brief period of time after treatment was stopped.

The Black Press (NNPA) / Nielsen Consumer Report

Special to the NNPA from the
Los Angeles Sentinel

This is a historic consumer report that was hammered out for the Black Press on behalf of the Black consumer, so that spending in Black America produce tangible returns.

In an unprecedented agreement, the Black Press of America (NNPA) and the Nielsen Company have reached an historic agreement on behalf of the Black consumers whose earning power makes up a sizeable market share of Corporate America's earnings.

The agreement was worked between former NNPA chairman, Danny J. Bakewell, Sr.—and is now being carried on by NNPA's current chairman, Cloves Campbell—and Cheryl Pearson-Mc Neil, senior vice president of

government relations, and public affairs for the Nielsen Company.

With a membership of over 200 newspapers, NNPA's reach in America's Black communities is unquestionable.

And with Nielsen's global reach in marketing and consumer information, that collaboration has provided a ground breaking consumer report that is second to none.

When strategically implemented, that combination will empower the Black consumer and place corporate America on notice that 'business as usual' is a thing of the past.

This will have the resultant effect of engaging corporations that intend to do business with the Black consumer, that at minimum, they will be

expecting an equitable return.

Former chairman Bakewell said, "This consumer report will arm the Black consumer with a much-needed arsenal of information as to where to spend those Black dollars intelligently.

Also it clearly illustrates and demonstrates the power of the Black consumer with all the statistics and specifics, and it is what is needed to provide a profound impact, and create a level of 'equal-ness' between corporate America and the Black consumer."

Neilsen's senior vice president Nielsen stated, "We are extremely excited to share The State of the African-American Consumer Report with millions of readers through the NNPA. Our hope is that once consum-

ers know more about their purchasing power, they will exercise it collectively and really impact change."

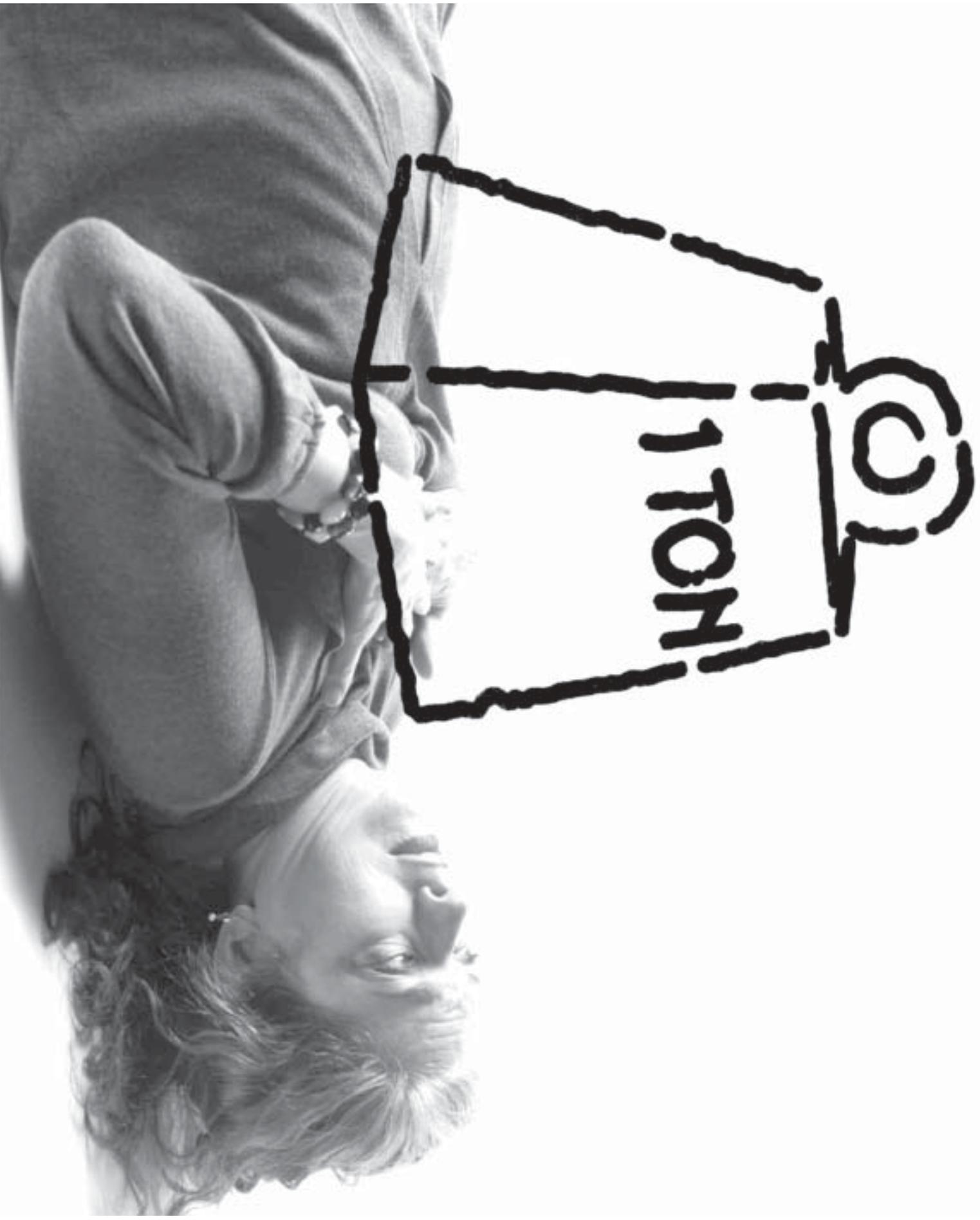
The long term effects of the state of the African-American consumer report reflect some of the causes and effects of the financial condition in many Black communities across the nations.

And the Black Press/NNPA believes that this report will have a sobering, wake-up effect, when properly understood.

The results of the report came from focused research and study of the Black consumer in a myriad of cities with large percentages of Blacks: from New York and Atlanta to Los Angeles and San Francisco, and all in-between.

THIS IS WHAT A HEART ATTACK FEELS LIKE TO A WOMAN.

(CHEST PAIN, DISCOMFORT, PRESSURE OR SQUEEZING, LIKE THERE'S A TON OF WEIGHT ON YOU)



Other Heart Attack Symptoms to Watch Out For:

Shortness of breath • Nausea • Light-headedness or sudden dizziness • Unusual upper body pain, or discomfort in one or both arms, back, shoulder, neck, jaw or upper part of the stomach • Unusual fatigue • Breaking out in a cold sweat

If you experience any one of these symptoms, don't make excuses for them. Make the Call. Don't Miss a Beat.

To learn more, visit WomensHealth.gov/HeartAttack



Health

Peeved about my parents' predicament

By **Phill Wilson**
Special to the NNPA from the Black AIDS Institute

I've been spending a lot of time with my parents lately. In July my father was in serious industrial fire. He suffered third-degree burns on his upper body, had to have skin grafts on his arms and was in the ICU at the University of Chicago hospital for a month. The experience has provided me with enhanced insight into the challenges that our seniors are facing today.

My parents are 76 years old. They've worked hard their entire lives; they played by the rules; they raised a family. My parents believed owning real estate was a safeguard for retirement. They

saved their money and he bought property. My parents were conservative. When others used their property as an ATM or a piggy bank, my parents paid down their mortgages. They didn't refinance; they never took money out.

Unfortunately, they didn't diversify either. Their plan was to sell their properties and use the proceeds to retire. They had No Plan B.

The plan was not really a bad one, except for two things. My parents live in Chicago. Their property is in the middle of an area that would have been right in the heart of things had the Olympics come to Chicago. But Chicago lost its Olympic bid, and the housing market crashed. My parent's retirement dream crashed with it. To ex-

acerbate the problem, in anticipation of the Olympics, a robust real-estate market dramatically raised property taxes in "transitional" neighborhoods like the one my parents live in.

Between them, my parents receive \$1,862 a month in Social Security payments. Without my father's income from working, that's their entire income. Out of that they have to pay their mortgage on their home, pay for utilities—their heating bill can be as high as \$800 a month—buy groceries, and pay for health related expenses.

So, here's my question: If asking billionaires and millionaires to pay taxes on luxury yachts and private jets is class warfare, then why isn't it class warfare when

legislators propose to cut my parents' Social Security and undermine their Medicare? Already they have to make choices between paying their mortgage and buying the prescriptions that my mom needs for diabetes and my dad needs for high blood pressure—which he didn't have until he experienced the stress of financial hardship and began taking the additional medicines he needs to recover from his accident.

My parents did not contribute to America's economic crisis. The collapse of the real estate market was not their fault. They did not make a dime from the subprime scam. And while maybe one could argue that whether they were a part of creating the problem or not, we all have to be in the game, we

all have to share the pain.

The operative word here is "all". It is not fair that the burden of solving America's economic mess falls on the backs of my parents and others like them, while the Americans who have benefitted the most from decades of excess and greed are not required in the least to participate and share the pain of solving this problem. Phill Wilson is the President and CEO of the Black AIDS Institute, the only National HIV/AIDS think tank in the United States focused exclusively on Black people. Follow him on twitter @iamphillwilson. Mr. Wilson is also available for interviews and press inquiries. Contact him at PhillWilson@blackaids.org or (213) 353-3610 ext. 105. www.BlackAIDS.org.

Who's looking out for your health care needs?

By **Janet Trautwein**

Officials recently released 244 pages' worth of regulations governing the health-insurance exchanges established by the federal health reform law.

The rules envision a big role for "navigators" — entities or people expected to help consumers evaluate their health insurance options in the exchanges. Some groups intend for navigators to replace the folks who currently help consumers with their insurance needs — licensed, professional health insurance agents.

That would be a disaster. Although it will take many different voices to let people who are uninsured today know about the health insurance options available in 2014, expanding the role of navigators from promoting program availability to enrolling and advising people about specific plans is a consumer hazard. These navigators will lack not only the expertise, training, and licensing that agents possess but also sufficiently strong incentives to serve in an advisory capacity.

So who will these navigators be? That's not yet apparent — and will vary from state to state.

The law specifically lists agents and brokers as groups that may be navigators. But the law's financial requirements would force most agents and brokers to disrupt their business models and could prevent them from serving current clients who might be ineligible to purchase coverage through the exchanges. So it's doubtful that many will participate in the navigator program. They may instead try to work with the exchanges in more traditional ways.

The proposed exchange rules also specify that at least some of the navigators must be "consumer-focused" or "community-

based." In other words, they'll need to demonstrate an existing relationship to consumers.

Observers believe that trade, industry, and professional organizations; unions; chambers of commerce; and small-business development centers could be among the groups that serve as navigators. That makes sense. Their relationships will be important in educating the public about new insurance opportunities in 2014.

Many are likely to have expertise with outreach to specific populations. But it's safe to assume that most will not be qualified to perform the work of agents and brokers, who have been linking consumers to appropriate health insurance policies for decades. Agents and brokers must already comply with state licensing and continuing education requirements in order to advise consumers about health insurance options. This important consumer protection is expected to continue.

How would navigators be paid? Although states must have navigator programs, no federal funds can be used for their payments, which are described as grants. It's unclear whether states must come up with this grant funding, how much these grants would be, or how they would work.

With some 42 states and the District of Columbia facing budget shortfalls in 2012, most states won't have the money to support the sort of robust navigator program the drafters of the law envisioned.

And what exactly will navigators do? The law says they will focus on public education, outreach to special populations, and facilitating health-plan enrollment. But the navigator program's goals do not include providing plan-year-to-plan-year assistance to consumers regarding the functionality of their health coverage. By contrast, that's an integral part of private

health insurance agents' jobs and business models.

Agents and brokers aim to keep their clients for life and have financial incentives as private business owners to furnish them with ongoing service.

Agents hold seminars to educate employees, fight to make sure claims are paid, and help their clients find the right doctors and healthcare providers. The Congressional Budget Office has reported that many insurance agents even function as virtual human resources departments for small businesses.

It's no wonder that those who have worked with agents have

been satisfied. A 2007 IBM survey found that 75 percent of those who employed agents held favorable views of them. More than half cited "personalized experience" as what they liked most about their insurance broker.

Every day, agents go above and beyond the call of duty. Their livelihood depends on it. Consider the case of Idaho resident Anne Marie G., who publicly lauded the efforts of her agent Brooks Mathern to handle "indecipherable" paperwork and claims in the wake of the birth of her child.

Or take Maryland broker Marcia Friedman, who through diligent research found a way to

get additional coverage for a 10-year-old autistic girl who had exhausted her family's mental health coverage. These are the sorts of problems that agents and brokers have solved for years — and that navigators will be poorly equipped to deal with.

Millions of consumers depend on insurance agents to help them secure high-quality coverage for their families — and to advocate on their behalf even after they pay their premiums. Navigators may try to imitate agents, but they'll never be able to duplicate them.

Janet Trautwein is CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters.

Vitamin D deficiency epidemic among Blacks, says new book

Vitamin D deficiency is a silent epidemic that is taking the lives of countless blacks worldwide. Many Americans are seriously deficient in vitamin D, a critical nutrient which aids in the prevention of numerous diseases including cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure to name a few.

However, vitamin D deficiency is far worse among dark-skinned people because high concentrations of melanin in dark skin block the production of vitamin D from the sun, the most natural and abundant source of vitamin D.

More than 90 percent of Blacks have critically low vitamin D levels and Blacks also suffer disproportionate illness and mortality rates from major chronic diseases. Correcting the Vitamin D Deficiency Epidemic: Strategies to Fight Diseases and Prolong Life for Black People is the first book to comprehensively address the un-

der-examined issue of critical vitamin D deficiency among blacks.

The book explores the connection between vitamin D deficiency and the high illness and mortality rates among Blacks. It also provides practical steps that dark-skinned people worldwide can take to improve their vitamin D status as well as useful, natural health strategies to help prevent and fight chronic diseases. Leading scientists in the field of vitamin D research have commented on the book:

* Dr. Cedric Garland, professor at the School of Medicine, University of California San Diego urges "all society, and concerned people of all ethnicities to act upon" the vital information provided in the book.

* Dr. William B. Grant, director of The Sunlight, Nutrition and Health Research Center advises that the book "should be required reading for every black

family in the United States; white and brown Americans could learn much from it as well."

* Dr. Bruce Hollis, director of pediatric nutritional sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina, implores "patients and physicians [to] heed [the book's] advice."

* Dr. Vin Tangpricha, associate professor of medicine at Emory University School of Medicine notes, "this book covers the link between vitamin D deficiency, vitamin D status in African Americans and the diseases associated with vitamin D deficiency."

Copies of the book may be purchased from amazon.com and outlets posted at the website below. The author, Mrs. Emily Allison-Francis, is a nutritionist and educator.

Contact: www.healthieryounutrition.com, info@healthieryounutrition.com or 718.916.8974.

16 New approach to expand school day launched nationally

NEWYORK BEACON, December 22, 2011 - December 28, 2011 newyorkbeacon.net

Students in schools in Baltimore and New Orleans are reaping the benefits of a longer school day and an exciting range of new learning opportunities through a national expanded school day initiative officially launched today.

ExpandedED Schools, a public-private initiative of The After-School Corporation (TASC), began operations this fall in three schools in Baltimore, three in New Orleans and five in New York City, building on a successful New York City pilot. The national launch is supported by major new funding from Open Society Foundations and The Wallace Foundation. ExpandedED Schools offer a promising way to reinvent public schools by forging partnerships between schools and community organizations to expand students' learning time and options. In these elementary and middle schools, community organizations are full partners with the school's teachers and administrators.

The learning day in ExpandedED Schools is about three hours longer than in typical schools, giving students more time for quality instruction, increased adult mentoring and the chance to explore a range of inspiring learning opportunities from dance and debate to web design and hands-on science. This approach, which operates in schools in disadvantaged communities, seeks to close gaps in opportunity and educational achievement.

"The current school calendar made sense in the 19th Century, but today it puts our country at a competitive disadvantage. Our

children spend over a month less in school than children in South Korea — every year. That's no way to prepare them to compete in the 21st century economy," said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "Under the ExpandedED model, schools will be able to partner with an experienced youth-serving organization to bring in new resources and staff members such as AmeriCorps volunteers. Expanding learning time can accelerate student achievement, particularly in high-poverty schools where students don't always have as much outside support or resources," said Duncan. (Visit this site to listen to Secretary Duncan's remarks.) The national launch of ExpandedED Schools was made possible through major funding from The Wallace Foundation and the Open Society Foundations (OSF). The Wallace Foundation has committed \$5 million to TASC over three years to help it create additional ExpandedED Schools and evaluate the impact on student learning, while OSF has committed \$3.5 million. Additional support for this effort comes from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the New York Life Foundation, the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation and Rona and Randolph Nelson. TASC is committing an additional \$3 million in funding in anticipation that private investment will leverage a \$30 million public-private national demonstration of expanded learning time over the next three years. A key objective is to shape policy and grow sustainable public funding to help states and school districts bring expanded learning opportunities to scale among large numbers of students and schools.

"We are excited to work with our partners to launch ExpandedED Schools in Baltimore and New Orleans," said TASC President Lucy N. Friedman. "The kids with the greatest needs typically have the fewest opportunities to keep learning when the conventional school day ends at 3 p.m. ExpandedED Schools reverse that inequality. By building partnerships with community organizations like Y's, we can reinvent schools that deliver fully on the promise of public education. And we can do it cost-effectively by making more efficient use of resources communities already invest in education and youth development."

"We are pleased that Baltimore now has three ExpandedED Schools, which are providing more time and opportunities for our kids to learn, and bringing more adults into our schools to help students be successful," said Dr. Andrés A. Alonso, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools. "On behalf of the district I want to thank TASC and the Open Society and Wallace foundations for supporting this opportunity, and I want to thank our community partners for their dedicated work."

"All parents want their kids to be able to take part in high-quality activities at school that can stir their imagination and get them engaged in exploring new things. The new partnerships at Baltimore's three ExpandedED Schools are providing those kinds of opportunities every day," said Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. "For many of our students, this is the chance of a lifetime, with more hours to learn — and more chances to try new things."

ExpandedED Schools work

collaboratively from the outset to expand the curriculum, personalize instruction, and fortify kids socially and emotionally against lives often marked by hardship. The approach is based on research and proven practice, including dozens of empirical studies that show that more high-quality learning time leads to better student outcomes including greater achievement, better school attendance and more enthusiastic learners.

"We know the conventional six-hour, 180-day school year is insufficient to give many kids, especially those in low-income communities, the education they need and deserve," said Nancy Devine, director of communities at The Wallace Foundation. "ExpandedED Schools is one of a group of leading national organizations that we are funding with promising models of expanding the school day or year in ways that help students in urban schools achieve — models that share a commitment to high-quality instructional programming and the use of data to measure progress."

"ExpandedED Schools help communities reimagine the school day so kids can have greater academic success," said Diana Morris, acting director of U.S. programs for the Open Society Foundations. "In Baltimore and New Orleans — and eventually in other cities around the country — community organizations will work hand-in-hand with schools to give kids more time for academics and a wider range of learning options." The ExpandedED model relies on the use of a range of funding sources, including local, state and federal funds, to help schools provide at

least 35 percent more learning time per year at less than 10 percent additional cost for the school day.

With support from its major funders, TASC helps schools raise the necessary private funds to leverage existing public funding streams including federal 21st Century Community Learning Center funds, federal support for low income and English-language learners, AmeriCorps volunteers and city funding for Out-of-School Time initiatives in New York City and Baltimore.

"We have worked for more than a decade in schools in New York City and have spent the past three years developing the ExpandedED Schools approach in 17 of those schools. Our results in those schools have been encouraging, and we know this approach is leading to greater opportunities for kids who urgently need them," said TASC President Friedman. Students in New York City pilot schools improved their school attendance by seven more days a year than students in matched schools.

In Baltimore, ExpandedED Schools are administered through the Family League of Baltimore City, Inc. together with Baltimore City Public Schools. Participating schools are George Washington Elementary School with Y of Central Maryland; Harlem Park Elementary and Middle School with BELL; and Hilton Elementary with Child First Authority.

In New Orleans, ExpandedED Schools are administered by the Partnership for Youth Development. Participating schools are Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak Elementary with New Orleans

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

CUNY offers free journalism training in January Academy

The CUNY Graduate School of Journalism announces exciting training opportunities for members of the New York-based ethnic and community media. From Jan. 3 through 25, journalists from that media sector can attend up to 18 workshops free of cost.

Very limited space and is filling fast. Registration on first come, first serve basis. Don't wait, register now!! Please RSVP:

tovoicesofnewyork@journalism.cuny.edu at your earliest convenience.

1-Freelancing Workshop

January 3-4 (Tuesday & Wednesday), 1-5 p.m. Ellen Walterscheid and Prof. Frederick Kaufman - Room 308. We'll cover such topics as: generating ideas, understanding the market, getting to the right editor, pitching the story, revising the pitch, understanding the contract, negotiating a good price, working with editors, and polishing the freelance piece.

2- Covering the Presidential Election

January 4 (Wednesday), 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (3 seats available) Douglas Muzzio and Errol Louis - Room 430. The goal of the seminar is to give you a working knowledge of how the 2012 presidential race will unfold, with a focus on how to report on the main race and affiliated

stories (e.g., control of Congress and key contests for governor.)

3- Covering New York City (The Short Version)

January 5 (Thursday), 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (3 seats available) Prof. Sarah Bartlett - Room 430. This three-hour seminar will give a fast-paced overview of the critical details reporters need to know about how New York City works. The session will begin with some brief historical and demographic background, and then introduce students to the city's political structure, the key economic and business players, and the web of nonprofits and advocacy groups that provide essential social services.

4- Digital Lunch: 21 Websites Every Journalist Should Know

January 5 (Thursday), 12:30-2 p.m. Jeremy Caplan - Room 308. From Evernote to Storify, catch up on the most useful new web resources. This lunchtime session will highlight 21 different cutting-edge tools transforming the work of innovative journalists.

5- 60 News Sites and Databases for Journalists

January 6 (Friday), 2-4 p.m. Gary Price - Room 434 (NO SEATS AVAILABLE)

6- Radio Documentary Workshop

January 10, 11, 18 (NO SEATS AVAILABLE)

7- Voice Coaching Workshop

January 10, 11, 17, 18 (NO

SEATS AVAILABLE)

8- The Crash Course on Economics, Markets, and Business

January 10, 11, 12 (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday), 5-8 p.m. Greg David - Room 430 (2 seats available) Want to know why the Great Recession has so devastated the country? Why Wall Street is so hated? Why Europe's economy could soon crash? Why Apple is the most successful American company? This three-part January Academy class answers these questions in a crash course on the basics of economics, markets, and business.

9- Intro to ProTools

January 12, 13 (NO SEATS AVAILABLE)

10- Basics of Social Media Skills for Journalists

January 12 (Thursday), 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Reporting, Community Building, and Branding - Adam Glenn - Room 434. Social networks like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn have fast become significant tools for the work of journalism, allowing you to find stories and sources, engage your audience more fully, virally market your work, and build a professional identity online. This course will explore these and numerous other social media tools with an eye toward their journalistic purpose.

11- Mining the Census

January 13 (Friday), 1-4 p.m. Barbara Gray - Room 434 (6 seats

available). This session with research lecturer Barbara Gray is part understanding the Census and part workshop, to uncover and enhance stories using what you've learned.

12- Politics, Power, & Money

January 17 (Tuesday), 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tom Robbins - Room 430 (4 seats available) The CUNY J-School's investigative journalist in residence, Tom Robbins, explains how to use public databases to analyze the impact of campaign donors and lobbyists on local elected officials.

13- News Photography Workshop for Applicants

January 17 (Tuesday), 10 a.m.-4 p.m. John Smock - Room 438 (NO SEATS AVAILABLE)

14- The International Economic Crisis

January 17, 18 (Tuesday & Wednesday), 5-8 p.m. Greg David - Room 430 (3 seats available)

The complicated Chinese-American economic relationship. The rise of Brazil. The resurgence of Germany. The economics of the poorest continent, Africa. With the exception of wars, these stories dominate the coverage of international issues in the American media.

15- Secrets to Compelling Page Design, Online and In Print

January 18 (Wednesday), 2-5 p.m. John Smock - Room 438 (3 seats available)

This workshop is an introduction to basic principles of good layout and design. The personality of a news publication online and in print are often defined by appearance. Smart use of design elements such as typeface, color, and a variety of other graphic elements can make a publication appear more professional while also making it easier to navigate. The course will study an assortment of publications and identify underlying graphic elements useful to students interested in better design of their own online publications or those who simply want a better understanding of design's role in the increasingly visual world of journalism.

16- Interviewing for Multimedia Stories

January 23 (Monday), 5:30-8:30 p.m. Sarah Kramer - Room 442 (NO SEATS AVAILABLE)

17- Travel Writing

January 24 (Tuesday), 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Tim Harper - Room 330 (1 seats available) One reason most of us got into journalism was to see the world, and tell people about it. CUNY J-School Craft Prof. Tim Harper leads this workshop that aims both to inspire and inform, whether your goal is to become a full-time travel writer or you merely want to supplement your day job with stories you do while on vaca-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

Cuomo's bill to crack down on sexual abuse

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced last week he will introduce new legislation that will require additional persons, including coaches at high schools and colleges, to immediately report to law enforcement possible acts of child sexual abuse on their campuses.

Under current law, there are no requirements for any college employees to report acts of sex abuse to law enforcement. At high schools, many educational and health care professionals are subject to mandatory reporting requirements, but coaches are not. The Governor's proposal will address these gaps in order to better protect children who are present on high school and college campuses.

"Parents need to be sure that their children are safe in programs and activities that are organized by and at colleges," Governor Cuomo said. "This legislation will ensure that those who harm our children are reported as quickly as possible to law enforcement."

Governor Cuomo's announcement of the new legislation comes after the recently publicized reports of alleged sexual abuse in

the athletic programs at Syracuse University and Penn State.

The bill continues Governor Cuomo's extensive efforts to protect children across New York State from sexual abuse. In August, the Governor signed a law to better ensure individuals convicted of sexual offenses are disqualified from becoming school bus drivers. As Attorney General, Cuomo authored the successful Electronic Securing and Targeting of Online Predators Act (e-STOP) law that requires convicted sex offenders to register their e-mail addresses and other online identifiers with the state Division of Criminal Justice Services' New York State Sex Offender Registry. The e-STOP law is credited with forcing the removal of thousands of accounts associated with sex offenders from major social networking web sites.

In October, the Division of Criminal Justice Services launched a new feature that allows Facebook users to access information about medium and high-risk sex offenders living in their neighborhoods, near their workplaces and schools with just a few clicks and without leaving the popular networking site.

Program nearly doubling CUNY graduation rates

As media reports circulate of troublingly low graduation rates at the City University of New York (CUNY) and academic unpreparedness among NYC high school students, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez and the Higher Education Committee examined a program within CUNY which is fighting back against both problems.

The Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) initiative is offered for incoming CUNY community college freshman, and has seen 55% of its Fall 2007 cohort obtain degrees within three years. Through a structure including a consolidated schedule, a limited number of majors, small class sizes, advisement services, and required full-time study, the program is nearly doubling the average CUNY community college 6-year graduation rate of 28%. ASAP pays the difference of the \$6,500 cost of the program left after federal and state financial aid.

ASAP works to address the fact that the majority of students leaving New York City public high schools are unable to complete academic work at a college level. In fact, 79% of freshman entering into CUNY community colleges, the majority of whom attended NYC public schools, require some level of remediation. Students who require remediation have been shown statistically to have lower retention and graduation rates.

"New York City is facing a cri-



Council member Ydanis Rodriguez

sis in education" said Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez. "If we don't raise graduation rates at the City University, where the majority of college-bound working class students attend, we risk sending these young people into the economy unprepared to compete. ASAP has taken this challenge head-on, however, and in around 4 years has incredibly doubled the graduation rates of the students it works with. We need to build on this success and expand it across the University."

Oleta Adams sings for Haiti

By Jami Kelmenson

Acclaimed recording artist Oleta Adams remembers seeing commercials for Ajax laundry detergent as a child in which a knight on a white horse sweeps into the homes of apron-clad but iron-fisted women to help them with their household chores. This colorful vision of "coming to the rescue" of people in need is much more than an ad campaign or fairy tale to this chart-topping gospel, soul and jazz singer. It is the inspiration that runs throughout her rendition of "Get Here," the chart topping Brenda Russell song that became the unofficial anthem of the Gulf War in the early nineties - an ode to fighting soldiers and the families they left behind.

"The worst thing that can ever happen to people is to feel that there's no hope," Oleta says. "For the people of Haiti, life practically stopped. There are many stories where people have been in hopeless situations but they clung to something deep inside them that made them feel there's a miracle or a change coming." Providing that feeling that normalcy can be restored is central to the message she'll convey when she comes to Brooklyn and performs her classic hit "Get Here," at the second annual "Hope and A Future" Benefit Concert for Haiti. Presented by Community2Community (C2C), the eclectic, Haitian relief showcase takes place Friday, January 13th at Walt Whitman Theatre lo-



Oleta Adams

cated at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College.

"Everybody needs to have a place that they can call home and everyone needs hope," says Oleta Adams

Interestingly, at the time the 7.0 magnitude quake that claimed 300,000 lives and left more than one million homeless in Haiti hit, Oleta Adams was in what was to become another crisis-ridden country with her husband, drummer John Cuson. "We were in Japan when we saw the news on television. We felt terribly far

away and at the same time it still touched us all. Especially when you're away from home, you feel it even more and imagine what it must mean to people to go back to nothing?"

Currently, Oleta and her husband live just a few hours from Joplin Missouri, which in May of 2011, was devastated by a powerful tornado. Additionally, she was in L.A. during the Northridge earthquake of 1994. These experiences have taught her to appreciate life and resonate with her every time she hears the emer-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 36)

Gov. Cuomo signs inner city youth employment bill

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has signed a bill creating "NY Youth Works," an inner city youth employment program that will combat high unemployment in the state's metro areas.

In a standing room only audience, students from Medgar Evers College Preparatory High School as well as Medgar Evers College students, faculty and staff looked on as the Governor, joined by his colleagues from the Legislature, signed the new bill in a ceremony held at Medgar Evers College of The City University of New York in Brooklyn.

"We are giving young adults in our cities the skills and the opportunity to build a career," Governor Cuomo said. "With four out of every ten inner city young adults looking for work, our state faces an unemployment crisis within an unemployment crisis that needs to be immediately addressed. Through the NY Youth Works program, we are putting our young people on a career path and preventing a cycle of

poverty. This program represents not only an investment in our youth, but an investment in the collective future of our state."

The new law includes \$25 million in tax credits for businesses that hire unemployed and disadvantaged youth and \$62 million to support job training programs.

"Governor Cuomo's job initiative underscores what he has repeatedly emphasized in his remarks about our state economy - there is nothing New Yorkers need more than jobs, jobs, jobs," said Dr. William Pollard, President of Medgar Evers College. "We believe that in urban communities like Central Brooklyn, an impactful inner-city youth employment program can create real momentum and stabilization for the local economy. In turn our young people, who have struggled so noticeably in finding meaningful employment and opportunity, can help drive economic growth and local competitiveness. Governor Cuomo's NY Youth Works program is welcome

news for both businesses and young job seekers and I applaud the Governor for making the future of our inner-city youth a priority and legislative focus."

The NY Youth Works program provides \$25 million in tax credits to benefit employers that hire unemployed youth over the first six months of 2012, with the ultimate goal of permanent, unsubsidized employment.

NY Youth Works will function in three phases:

• Phase 1: For up to six weeks before a youth is placed in employment, youth providers, like not-for-profits and workforce investment boards, will prepare eligible youth with skills such as work readiness, occupational training, and digital literacy.

• Phase 2: Businesses will be offered a \$3,000 wage subsidy in the form of tax credits to hire disadvantaged youths for six months. Preference will be given to employers in demand industries such as clean en-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

AUDREY'S SOCIETY WHIRL



By Audrey J. Bernard
Lifestyles & Society Editor

On Saturday afternoon, December 10, 2011, the **Empire City Moles** hosted its annual holiday celebration at the exclusive **Davenport Country Club** in New Rochelle, NY with over one hundred guests dining and dancing on the Long Island Sound including the Moles, husbands of the Moles. The eagerly-anticipated annual affair is always a spectacular afternoon filled with an abundance of spiritual bliss that fills the room while DJ Q & E fills the dance floor.

Mole president **Cynthia J. Gresham**, who was recently elected as national parliamentarian at the club's 61st National Conclave in Hampton, VA making her the first in the chapter to hold a national office, began the lovely luncheon with warm welcoming remarks.

During the cordial celebration, Mole **Margaret Wesley**, who is the longest standing chapter member, was honored for her outstanding service. Mole past presidents **Stacey Bell**, daughter of Mole Wesley, and **Emalena Davis North**, made the honorary presentation.

Moles **Cecelia Newkirk** and **Jacqueline Smith** co-chaired the delightfully decorated Christmas gathering along with committee members **Edith Davenport**, **Lisa Ray Clarkson** and **Stacey Bell**.

The Empire City chapter is the 21st established in a sisterhood of thirty chapters nationwide that has hosted two national conventions, one at the Waldorf Astoria, and three board of directors luncheons. The Moles will be hosting the 75th Conclave in 2025 here in New York City. Mole **Dr. Carolyn Rudd Johnson**, of Washington DC, is the National President of the distinguished organization.

Members of the Empire Moles include **Cynthia J. Gresham** (president), **Jacqueline Smith** (vice president), **Stacey Bell**, **Edith Davenport**, **Lisa Ray Clarkson**, **Cyndi Carew**, **Gloria Dixon**, **Hon. Wilhelmina (Billie) Holliday**, **Cecelia Newkirk**, **Emalena Davis North**, **Rhonda McLean Nur**, **Tanya Levy Odom**, **Margaret Wesley** and **Terri Wisdom**. (Photos by Gideon Manasseh)

Revered Mole Margaret Wesley honored at Empire City Moles Christmas celebration



The Empire City Chapter of The Moles with some Mule mates





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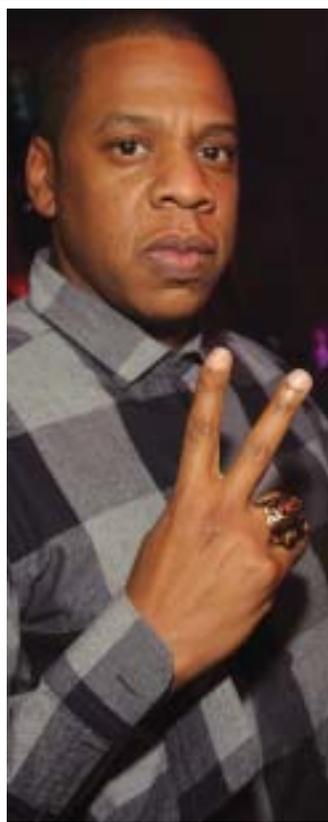
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Beacon On The Scene

Edited by Audrey J. Bernard
Lifestyle & Society Editor



Former Secretary of State still making history! . . . On Monday, November 7, 2011 the **New-York Historical Society (N-YHS)** presented National Security Advisor and former Secretary of State **Dr. Henry Kissinger** and founder and managing partner of Kynikos Associates LP **James Chanos** with the distinguished 2011 History Makers Award at the Waldorf-Astoria during its annual History Makers Gala. The theme of the evening was *China: An Evening With the Experts* and featured a discussion between Dr. Kissinger and noted historian **Dr. John Lewis Gaddis**. The money raised will benefit the programs of the N-YHS, including major exhibitions and educational programs on American history. **Helen Appel, James A. Chanos, Ravenel B. Curry III, Elizabeth B. Dater, Diana & Joe DiMenna, Buzzy Geduld, Richard Gilder, Martin J. Gross, Roger Hettog, Patricia Klingenstein, Bernard Schwartz and Sue Ann Weinberg** served as honorary co-chairs. (Photo by Don Pollard)



Jay-Z returned to TAO Las Vegas to deliver another epic night for club goers. . . . Following his sold out *Watch the Throne* concert Jay-Z threw an "after, after" party at TAO for fans wanting more. The star made his way into the packed hot spot around 1 am and with one shout out from **DJ Ross One** the crowd erupted and camera phones went flying in the air to catch a shot of Hova. He commanded a VIP table on the dance floor with a group of his close guy friends. A six piece marching band with a little person conductor traveled through the partiers to his table where they launched into the intro of his hit "N**gas in Paris." Jay-Z loved the tribute and it sent the crowd into a frenzy. The party marched on after that with Jigga holding court well past 3 am as TAO's bottle fairy delivered a seemingly endless supply of Ace of Spades. Every time she made her way down the zip line with a bottle of bubbly Jigga would point up to make sure everyone saw the aerialist show off her contortionist moves. As he made his way out of the club he stopped in the DJ booth to graciously thank Ross One for an amazing party. (Photo by Al Powers/Powers Imagery)



Ho! Ho! Heidi! . . . Holiday shopping is in the bag for **Heidi Klum** as she "presents" everyone on her list with pieces from her *Wildlife By Heidi Klum* collection for QVC. (Photo by Chris Weeks/Getty Images)



Singsational Natasha C. Coward gets her beauty on with Beverly Johnson's Multi-Cultural Haircare, Skincare and Bath & Body Products! . . . LEJ Records R&B Powerhouse **Natasha C. Coward**, along with celebrity journalist, **Flo Anthony**, dropped by legendary beauty **Beverly Johnson's** launch party for *Beverlyjohnson.com* and the showcase of the first African American woman on the cover of *Vogue's* beauty line, Beverly Johnson, the expert in multi-cultural haircare, skincare and bath & body products, on Monday, December 12, 2011 at the Carlton Hotel in downtown Manhattan. Like Johnson, Coward, is a woman on the move. The *singsational* songbird will be singing hits from her new CD *No Warning Signs* and some Christmas songs at a special Holiday Finale at **Native Restaurant** on Lenox Avenue and 118th Street in Harlem on December 29, 2011. The evening is sponsored by Cadillac. Showtime is at 9 pm. No cover. Appetizers. Crooner **Bert Clarke** will open for Coward with three original songs including his holiday hit, "Merry Christmas." (Photo by LEJ Records)



Jennifer Hudson brought the roof down with her dynamic performance at this year's "VH1 Diva" awards in New York City. The stunning starlet dazzled onlookers and award show guests and nominees as she showed off all her stunning, one of a kind pieces, created by **Jacob & Co.** (Photo by Wire Image)

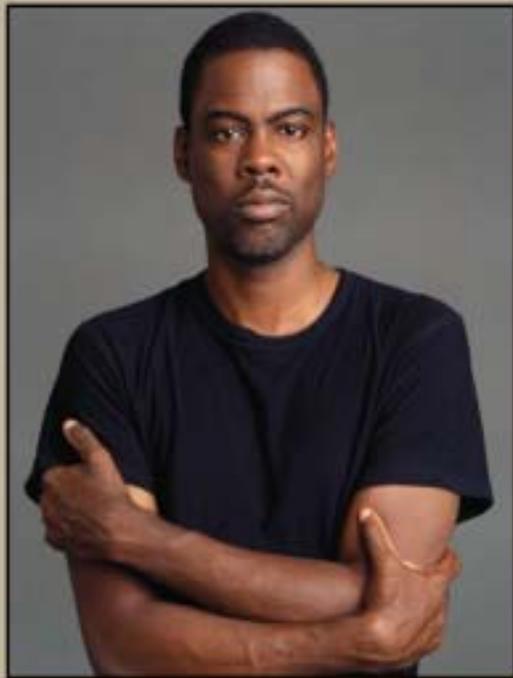


Winter Wonderland melts hearts . . . Hollywood's hottest couple **Melissa Rycroft** and **Tye Strickland** hosted an ice skating party at The Venetian's *Winter in Venice*. The two traveled from Dallas, Texas celebrating the holiday season as well as their second wedding anniversary. She arrived to the white carpet dressed in a red chiffon top, Simon G earrings and David Lerner leggings paired with red high heels. He joined her for photos as they stopped to meet and greet fans while agreeing, "The Venetian is one of our favorite places to stay. Little did we know *Winter in Venice* is the perfect time to come!" As soon as they saw the ice, it was "stilettos to skates" as Melissa ditched her red high heels for laced up ice skates just before joining Tye to greet the crowd wishing them all "Happy Holidays." The two posed for photos on the ice with fans, skated around and tested out their ice skating moves. After lots of spins and kisses on the ice, the couple enjoyed a cup of the *Winter in Venice* hot chocolate from **Cafe Presse** as they checked out the holiday festivities. Before heading inside, they made a quick stop to try some roasted chestnuts and cookie dough truffles from **First Food and Bar**. The two ended their day relaxing and enjoying a signature holiday cocktail, Gondolier Blanco at the **Laguna Champagne Bar**. (Photo by Robyn Andrzejczak/ImagesOfVegas.com/ISPhotography)

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

THE BLACK LIST

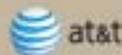
Photographs by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders



October 28, 2011, through April 22, 2012

Inspired to change the meaning of the term "blacklist," Timothy Greenfield-Sanders created a visual "who's who" of African American achievement. The portraits in this exhibition reclaim the historically negative term and showcase 50 men and women of accomplishment in fields from literature, performing arts and sports to politics, business and activism. Subjects include Sean Combs, Whoopi Goldberg, Beverly Johnson, John Legend, Toni Morrison, Susan Rice, Al Sharpton, and Kara Walker.

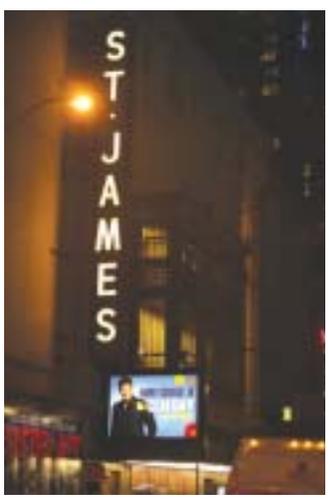
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Clockwise from upper left: Toni Morrison, Colin Powell, Serena Williams, Chris Rock. All images by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders. Brooklyn Museum of Art; promised gifts of Michael Sloane. © 2007/2008 Timothy Greenfield-Sanders



On A Clear Day You Can See Forever at St. James Theatre Marquee

Grammy and Emmy Award winner, Tony Award nominee and multi-platinum recording artist **Harry Connick, Jr.** stars as Dr. Mark Bruckner in the newly imagined production of *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever*, reconceived and directed by Tony Award-winner **Michael Mayer**, with choreography by **JoAnn M. Hunter**, that opened on Broadway at **The St. James Theatre**, 246 West 44th Street, New York City on Sunday, December 11, 2011 with a new book by **Peter Parnell** based on the original book by **Alan Jay Lerner**.

This freshly minted version also stars **David Turner** as David Gamble and **Jessie Mueller** as Melinda Wells, in her Broadway debut, who delightfully sing and dance through the lively Tony-nominated score by **Burton Lane** (music) and **Alan Jay Lerner** (lyrics) with enhanced selections from their film scores for *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1970) and *Royal Wedding* (1951).

The romantic musical comedy also stars **Kerry O'Malley**, **Drew Gehling**, **Sarah Stiles**, **Paul O'Brien**, **Heather Ayers**, **Lori Wilner**, **Benjamin Eakeley**, **Alex Ellis**, **Kendal Hartse**, **Grasan Kingsberry**, **Tyler Maynard**, **Zachary Prince**, **Alysha Umphress**, **Phillip Hoffman**, **Sean Allan Krill**, **Patrick O'Neill**, and **Christianne Tisdale**.

As the narrative goes, love blooms in unexpected places in the delightfully reimagined world of *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever*. Still in love with his deceased wife, Dr. Mark Bruckner (Harry Connick, Jr.), a dashing psychiatrist and professor, unknowingly takes on the case of his life with David Gamble (David Turner), a quirky young florists' assistant.

While putting David under hypnosis to help him quit smoking so he can move in with his perfect boyfriend Warren (David Gehling), Dr. Bruckner stumbles upon what he believes to be David's former self - a dazzling and self-possessed 1940's jazz singer Melinda Wells (Jessie Mueller). Instantly intrigued by Melinda, Dr. Bruckner finds himself swept up in the pursuit of an irresistible (and impossible) love affair with this woman from another time and place, who may or may not have ever existed.

Connick is one of the smoothest singers around and his velvety vocal interpretation of each production number is worth the price of admission; with special

Opening Night with Second Night Reviewer Audrey J. Bernard

Consummate entertainer Harry Connick, Jr. jazzes up *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever*

mention to his jazzy version of the title song. Add to that the flawless vocal prowess of Melinda and David and you've been transported to heaven on earth. The trio along with the full company do Mayer and Parnell's enchanting new version from the 1965 score proud including the classic hits "Come Back To Me," "What

Did I Have That I Don't Have Now?," "She Isn't You," and the titular "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever."

The creative team for *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* includes two-time Tony Award winner **Christine Jones** (sets), five-time Tony Award winner **Catherine Zuber** (costumes),

three-time Tony Award winner **Kevin Adams** (lighting), two-time Tony Award winner **Peter Hylenski** (sound), **Tom Watson** (hair), **Lawrence Yurman** (music director & arrangements) and three-time Tony Award winner **Doug Besterman** (orchestrations).

After several standing ova-

tions, the star-studded crowd headed over to the posh Plaza Hotel for a jazz-themed after party that had Opening Night theatergoers partying into the late, late night. Clearly, this swinging production of *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* will make you fall in love all over again. (Photo Credit: **Walter McBride / Retna Ltd.**)



On A Clear Day You Can See Forever Opening Night Curtain: Cast Sarah Stiles, David Turner, Harry Connick, Jr., Jessie Mueller, Kerry O'Malley, Drew Gehling & Company



Katherine McPhee



Phillip Hoffman, Heather Ayer, Alysha Umphress, Tyler Maynard



On A Clear Day You Can See Forever Company



Angelica Houston



Harry Connick, Jr., Kate Connick, Charlotte Connick, Jill Goodacre



Debra Messing, Mariska Hargitay, Hilary Swank, Harry Connick, Jr., Jill Goodacre, Jessie Mueller



Jaime Cepero



David Turner, Harry Connick, Jr., Jessie Mueller



Michael Mayer, Joann M. Hunter, Peter Parnell

Film Strips

Conversation with the majestic George Harris and Alfie Enoch



By Marie Moore
Contributing Scribe

Although having attended all of the "Harry Potter" junkets prior to the films openings and talking to the cast and filmmakers, I never had the pleasure of speaking with the majestic George Harris or Alfie Enoch.

The striking Harris is (Kingsley Shacklebolt), Harry Potter's guard and protector. The part may be small, but it's an important role. "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2," alone, surpassed \$1 billion in box office sales shortly after its opening.

Recently at the Orlando, Florida DVD/Blu-ray release celebration in which cast members and the filmmakers were at Universal Home Entertainment press event that took place at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at the Universal Orlando Resort.

In an exclusive interview with Harris he was asked how does it feel to be the protector of one of the world's most recognizable

figures? "You know when I was filming in New Castle during a shoot for '55 Degrees North,' I got a call and was told I was wanted for 'Harry Potter,'" he beamed.

"I said, 'Who me? They don't have Black people in 'Harry Potter,' and was told, 'No, no, no, David Yates wants you to play Kingsley Shacklebolt' and you know the regality of the character, the dignity, the power, the majesty and the magic I was able to imbue the character with was very rewarding."

The events at the DVD/Blu-ray celebration began with press conferences at Navigators in Universal's Island of Adventure. At the press conference Harris talked about his early beginnings. "I grew up in a little island called Grenada in the Caribbean, and I always imagined that I wanted to be a film star.

"David Heyman, David Barron and David Yates gave me the opportunity to be in one of the biggest movie franchises in the world. So it was like being in kindergarten; every time I'd go to work, it was an exciting day, being with my mates like Jason and the twins and Michael Gambon and people like that. Oh, it's a dream come true

for a little boy from the Caribbean.

That evening at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter on the Red Carpet I got another chance to speak with Harris and Alfie Enoch. I asked Harris what would he say to Kingsley if he were there that evening. "Stay with me, stay with me" Harris said. "He's a good guardian, you know." After the party, Harris was back to Malta to film "Sinbad."

Alfie Enoch had grown so much he was almost unrecognizable. Even with "Potter" under his belt, Enoch was modest. "I still have a lot to learn, but I'm sure I'll still find quality work."

He even reminisced about the early years. "The first time I went to the premiere I was about 11-years-old. I knew that I had been lucky enough to be selected for something really special.

"I was aware of that already because I was a fan of the books and I've loved them. I knew it was big, but realized how amazing the whole phenomenon was when I got out of the car. I remember people were shouting my name and I just remembered being very shocked.

"I mean, I was 11-years-old and there was nothing I could've expected because clearly Dean Thomas is a small part in the films and I don't think at all he's an important character; he's just part of that whole world. But to hear people saying my name and the film hadn't even come out yet, that was the other thing, that shocked me.

"So I was just totally taken aback and I think looking back on it, although I didn't realize



George Harris portrayed (Kingsley Shacklebolt)

quite what it meant at the time, I knew that I felt it. I felt that this is something big, something quite extraordinary."

When queried about the impact of "Harry Potter" on his life, 23-year old Enoch expressed extreme gratitude. "I mean I don't think I'm ever going to play another role for another ten years. Just in the very simplest of terms, it has had an enormous impact.

"But I mean, you can't over state its importance—it's going to be something that will live on forever and this is a perfect indication, this wonderful theme park. It's [Harry Potter] such a huge thing. To be part of it at all is a gift, and to get to work with the people I got to work with was wonderful. I'm becoming a bit inarticulate, you know, because it's very hard to explain." We get the picture Alfie.



Alfie Enoch portrayed (Dean Thomas)

Black History Event

GNYCC presents Bill McCreary tribute



During the culmination event scheduled for Feb. 29, 2012 the Greater New York Chamber of Commerce presents "Living Legends" as apart of Black History. The double Emmy Award winning television journalist and former vice president of FOX Channel 5, Bill McCreary (PICTURED), will receive the Trail Blazer Award presented by the Chamber for the paths that he has opened for the multicultural community. The Chamber will also honor the 15 year old organization known as "The African American Women in Cinema" for their distinguished film making association. The special event will also be produced for Internet television.

Entertainment Special

Steve Harvey beckons youth to come and get your *dream* on at Disney's Dreamers Academy with *Essence* Magazine

By Audrey J. Bernard
Lifestyles & Society Editor

Walt Disney World Resort hosted a media luncheon featuring syndicated-radio-show host/author/comedian and philanthropist **Steve Harvey** on Friday, October 7, 2011 at the **Redeye Grill** in New York City to announce the upcoming 2012 Disney's Dreamers Academy with *Essence* Magazine taking place at the Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida from March 8-11, 2012.

The New York media luncheon enlightened guests about the excitement surrounding the fifth annual event and introduced past participants of the Disney's Dreamers Academy who shared some of their experiences since becoming a graduate.

Guests lunched on Field Greens and Shaved Apple Salad; Grilled Scottish Salmon (Citrus Beurre Blanc), Porcini Crusted French Cut Chicken Breast (Tarragon Cream Sauce), Pasta with Seasoned Mushrooms (Garlic & Mushrooms); followed by Chocolate Mousse Cake or Banana Cream Pie; and Coffee and Tea.

Then **Annette Gibbs**, publicity manager, Disney Destinations, introduced her staff and *lucheoneers* from the metro area who are former graduates of the Dreamers Academy before bringing on the King of Comedy, Harvey.

Gibbs introduced **Shanecce Brown** (DDA Class of 2011); **Malcolm Bristow** (DDA Class of 2008); **Dashana Collins** (DDA Class of 2011); **Berchell Egerton** (DDA Class of 2008); **Rian Grimes** (DDA Class of 2008); and **Isaiah Wesley** (DDA Class of 2011). The students shared with lunch guests just how instrumental their Disney experience has been in making their dreams come true.

Today, Team Disney is working very hard to bring 100 high school student winners ages 13-19 from across the United States who will gather in the world's most creative classroom, Walt Disney World Resort, for a weekend of special events, educational workshops, personal enhancement and professional enrichment that will unite them with entertainment experts, motivational speakers and world-class business professionals.

The students were selected by a distinguished panel of leaders from the communications, education and entertainment industries who judged nominations from parents, teachers, mentors and youth. Participants and a parent or guardian will receive an all-expenses-paid trip for the Disney's Dreamers Academy.

Since its launch in 2007 by Disney and Harvey, Disney's Dreamers Academy has shown a



Steve Harvey (center) is joined by Mickey Mouse, Michelle Ebanks, Mikki Taylor and students of Dreamer Academy Class of 2011 (Photo courtesy of WDW)



Steve Harvey poses with past participants in Disney's Dreamers Academy with Steve Harvey and *Essence* Magazine at New York City media luncheon (Photo courtesy of WDW)

world of possibilities to hundreds of teens. Every year, Dreamers participate in "immersive" workshops that allow them to take a plunge into real-world career scenarios. Each participant learns important interview skills, communication techniques and networking strategies. With a focus on hands-on experience and training, Disney's Dreamers Academy encourages youth to *dream big!*

"Over the past four years, we have helped more than 400 Dreamers unlock their potential and get started on their journeys in life," said Disney's Dreamers Academy executive champion **Tracey D. Powell**. "The fifth Disney's Dreamers Academy marks another year of continued motivation, edu-

cation and success. Harvey and Essence Communications share in our vision of enriching lives. Everyone leaves this program inspired to live their best life."

"Disney's Dreamers Academy gives hope and inspiration and exposes youth to a world of possibilities. The fifth year of this program will prove to be the best yet. We are excited about another opportunity to transform lives and give students an inside look at what their future can hold," remarked Harvey.

Disney's Dreamers Academy has evolved into a year-round initiative with its informational Facebook and Twitter social media platforms, an interactive website, presence at community-

outreach-partner events like the Essence Music Festival, the National Association of Black Journalists Convention, the Bud Billiken Parade, and the addition of the recently formed Disney's Dreamers Academy Speakers Resource Group, which consists of various Dreamers Academy event speakers and presenters who serve as program ambassadors.

This year, Dreamers also had the chance to win internships, allowing them the opportunity to test skills learned at Disney's Dreamers Academy. Essence Communications president **Michelle Ebanks** added, "We are excited about the fifth Disney's Dreamers Academy. This program transcends the normal classroom

setting, taking learning to the next level. This year we plan to go above and beyond to encourage Dreamers.

Our valued partnership with Disney Parks and Steve Harvey serves as a firm commitment to the community and leaders of tomorrow." For more information visit www.disneysdreamersacademy.com, www.facebook.com/disneysdreamersacademy or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dreamersacademy.

About Walt Disney World Resort / The Walt Disney Co.

Walt Disney World Resort is a contiguous 40-square-mile, world-class entertainment and recreation center located at Lake Buena Vista, Fla., 20 miles southwest of Orlando. The Walt Disney Co. has a rich legacy of creativity and exceptional storytelling that brings families together in unique and memorable ways. Creative excellence is coupled with a strong commitment to community service and diversity. The Walt Disney Co. is dedicated to making a positive impact in communities around the world, with a primary focus on brightening the lives of children.

About Steve Harvey
Steve Harvey began doing stand-up comedy in the mid-1980s, which eventually led to a long stint as host of "It's Showtime at the Apollo." His success as a stand-up comedian led to multiple TV sitcoms, including "Me and The Boys," "The Steve Harvey Show" and "Steve Harvey's Big Time Challenge." His first book, "Act Like A Lady, Think Like A Man," quickly became a bestseller in 2009. Harvey has appeared on "The Oprah Show," "Nightline," "Good Morning America" and "The Ellen DeGeneres Show." Currently, Harvey hosts the nationally syndicated television game show "Family Feud," and the nationally syndicated "Steve Harvey Morning Show" which airs in over 60 markets and has over 7 million listeners.

About Essence Communications Inc.

Essence Communications Inc. (ECI) is the number one media and communications company dedicated to African-American women. With a multi-platform presence in publishing, live events, and online, the Essence brand is "Where Black Women Come First." The company's flagship publication, *Essence* magazine, is the preeminent lifestyle magazine for African-American women, generating brand extensions such as the Essence Music Festival, *Essence* Black Women in Hollywood, Window on Our Women (WOW I & II) and Smart Beauty I, II & III consumer insights, the Essence Book Club, Essence.com, and ventures in digital media (mobile, television and VOD).

Governor Cuomo signs inner city youth employment bill

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NEW YORK BEACON, December 22, 2011 - December 28, 2011 newyorkbeacon.net

(from page 17)

ergy, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and conservation. Priority will be given to employers that provide on-site occupational skills training during this period. During Phase 1 and Phase 2, participating youth will be provided with up to three monthly stipends of \$300 to cover costs associated with transitioning into the workplace.

* Phase 3: An additional \$1,000 tax credit will be available to employers that retain the participating youths for an additional six months.

Under the new law, \$62 million in funding will be provided to critical job training and support programs for inner city youth, including basic education pro-

grams, summer youth employment, job search and placement initiatives, and child care.

Eligible participants for the jobs program include unemployed, low-income youth aged 16 through 24 who are located in one of the following areas: Albany, Brookhaven, Buffalo, Hempstead, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, New York City, Rochester, Schenectady, Syracuse, Utica, and Yonkers.

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said, "While Washington is paralyzed by gridlock, we have worked together in New York to advance a plan that instills fairness in our tax code, stimulates New York's economy, and creates jobs. The Assembly Majority has made it a priority to fight for and fund jobs programs for inner city young people because unemployment among our youth is unacceptably

high. That is why I am so pleased that, with the strong leadership of Governor Cuomo, we were able to include the Inner City Youth Employment Program and tax credit in the larger agreement to cut taxes on working families and create jobs. This is not only about unemployment and the economy, it's also about our children. I am confident our efforts will go far in helping young New Yorkers find good paying jobs and keep them."

New York State Senator John L. Sampson said, "The most worthwhile investments we can make in government are investments in our youth - the future workforce that will carry on this state's legacy of economic vitality and innovation. I'd like to applaud Governor Cuomo for his leadership on this progressive

legislation and his strong commitment to an urban agenda. This legislation - including a business tax credit for employers - will ensure that more young people in inner city communities gain useful skills and embark on fulfilling careers. Statistics show that finding employment at a young age helps ensure long term professional success. This legislation sends the right message that we will not ignore the needs of young people in communities that are often overlooked."

New York State Assemblyman Karim Camara said, "Unemployment among New York youth is at a record high, especially among inner city minority youth. During these difficult times, it is up to government to take the lead in stimulating the economy and creating jobs.

Working with Governor Cuomo and my colleagues in the Legislature, we have developed a series of initiatives to help New Yorkers get back on their feet. I am confident that the NY Youth Works program will go far in helping young New Yorkers secure brighter futures.

I encourage businesses to take

advantage of these incentives, and I thank Governor Cuomo for his hard work."

Even in a robust economy, younger workers have higher levels of unemployment than those aged 35 and older. Recent unemployment levels have escalated to all-time highs as a result of the prolonged economic downturn of the past few years. According to the Department of Labor, unemployment among the state's youth is more than 25 percent, with minority youth facing unemployment rates of up to 40 percent.

The new inner city youth employment program and tax credit is part of Governor Cuomo's comprehensive New York Works Agenda, which was passed by the Legislature earlier this week.

The New York Works Agenda will create thousands of jobs and grow the state's economy with investments in New York's infrastructure, a new fair tax reform plan that achieves the first major restructuring of the tax code in decades, a tax cut for 4.4 million middle class New Yorkers, additional relief for areas devastated by recent floods, and a reduction of the MTA payroll tax to provide relief for small businesses.

Public Advocate writes to mayor and Speaker on Living Wage Bill

(from page 4)

comes that would occur if the City adopted a Living Wage. Upon close and thoughtful examination, I view many of these claims skeptically. Some have claimed that a Living Wage bill would inhibit future development, citing the City's experience with the Kingsbridge Armory as an example. I am the first to say that it was a tragedy negotiations were not able to yield a project at the Kingsbridge Armory. I do not subscribe to the notion that no projects are better than imperfect projects. But what killed the Kingsbridge Armory project was brinkmanship in the negotiating process—not the principle of a Living Wage.

The question then, is one of the viability of projects with Living Wage jobs. Is it possible to pursue large projects with wage mandates? When we look at jurisdictions with Living Wage requirements, the answer is a resounding yes. NYC EDC's counterpart in Los Angeles, the LA

CRA, operates with Living Wage requirements for its projects. Under those requirements, the City has over 144 projects with Living Wage components. Those projects represent \$400 million in LA CRA spending, and have resulted in \$8 billion in private investment. In Los Angeles, the City and its development agency have managed to figure out how to leverage city assets to develop while ensuring a Living Wage.

It is clearly possible for a big city to adopt a Living Wage standard for economic development and still create jobs and economic activity. That is not to say that the Living Wage bill that has been proposed is without room for improvement. I am heartened by the changes that have already happened to make clear that the bill's intent is not to cover as-of-right subsidies, and with additional amendments that exclude the non-profit and affordable housing sectors. In addition, I recommend increasing the amount of revenue a business must earn to trigger the Living Wage requirement in order to exclude all small

businesses receiving development aid. I urge these changes because, at its core, this bill's principle demands our support.

We should leave no tool of government unused in the current economic climate. Where City business, contracts and assets can be leveraged to increase economic activity, improving the quality and quantity of jobs in our city, we must act aggressively.

The desperate state of New York City's middle class, the experience of other localities, and improvements made to the bill in recent months have collectively convinced me that the time has come to pass a Living Wage bill that uses the power of our economic development dollars to reduce income inequality. I urge you to give this effort your full support.

Sincerely,
Bill de Blasio
Public Advocate for the City of New York
cc: Council Member Oliver Koppell, Council Member Annabel Palma

CUNY offers free journalism training in January Academy

(from page 16)

tion. The sessions will cover everything from how to find and pitch travel stories to what you can write off on your taxes when you get home, with an emphasis on what travel editors are buying now.

18- Food Writing

January 25 (Wednesday), 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Indrani Sen - Room 442 (2 seats available) Writing about food must be as simple as eating and cooking it, right? Wrong. Food writing requires more than a fine-tuned palate and a good recipe for holiday cookies. Locavores, the Farm Bill, food safety scares, commodity prices, environmental justice - in this

post-Michael Pollan era, food writing is increasingly complex. The good news is it's also a growing field.

Gourmet magazine is gone, but the fertile landscape of localized or specialized food websites, blogs and food zines is still expanding, and general interest publications have increased their food coverage.

U.S. Supreme Court brazing for tense times ahead

(from page 3)

aside from his many 'oops' moments, but because of reluctance to elect another Texan," observes Marvin King, a political science professor at the University of Mississippi.

"The problem, from the North's perspective, is the ascension of the South. It's growing at a much faster clip and growing in political clout too. The congressional seats lost by Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania

and New York invariably end up in Georgia, Texas or North Carolina. Texas is gaining four new seats, and while that will make it harder for Democrats to retake the House, it shouldn't affect the presidential contest.

King argues that while the tensions are there they may not be decisive. Obama could lose the 55 Electoral College votes he won in Florida, North Carolina and Virginia and still win the election. What will be decisive are national issues like the economy, health

care reform, and immigration. For instance, while Americans want a strong border they don't prefer the antics of Sheriff Joe Arpaio or the explicit discrimination of Alabama's anti-immigration efforts.

And whatever the Supreme Court ruling, it's a national issue, not a sectional one, argues King. "If the perilous economy and the ponderously improving unemployment and numerous foreign policy concerns weren't enough two potential decisions by the

U.S. Supreme Court could heavily impact next year's presidential election," says Peter Groff, the first Black president of the Colorado State Senate and currently a senior fellow at Johns Hopkins University. "The Court decrees on the Affordable Care Act and Arizona's immigration law makes the Court a player in 2012 in a way that should make the Court, which claims to be uncolored by society and politics, very uncomfortable. Some think the discomfort of the Court will result in Re-

publican pleasure in 2012."

"However, the GOP better be careful what it hopes for because I think the president wins either way politically.

The White House has embraced the inevitable court challenge and has said from the very beginning the new law will pass constitutional muster. An affirmation by the Court punctures the constitutional argument against health care and clears the way for full implementation and also wipes it off the politically table," adds Groff.

Ofield Dukes remembered as champion for the Black Press

(from page 12)

Dukes' accomplishments are extensive:

He was born Aug. 8, 1932, in Rutledge, Ala., served in the U.S. Army from 1952 to 1954, earned a journalism degree at Wayne State University in 1958 and got a job at the Chronicle the same year.

He left the Chronicle for Washington, D.C. in 1964 to serve as deputy director of information for the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity under President Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1966, he joined the staff of Vice President Hubert Humphrey as a consultant and continued as a consultant to every Democratic presidential campaign since then.

In 2002, Radio One founder Cathy Hughes named the building that houses three of her Detroit stations the Ofield Dukes Communications Center because of his sustaining impact on her career.

Known to spout wisdom and encouragement, Dukes taught as an adjunct professor at Howard University for 17 years and at the

American University School of Communications for eight years.

He is founder of the Black Public Relations Society of Washington and was a member of the Washington, DC/National Capital Public Relations Society of America Hall of Fame and the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame.

The PRSA Detroit, which will hold its first diversity summit in February, has named the summit after Dukes and is also providing a scholarship in his name, according to the Detroit Free Press.

Dukes is survived by his beloved daughter Roxi Victorian, a performing arts graduate from Howard University; a grandson; and three sisters, Anne Harris, Betty Hayden, and Lou Brock.

"His kind, like that, there ain't no more Ofield Dukeses," said Sam Logan, publisher of the Michigan Chronicle, in an interview with the Detroit Free Press. The Chronicle honored Dukes upon its 75th anniversary in November. "There will not be another," Logan said.

Concludes Ray Boone: "We can best pay tribute to Ofield by emulating his high level of expertise and unswerving commitment to justice."



By Victoria Horsford

TIS THE SEASON

Our troops are home from Iraq on time to celebrate the Nativity and presumably a new era for mankind, one where there is peace on earth and more joy to the world through 2012!!!!

The Museum of Modern Art MOMA bought an Elizabeth Catlett sculpture, MOTHER AND CHILD from the June Kelly Gallery, which is currently on display, on its 5th Floor, Painting and Sculpture. The 11.25 x 7.7 inch terracotta sculpture, executed in 1956, is MOMA's first acquisition of a Catlett piece. Catlett's Mother and Child no doubt is her interpretation of the Madonna and Child, an appropriate art piece during this or any season.

Six weeks into his new job as Jamaica's Prime Minister Andrew Holness, announces general elections on December 29, saying that he wants a peoples mandate. Holness was recently elevated to PM post by a party vote shortly after PM Bruce Golding abruptly announced his retirement last month. Holness, 39, is Jamaica's first PM born after the nation achieved independence in 1962. Senegal's presidential elections are scheduled for February 26, 2012.

JOBS/FELLOWSHIPS

The Open Society Foundation and Echoing Green are co-sponsors of the BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT FELLOWSHIP program, for individuals committed to improving life outcomes of US based Black men and boys. Fellowship program will provide start-up capital and technical assistance to help new leaders launch and build their organization with a focus on three areas: education, family, and work. Applications due by January 12, 2012 Fellowship term is 18 months, including a \$70,000 stipend, health insurance, a professional development stipend and other benefits. For program details, visit echoinggreen.org/bma-fellowship.

The Calhoun School, a leading progressive private school (PreK-12) seeks a Director for it Upper School, (Grades 9-12) on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Qualifications include advanced degree, HS teaching experience, ideally in progressive school setting. Interested candidates must submit cover letter summarizing interest in position; resume and 500 to 1000 word essay demonstrating applicants progressive approach to education with compelling evidence re: candidates commitment to inclusion, equity and diversity. Mail to Calhoun School, Office of the Head of School, Attn Angela Fischer; 433 West End Avenue, NY, NY 10024. Email: angela.fischer@calhoun.org for

complete job description.

The University of Pennsylvania's Philadelphia-based School of Design invites applications for a Director of the Undergraduate Fine Arts Program. Ideal candidate will offer creative and collegial intellectual leadership of an interdisciplinary undergrad visual arts program. Applicant must have a terminal degree in their field. Appointment begins July 1, 2012. Nominations and inquiries should be directed to Undergraduate Director, Search Committee, c/o Jane Irish, email:

artadmin@design.upenn.edu. Phone 215.898.8374.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

The BET Networks presents BET HONORS, a celebration of outstanding lifetime achievement of denizens in music, literature, entertainment, media, service and education. Hosted by actress Gabrielle Union, the BET HONORS will be held on January 14 at the Warner Center in Washington, DC, but will be televised at a later date. The 2012 BET honorees are Dr. Maya Angelou, Stevie Wonder, Mariah Carey, Spike Lee, Tuskegee Airmen, and educator Beverly Kearnes.

November was awards month for African American literary lionesses. City College (NY) honored Haitian writer Edwidge Danticat with the 2011 Langston Hughes Medal. Danticat, a MacArthur Genius Awardee, is the first French Caribbean writer to receive the Langston Hughes Medal.

Two African America women won prestigious National Book Awards (2011.)

Jesymn Ward won fiction award for "Salvage The Bones," a story about a poor Black family during the Katrina crisis. Nikky Finney won the award for her book of poetry, "Head Off And Split." She said in her acceptance speech. "Black people were only people in the United States ever explicitly forbidden to become literate," then add. "I am now officially speechless."

Jamaica-born Yvonne Graham, Deputy Brooklyn Borough President was named Associate Commissioner, Director of Health Disparities Prevention, NYS Department of Health effective November 30.

Peripatetic Minister Louis Farrakan just return from the Caribbean where he visited Jamaica, his ancestral home on one side, which was followed by 5-day tour of Haiti where ran into TV mogul/philanthropist Oprah Winfrey. Both visited Haiti to determine what sort of help they could provide to the earthquake-ravaged nation. Haiti President Michel Martelly met both separately. He wants Oprah to come aboard as goodwill ambassador for Haiti.

Noted Pan African scholar Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan is temporarily residing in a nursing home, following a recent hospitalization. He awaits an approval nod from authorities for a 24/7 home attendant. Meanwhile, donations are appreciated. Make check payable to him and mail to Dr. Ben, c/o Medina, PO Box 290, Bronx, NY.

WHAT'S GOING ON



Oprah



Robert Horsford, Edonardo Plummer, Alyah Horsford



Louis Farrakan

REST IN PEACE

Horace Morris, local and national hero, leader, and visionary in the nonprofit community, died. Morris work affiliations include director of Model Cities, NJ; Dade

County Manpower and Employment CEO; the NY Urban League Executive Director; and United Way of NY Director.

The Celebration of Life of Dr. Muriel Petioni, 97, at The Riverside Church was a grand ceremony

of fond remembrances, eulogies and a film short which gave insights into her life, which was filled with good family values and rituals and service to the community. Her obit revealed that her dad was Marcus Garvey's private physician, that Dr. Charles Drew was one of her favorite professors at Howard's Medical School and that she was the quintessential public servant initiating many health initiatives vital to Black America.

HARLEM. USA

Kudos to George Faison and the Harlem Opera Theater, under the leadership of Dr. Gregory Hopkins, for the Faison Firehouse presentation of "Opera Is Hot At The Firehouse," in two acts, a the December 2/4 weekend concert series of opera arias and Negro spirituals delivered by a virtuoso cast of vocalists: Flora Mendoza, Jasmine Thomas, Patrick Dailey, Barry Robinson, Marion Vernett Moore, Richard Bellazzin, Rodrick Dixon and Robert Mack. Brian Whitted was "Opera Is Hot" concert musical director. To a man, they delivered hypnotic Met Opera-like performances uptown in Harlem!

Act II, of the Opera Is Hot, was a concert of rousing and beautiful Negro spirituals, occasionally punctuated with performances by faith dancers. I wondered what color and image God assumed in the minds of enslaved Africans as I listened to the spiritual weight and intensity of the poetry of those songs.

The audience was in a trance as the cherub voices boasting well trained operatic voices - mezzo soprano, baritone, tenor, soprano, and countertenor voices, equally proficient in German, French and Italian. The performed arias by Schubert, Bellini, Rossini, Mozart and Charpentier. Internationally renowned opera diva Kathleen Battle attended opening night and returned the next day as did a few Met season ticket holders who overwhelmed the performers with their enthusiastic bravos, when the concert ended. The good news is that "Opera Is Hot" returns to George Faison's Firehouse from February 11-13, 2012.

GenX siblings Alyah Horsford Sidberry and Robert Horsford co-hosted another great night in Harlem at the coming out party for their new corporation, The Horsford Group, their new omnibus flagship business, last week at the Cove Lounge on Lenox Avenue.

The party was a tribute to their grandfather Victor Horsford, a Harlem businessman, and to honor local people, who helped them cut their professional teeth - Full Spectrum's Walter Edwards; Assemblyman Keith Wright and Senator Bill Perkins.

Educator Edouard Plummer, architect of the 48 year-old Wadleigh Scholarship Program (WSP) which prepares urban middle school students for boarding school admissions and scholarships, was also honored and awarded a \$1000 check for his WSP nonprofit.

HAPPY HANUKKAH, MERRY XMAS AND HAPPY KWANZAA
A management consultant, Victoria Horsford is also a NY based journalist and pop culture historian who can be contacted at: victoriahorsford@yahoo.com

Entertainment



By Don Thomas

35th annual Harlem tree lighting

Talented teens and stella performers illuminate Harlem Stage on the plaza

By Keith L. Forest
Special Assignment

The holiday season in the Village of Harlem recently came to life as Harlem's own Grammy and Oscar nominated music group Impact Repertory Theatre and youth groups including Vy Higginson's Gospel for Teens and the Urban Assembly School for the Performing Arts' Voices of Excellence choir took center stage on the plaza of the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr State Office Building for the 35th annual Harlem Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Hosted by NY1 News leading anchorwoman Cheryl Wills, the festive, outdoor, family-affair also featured a soulful holiday greeting from R&B song stylist Alyson Williams who moved the crowd with her own personal rendition of "This Christmas." Three-time Tony Awards winner Hinton Battle was also on hand.

Broadway community's most respected musical star debut his first inspirational single, "When I Walk," and later introduced cast members from his latest off Broadway production "Sistas."

New York State Assemblyman Keith Wright, the legendary Roxanne Shante, radio personalities DJ Marley Marl and WBLS own Dr. Bob Lee and other luminaries were also in attendance.

The event, which was sponsored by the New York State Office of General Services, Melba's



NY1 News Anchorwoman Cheryl Wills (centered right), Playwright/Producer Vy Higginson (centered left) and the Gospel for Teens Choir take a bow in front of Harlem's illuminated 35 ft. balsam Christmas tree

Restaurant, Harlem Community Development Corporation, American Express, Harlem Arts Alliance, Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce, Healthfirst, Chez Lucienne and City College of New York,

highlighted Harlem's profound legacy and majestic future.

As in the past, organizers used the affair as an opportunity to give back to those less fortunate. "This is the community's tree," stated

Willie Walker, committee member of Holidays in Harlem. "During these difficult economic times, many families in our community are unable to put food on their tables. This ceremony and this tree is our

gift to them."

The history of the Harlem Tree Lighting Ceremony dates back to 1976 when a group of prominent Harlemites decided to celebrate their beloved neighborhood with a ceremonial festival similar to the annual Rockefeller Plaza event.

In 1978, with the assistance of New York State office of General Services, Con Edison and the 369th Army National Guard, the first tree was placed in front of Adam Clayton State Office Building.

35 years later, with corporate and community support, the tradition lives on. The Holidays In Harlem Committee is comprised of concerned citizens from both the public and private sector, in concert with New York State Office of General Services.

Each year a committed body of good spirited citizens come together to create this amazing tree lighting event in hopes that the affair captures the spirit of all who visit the historic village while reflecting the true essence of Harlem.

The main event is the tree lighting ceremony, which features a magnificent 30 foot balsam fir tree adorned with an array of cool LED lights, followed by an after party in the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State Office Building sponsored by Melba's Restaurant.

(Photos: Hubert Williams of Images of Us)



New York State Assemblyman Keith Wright, Healthfirst George Hulse and NY1 News Anchorwoman Cheryl Wills greets the Harlem community.

(MORE HARLEMTREE LIGHTING PHOTOS ON PAGE 30)



Bebe Designer Charles Benton

CATWALKIN' with Fashion & Beauty Editor Audrey J. Bernard

Bebe spring/summer 2012 show channels feminine Edwardian Era

The Bebe spring/summer 2012 collection held off-site from the Mercedes-Benz at Lincoln Center during New York Fashion Week at the Metropolitan Pavilion for Style 360 transported the fashion *whirl* back to a dreamier place in time when romance was key for women who wanted to be in touch with their femininity — like back in the Edwardian Era

where fancy fashion ruled! Fast forward to today and the new look of the Bebe woman created by consulting designer **Charles Benton** — known to push the envelope when he toiled for Emanuel Ungaro, Burberry and BCBG. I'm happy to report that nothing has changed as Benton is still having his way with fashionistas. The all-white show

— with the exception of a few creams and ivories — was whimsical, witty and sexy to boot! Tall and tantalizing models hit the runway wearing big white wigs (channeling Diana Ross) accessorized with white oversized sunglasses and white boots and socks. The collection which was filled with looks that could go from day to night featured

flowing skirts, draped dresses, rolling ruffles, floating organza and layered lace. Additionally, the amazingly beautiful collection included corsets, pantaloons, tailored jackets, and wide-legged trousers. The raucous standing ovation spoke for itself! Everyone loved it!

(Photos by Photos by Alix Wegee and Flippo Fior/GoRunway.com)





Backed by a choir, Academy Award-winning actress and Grammy Award-winning singer Jennifer Hudson recently performs a medley of holiday songs while taping a segment for the “Disney Parks Christmas Day Parade” at the Magic Kingdom park in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. The 28th annual “Disney Parks Christmas Day Parade” airs nationwide Dec. 25, 2011 on ABC-TV and features performances by a variety of stars from both Disneyland Resort in California and Walt Disney World Resort in Florida. (D. T.) (Photos: Mark Ashman)



Cee Lo Green performs “This Christmas” while taping a segment for the “Disney Parks Christmas Day Parade” TV special at the Magic Kingdom park in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

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Holidays at the Apollo is a highlight of the Theatre's 2011-2012 season, made possible by local funding from The Coca-Cola Company, the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, the Apollo Theater Inc., the Ford Foundation, Broadway and the Macy's Foundation, as well as public funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Talented teens and stella performers illuminate Harlem Stage on the plaza



R&B song stylist Alyson Williams raised the frigid temperature with her soulful version of "This Christmas"



The angelic sounds from the Urban Assembly School for the Performing Arts' Voices of Excellence put the crowd in the holiday spirit



Harlem's own Academy Award nominated Voza Rivers' Impact Repertory Theatre delivered an energetic holiday musical performance



(L-R) New York State Office of General Service staff member/tree organizer April Robbins-Bobyns, actor/director Hinton Battle, Cheryl Wills, Alyson Williams and (OGS) Building Manager/Holidays in Harlem committee member Willie Walker with cast of "SISTAS" (background). (SEE STORY ON PAGE 27)

(Photos: Hubert Williams of Images of Us)

Playful Politicians put on their party hats at MLK Democratic Club Christmas Party

One of the hottest party tickets in our nation's capital during the Yuletide Season is the annual **Martin Luther King, Jr. Democratic Club Christmas Party** which took place this year at The Kennedy Center on Thursday, December 8, 2011 in Washington, D.C.

The annual soiree is always attended by the who's who in the Democratic Party who gathers together in perfect harmony to lay out their plans of action for the coming year. Speeches were kept short and succinct allowing the political powerhouses to get their party on early. New York was in *da* house.

Some of the playful politicians seen having a politically correct time consisting of great food, good libations and soulful music included:

Congressman **Charles B. Rangel** who was also celebrating a successful fundraiser he hosted the night before; NYC Council Member **Inez Dickens**; **Linda Wood Guy** of NYS Senator Bill Perkins' office; New York Urban League president & CEO **Arva Rice**; NYC Comptroller **John Liu**; The Honorable **Basil Paterson**; former NYC Governor **David Paterson**; NYC Parks Department recreational manager at Morningside and Jackie Robinson Parks **Jackie Rowe-Adams**; former NYC Comptroller **Bill Thompson**; NYC Council Speaker **Christine Quinn**; NYC Council District 7 Council Member **Robert Jackson**; The Greater Chamber of Commerce president & CEO **Lloyd Williams**; Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone president & CEO **Ken Knuckles**; Judge **Tanya Kennedy**; **Tina McRae** of Congressman Charles Rangel's office; and artist **Bobby Humphrey**.

(Photos by *Seitu Oronde*)



Sylvia Aston, John Liu, Jackie Rowe-Adams, Guest



William "Bill" Thompson, Ken Knuckles and Guests



Inez Dickens, Charles Rangel, John Liu



Tina McRae, Lloyd Williams



William "Bill" Thompson, Lloyd Williams



Basil Paterson, Charles Williams, Esq., David Paterson, Ken Knuckles



Linda Wood Guy, Arva Rice



Judge Tanya Kennedy, Eleanor Kennedy



Robert Jackson, John Liu

Interview

Victorious Viola Davis captures Golden Globe nom for 'The Help'

By Kam Williams

A graduate of the Juilliard School, Viola Davis built an exceptional background in theater productions and has continued to perform on the stage throughout her television and film career. Making her feature-film debut in 1996 as a nurse in "The Substance of Fire," she followed that up with several TV movies and guest-star appearances on dramatic series like "Law & Order" and "NYPD Blue."

She went on to play another nurse in "City of Angels," a hospital drama with a predominately African-American cast that didn't last long on CBS. She began collaborating with Steven Soderbergh for "Out of Sight," and went on to star in two of the director's subsequent films, "Traffic" and "Solaris."

In 2001, she appeared in "Kate and Leopold" as well as in Oprah Winfrey's television presentation of "Amy & Isabelle." The following year, she landed parts in both "Far From Heaven" and in Denzel Washington's directorial debut, "Antwone Fisher."

However, in 2008 she made the most of a modest but critical role as the mother in John Patrick Shanley's screen adaptation of his award-winning play, "Doubt." Although her screen time was minimal, her indelible performance garnered Viola an Academy Award nomination in the Best Supporting Actress category.

Here, she talks about her latest outing as Aibileen in "The Help," a compelling tale of survival, set in Mississippi during the waning days of Jim Crow segregation, which explores the unspoken tensions simmering just below the surface between well-to-do white women and their African-American maids.

Kam Williams: Hi Viola, thanks for the interview. I've admired your work for a long time, so I'm very honored to have this opportunity to speak with you finally. **Viola Davis:** Thank you, Kam. **KW:** I have a lot of questions sent in by fans, so let me get right to them. Legist/Editor Patricia Turner asks: What message do you want people to take away from *The Help*? **VD:** That anything can be achieved with a good, healthy dose of courage. These ordinary people who are just kind of just going about their lives are transformed into heroes because they have the courage to put their voices out there. I think that's a powerful message

in this time of political strife.

KW: Patricia also asks: Are there any unwritten rules which are part of the movie industry? **VD:** Yes, there are a lot of unwritten rules in the industry. **KW:** Film director Kevin Williams says: Congratulations on another great

joys, her grief at losing her son, her journey in finding a purpose in life, because when you meet her, she has basically died to herself after losing her child. So, that's what I did. I created a human being.

"That's not what you usually



Awards season continues with "The Help" receiving 5 Golden Globe nominations including Best Picture, Drama, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress (2 nods), and Best Original Song for Mary J. Blige's "The Living Proof." Best Actress: Drama Viola Davis (pictured). Actresses Octavia Spencer and Jessica Chastain also received nominations for Best Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture.

"Oh my God! I would love to be remembered as a person who used her life to inspire others in any way, shape or form."

performance! How did you approach your role and the material in such a way that it manages to stand out from other Civil Rights era films?

VD: Well, I made a choice to humanize this woman beyond her uniform is what I did. I made a choice to explore Aibileen fully: her

see in a maid. You see the woman cooking in the kitchen or taking care of a child, and she comes up, says her one line, and then she goes back into the kitchen. So, I made a choice to use my craft to create a character."

KW: Rene Harris says: I read an article in which you were quoted

as saying it is a painful certainty that you will never see a contemporary Black woman on screen as layered and complex as you. Do you expect someday to be in a position to greenlight just such a story someday?

VD: Oh, absolutely! My husband [Julius Tennon] and I started a production company. We've already optioned a book and some scripts to do exactly that, to create more complicated, multi-faceted roles for African-Americans, especially African-American females. I think it's important.

"Cicely Tyson was my inspiration to become an actor. And one of the people I've always wanted to emulate in pursuing that dream was Meryl Streep, in terms of the different types of roles she's been able to play and the number of different stories she's been able to tell. I know very few Black actors who've been given the opportunity to do that.

"I want to do what she does. I want to span different genres. I want to be able to transform. I want to be able to be sexy, and funny, and quirky, and all the other things that I am. And I feel that the best way that I can achieve that is by producing. I am not a writer, but I feel that when our production company is successful, we'll be able to give some young writers with fresh voices an opportunity to put their work out there."

KW: Rene was also wondering whether there are any books that present complex women of African descent that you might consider getting the rights to? **VD:** Oh, there are 50 million of them! I already optioned a book called "The Personal History of Rachel DuPree." I also like "The Book of Negroes" by Lawrence Hill. And I love all of Octavia Butler's books. She's created some very complicated Black heroines with a variety of belief systems. There are many great books out there, but those are a few of the ones that stand out.

KW: Speaking of writers, children's book author Irene Smalls says: You are one of my favorites. I read an article saying that even though you are dark-skinned you have succeeded as an actress in Hollywood. How do you feel about a comment like that? **VD:** I really appreciate that comment. I've always seen myself for who I am, which is a lot of things. So, I guess that when I walk into a room, I bring all those things to a role, and I've always just simply seen myself as an actor.

"And I believe that it serves me well to just think in terms of my craft. If hypothetically, I saw myself only as a sex symbol, or as some other limited stereotype, I think I would feel like a complete failure. I've been to acting school and I think that at the end of the day, when you just focus on the work and you're comfortable with who you are, that at some point someone's going to recognize your talent and give you an opportunity. And after that, there's a domino effect. I've always believed that, and never wanted to be anything other than who I am."

KW: Attorney Bernadette Beekman says: I love your work, and have enjoyed seeing you on Broadway. I'd like to know whether the actresses bonded along racial lines during the filming. I'm asking because I saw some cast members on a TV talk show, and there seemed to be different reactions to the cover photos of you on *Essence* and *Vogue*.

VD: The absolute truth is that the bond between all of the actresses on the set was beyond compare. It was the most loving and most supportive environment you can imagine. First of all, we had a great cast which was all about the work. No egos. Secondly, I think we all understood that we needed each other.

"We needed a relief from the world that we were creating. Each of us was as uncomfortable as the next. In terms of the magazines, I'm not exactly sure what Bernadette is referring to. I suppose that the covers are open to interpretation, but I want to assure you that if you were in a room with the cast, you would see absolutely no division."

KW: Harriet Pakula Teweles asks: How do you encourage someone to see the film who might say, "I read the book and already discussed it in my book group, so I don't think I need to see the movie." **VD:** First of all, film is a different medium. These characters actually come to life in the movie, and you get to feel them in a completely different way which is palpable. Plus, with a movie, you're able to share the experience with an audience.

"And [director] Tate Taylor did a great adaptation of the book. Because he's friends with [the book's author] Kathryn Stockett, he felt a great responsibility to stay true to the story, so he fought hard for everything that you see on the screen. Therefore, I'm urging people who might have read the novel to see the movie for the unique experience the film has to offer."

KW: My wife, Susan Doran,
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

NEW YORK ARTS

Artistic icons Leroy Campbell & Dindga McCannon use artistic talent to inspire others



By Mira Gandy
Artist & Scribe

During this time of year we hear stories of people giving food, money and gifts to those in need. We also reflect on the things that are most important in life. So in this column, my focus is on two artists, **Leroy Campbell** and **Dindga McCannon**; who give the gift of art and used their artistic talent to inspire others.

I aspired to become an artist since I was four years old. It was the 1960's and my best friend's mother was McCannon. I spent many hours in their home and was enamored by the large colorful paintings I saw there. She was the first Black female artist I ever met and knowing her made me believe being an artist was possible. Dindga was my earliest inspiration, and years later she is still inspiring people with her art.

The multi-genre artist and noted quilt-maker was born in Harlem in the 1940's. She began teaching in the 1960's, and soon after became a member of the esteemed Weusi Artist Collective; the group known for making African imagery a central part of their work.

McCannon co-founded the Black Women's Art Collective, *Where We At* (1971 to 1997). Members of the collection included **Faith Ringgold**, **Jerrilyn Crooks**, and others. She authored two children's books: "Peaches" (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard) and "Wilhelmina Jones, Future Star" (Dell Books) and has exhibited her work at the American Craft Museum and the Smithsonian.

McCannon's most recent project, the Harlem Memorabilia Project, involved her meticulously saving mementos and memorabilia of her life. From old family photos, to movie ticket stubs, to rent receipts, to dispossessed notices, to love letters – McCannon was convinced that once these items were transformed into art, the narrative would be a compelling one. The Harlem Arts Alliance agreed, and earlier this year awarded McCannon a grant, through its Community Art Fund, to conduct an eight-week workshop at the Dwyer.

Over the summer, McCannon and seven students set up a pseudo-studio in one of the Dwyer's galleries. They brought in their mementos and trinkets and began learning the processes of transforming their "crumbling pieces of paper" into art — techniques like transferring images onto fabric to preserve them.

By the end of the workshop sessions, McCannon and her students had crafted a stunning collection of one-of-a-kind quilts and hand-made books. Equally as important, they exchanged countless stories about family histories and about growing up in Harlem.



Leroy Campbell, Helping Hand floor mural



Dindga McCannon stands in front of her Harlem Memorabilia Quilt

"To see these women take my idea and create their own interpretation is inspiring and fulfilling," said McCannon. "As we worked on this project, each one of us became a teacher and historian. We continued the tradition that embodies the art of quilting — women gathered around exchanging wisdom, creating together, and telling our stories."

It was real life stories of brave women that inspired Leroy Campbell's mural at Greenhope's new facility, Kandake House, in East Harlem. Executive director, **Dr. Anne Elliott**, approached Campbell to create a mural in the new building to represent the essence of Greenhope's mission. For more than 35 years, Greenhope Services for Women has provided a nurturing respite for women whose lives have been claimed by poverty, drug addiction, trauma and crime. At Kandake House, children under the age of five are able to reside with their mothers as they undergo life-changing treatment.

Campbell flew to New York from his home in Atlanta. It was the weekend before Mother's Day, and when he arrived at the Kandake House, they were having a Mother's Day celebration.

"The residents shared their stories about how far they had come," Campbell recalled. "I choked up and held back tears when I heard

from those who spoke of not having seen their children or their mothers for quite sometime. The many hands in the room instantly consoled those who struggled and stumbled through that emotion. Hands reached out from everywhere, in many ways."

On his way back to the subway after the program, Campbell coincidentally met a Greenhope healthcare worker. He asked her if she could say one thing about the women at the house what would it be? She said, "The women were all in a hole together trying to come out."

That was the visual he needed. The beautiful mural Campbell created is located on the floor in the main lobby of Kandake House. He depicted female figures rising up from a hole, helping each other by reaching out a hand, as they push up from the ground. This inspiring piece is appropriately titled, "Helping Hands."

Campbell is a self-taught artist renowned for his depictions of the African-American experience. Originally from Charleston, South Carolina and Fort Green, Brooklyn, he has a career that spans more than 20 years. Campbell's artwork is sold to contemporary galleries and collectors internationally in Japan, Senegal, England and Germany.



Dindga McCannon and students display quilts



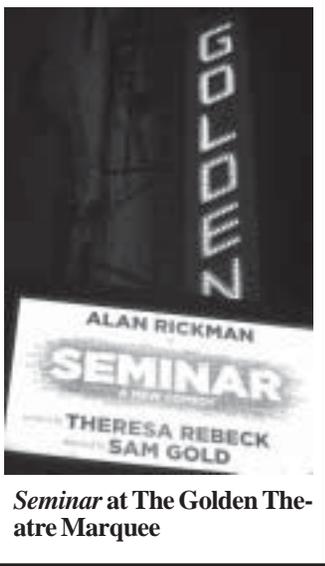
Leroy Campbell and Dr. Elliott at Kandake house

His distinctive art has been seen on classic hit television shows including, "Martin," "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," "Living Single," "The Jamie Foxx Show" and "The Cosby Show."

He recently completed a solo exhibition at the Rogue Space Gallery in Chelsea, New York and is currently working on a

new book titled, "Reflections of my Journey," to be released next year. For more information visit www.art-alive.com/dindga www.leroycampbelloriginals.com, www.greenhope.org and www.dwyercc.org.

(Photo Credits: Sanviki Chapman and Courtesy of the Dwyer Culture Center)



Seminar at The Golden Theatre Marquee

THEATER with Second Night Reviewer Audrey J. Bernard

Theatergoers give *Seminar* high grades for exceptional performances

I've been an **Alan Rickman** fan ever since I saw him in the role of Professor Severus Snape in the *Harry Potter* franchise and Hans Gruber in the 1988 hit *Die Hard*, as well as award-winning roles in such films as *Sense and Sensibility* and, more recently, *Sweeney Todd* and *Bottle Shock*. Now, Rickman's triumphant return to a place that fits him like a glove, the Broadway stage, is another *fait accompli* in which he delivers a memorable performance. His return marks his first return to the Broadway stage since being nominated for a Tony Award for his award winning performance as Elyot in the 2002 production of Noel Coward's *Private Lives*.

As an internationally-renowned actor of stage, screen and television, Rickman previously made his Broadway debut and earned his first Tony Award nomination as Valmont in the 1987



Cast and creative team of *Seminar* at Opening Night Curtain: Hettienne Park, Hamish Linklater, playwright Theresa Rebeck, Alan Rickman, director Sam Gold, Lily Rabe, Jerry O'Connell

U.S. premiere production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.

His legion of fans has eagerly awaited his return and he couldn't have picked a more perfect endeavor as the World Premiere of *Seminar*, a new comedy by Pulitzer Prize finalist and Peabody Award winner **Theresa Rebeck**.

Seminar, which opened on

Broadway on Sunday, November 20, 2011 at **The Golden Theater**, 252 West 45th Street, New York City, is directed by acclaimed Obie Award winner **Sam Gold** who makes his Broadway debut. In addition to the two-time Tony Award nominee, Emmy Award and Golden Globe winner Rickman, the play also stars Tony Award nominee **Lily Rabe**,

Obie Award winner **Hamish Linklater**, film and television star **Jerry O'Connell** in his Broadway debut and actress **Hettienne Park**.

As the narrative goes, in *Seminar*, four aspiring young novelists (Rabe, Linklater, O'Connell and Park) shell out \$5,000 to sign up for private writing classes with

Leonard (Rickman), an international literary figure. Under his recklessly brilliant and unorthodox instruction, some thrive and others flounder, alliances are made and broken, sex is used as a weapon and hearts are unmoored.

The wordplay is not the only thing that turns vicious as innocence collides with experience in this provocative new comedy. *Seminar* is a *must see* for word puzzle fanatics and anyone who likes to dabble in mind games and word jousting.

The production features set and costume design by Tony Award nominee and two-time Obie Award winner **David Zinn**, lighting design by Drama Desk Award nominee **Ben Stanton** and original music and sound design by two-time Drama Desk Award winner **John Gromada**. The show is produced by **Jeffrey Finn, Jill Furman, John N. Hart Jr., Patrick Milling Smith, Roy Furman, David Ian, David Mirvish, Amy Nauiokas** and **James Spry**. (Photos by *Walter McBride / Retna Ltd.*)

The festive after party hosted by the producers was held at the beautiful **Gotham Hall** in Herald Square where Opening Night revelers crossed paths with determined Christmas shoppers. Once inside, joyful partygoers gave Rickman and his students high grades for exceptional performances worthy of Tony nods.



Sam Gold, Amy Herzog



Christine Ebersole



Debra Messing



Jane Wagner, Rick Nicita



Johnny Wear



Kim Cattrall



Jerry O'Connell, Rebecca Romijn



Raza Jaffrey



Justin Mikita, Jesse Tyler Ferguson



Jason Robert Brown, Marsha Norman



Scott Wittman, Marc Shaiman

'Color Rwanda With Hope' art exhibition to benefit war victims

By Vinette K. Pryce
Contributing Scribe

A philanthropic drive to help the estimated 20,000 Rwandan children born of rape during the 1994 genocide there mobilized sympathizers to purchase coloring books composed of drawings from youths from the African nation. Organized by Foundation Rwanda in conjunction with LBi Syrup, a "Color Rwanda With Hope" benefit and art exhibition was recently held to raise funds for the women and children.

Reportedly, many of the women who were raped are now afflicted by HIV/AIDS and also shunned by society and their families. The goal is to raise funds to aid the reported 20,000 youths who will turn 17 next year and are unable to attend secondary schools without assistance.

"Art has the ability to cross borders, win hearts and change minds," a Foundation spokesperson said. Allegedly, profits from the coloring book will benefit disfranchised families to pursue education which "provides endless possibilities for the future, helping people grow and accomplish their biggest dreams."

Drawings in the book reflect simple items such as a football, a house, plants, water tap, images of stick figures holding hands, a tree, a car, bird or cloud – which is interpreted to reflected the de-



Kate Cunningham, executive producer LBi Syrup, Jules Shell executive director Foundation Rwanda, Jakob Daschek (LBi Syrup) and celebrity chef Marcus Samuelsson attended the "Color Rwanda with Hope" charity benefit at Sun West Studios.

(Photo: robbielephoto.com)

sires of the youths yearning for clean air, water, family and peace.

During the fundraiser, a film reprising the horrors of the 100 day war reflected the arbitrary murders of more than three quarters of a

million of the population. Marcus Samuelsson, UNICEF ambassador and celebrity chef provided the keynote address to guests along with Foundation Rwanda Executive Director Jules Shell and LBi

Syrup CEO Omino Gardezi who gave impassioned messages about the importance of the cause.

The purchase of a single coloring book, they said could support

one child's annual secondary school education. "The brush is in your hand...color Rwanda with hope!" a campaign mantra stated. For more info. on the campaign log onto www.foundationrwanda.org

Victorious Viola Davis captures Golden Globe nom for 'The Help'

(from page 32)

would like to hear your reaction to this quote from the postscript to the book: "There's no trickier subject for a writer from the South than that of affection between a Black person and a white one in the unequal world of segregation.

"For the dishonesty upon which a society is founded makes every emotion suspect, makes it impossible to know whether what flowed between two people was honest feeling or pity or pragmatism."

VD: I think that is precisely what the movie is about. And I think that the reason why the book has been so successful is their unlikely friendship, because they're coming from two different worlds. They're coming from a place where they cannot trust each other, because of what each represents in terms of what the culture has dictated that we should believe about each other.

"Then, all of a sudden, this idea of a book is put in

the midst of all of that mistrust, and the requirement of our having to work together to finish the book literally forces us to have some sort of relationship with each other. I think that's why it works." KW: Susan would also like to hear your reaction to Kathryn Stockett's recently saying she's proud of the South.

VD: I can't speak for the author, but I would guess that she feels proud of the progress the South has made because, growing up, she experienced a very different Mississippi than the one that exists today. KW: Director/Professor Hisani Dubose says: I fell in love with your acting abilities ever since I saw you in "Antwone Fisher." What type of roles are you currently looking for?

VD: Complicated women who are filled with contradictions. KW: Larry Greenberg says: You are one of the few actresses to enjoy success in theater, film, and television. Do you view these as a continuum or as three distinct forms?

VD: Probably as a continuum. KW: Rudy Lewis asks: What

was it like working opposite Denzel Washington in the staging of August Wilson's "Fences"? VD: It was a wonderful, beautiful experience working with the consummate professional. KW: Is there any question no one ever asks you, that you wish someone would? VD: No, I think people ask me just about everything.

KW: The Ling-Ju Yen question: What is your earliest childhood memory? VD: Meeting my 9 year-old sister for the first time when she came to live with us when I was 5. KW: When you look in the mirror, what do you see? VD: In one sentence? Gosh! I see a wise, confident yet insecure and ultimately proud, African-American woman?

KW: The Tavis Smiley question: How do you want to be remembered?

VD: Oh my God! I would love to be remembered as a person who used her life to inspire others in any way, shape or form. KW: Thanks again for the time, Viola, and best of luck with all your endeavors. VD: Thank you very much, Kam

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Ad Council

Oleta Adams sings for Haiti

(from page 17)

gency test sirens go off in her neighborhood or sees pictures of people whose lives have been turned upside down in a matter of minutes by natural disaster.

"It is times like these," Ms. Adams says. "That community becomes even more important." And that is exactly the premise behind C2C, the non-profit service organization established to create a self-sufficient Haiti in the wake of the January 12, 2010 disaster by partnering with a task force on the ground to effect lasting change — one community helping to heal another. Since its inaugural event at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem, NY on January 12, 2011, the "Hope and A Future" Benefit Concert for Haiti has become New York City's prime event commemorating the tragic earthquake and the promise of a healed nation. Along with Ms. Adams, this year's celebration of Haitian resiliency will also feature Haitian Kompa sensation Carimi and include performances by James "D-Train" Williams, Adante, Barbara King, CCC Mass Choir, Coalition, Concilio Taino Guatu-Ma-cu, Francine Ott/The Walk, Jean Chardavoine, Jocelyne Dorisme, Mavrick, Mecca, Monvelyno

Alexis, Mozayik, Wanda Nash, and Wisdom, interspersed with vignettes spotlighting Haiti's culture and history.

When Oleta Adams performs her hit song "Get Here" on January 13, at Walt Whitman Theatre in Brooklyn, it will be personal. "I'm so blessed to have had a hit like this one," says Ms. Adams. "It does not grow old. It means different things to different people at different times. For me, it's a life rope that you can cling to so you know that things are going to be better tomorrow. It's a warm place that I want to give to the people of Haiti. That's why I sing. To leave a lasting impression of comfort and joy and peace — because everybody needs to have a place that they can call home and everyone needs hope." The "Hope and a Future" Benefit Concert for Haiti takes place Friday, January 13, 2012 at Brooklyn's Center for the Performing Arts, Walt Whitman Theater at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Road (Nostrand Ave & Ave H) Brooklyn, NY. Doors open at 7:00 PM. Show time is at 8:00 PM. For more information, including other ticket purchasing locations, visit:

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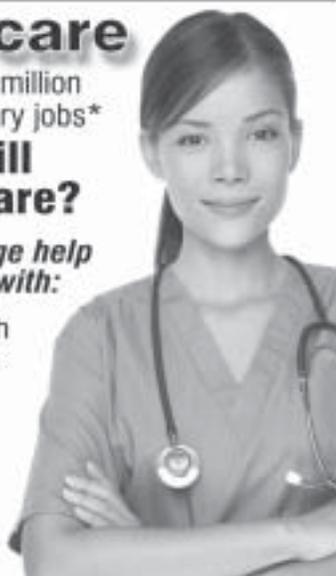
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Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, New York County, on 12/14/2011, bearing, Index Number NC-002671-11/NY, a copy of which can be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 111 Center Street New York, NY 10013, grants Grace Strahan Lockhart the right to assume the name of **Grace Lockhart Djuranovich**. The place of birth is Brussels, Belgium, the date of birth is April 21, 1981 and the present address is 30 West 63rd St. #23J, New York, NY 10023

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, New York County, on 12/15/2011, bearing, Index Number NC-002893-11/NY, a copy of which can be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 111 Center Street New York, NY 10013, grants Bela Haldar Bain AKA Bela Haldar, Bela Bela Haldar the right to assume the name of **Bela Haldar**. The place of birth is Bangladesh, the date of birth is June 15, 1984 and the present address is 42-07 Elberston Street, Apt. #6K, Elmhurst, NY 11373

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, New York County, on 12/16/2011, bearing, Index Number NC-002929-11/NY, a copy of which can be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at 111 Center Street New York, NY 10013, grants William Eric Bailey AKA William Eric Johnson, William E. Bailey, William Bailey the right to assume the name of **William Eric Johnson**. The place of birth is New York, NY, the date of birth is March 22, 1972 and the present address is 702 East New York Ave. #1E, Brooklyn, NY 11203



Gingrich idea exploits stereotypes reminds us of Reagan and Nixon

(from page 3)

own remedy for the country. His solution — put lazy and helpless inner city youth to work. It was a solution, some experts say harkened back to the days when the stereotype of welfare queens refusing husbands, was used by the Ronald Reagan campaign in 1980 to help frighten the country into ultimately implementing welfare reform as an antidote to welfare, ironically, during the Clinton Administration.

This time Gingrich has thrown his own form of dynamite into the presidential race igniting controversy and accusations against him of race baiting. Catching stiff flak, Gingrich backpedaled a bit to say he obviously was not talking about the “working poor,” but rather households where there is no work.

“They have no money. No habit of work,” the politician said. “[They have] No concept of working and nobody around them who works. ‘No concept of I do this and you give me cash,’ unless it’s illegal.”

What was left unsaid, according to critics, was that Gingrich was speaking about Black and Hispanics who, more than any other groups, fit the profile of the “very poor” inner city kids Gingrich described. “What kind of nonsense is this?” exclaimed City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. “How dare anybody make such a suggestion. It’s ridiculous that a white candidate for president would try to put people in certain classes based on economic background saying they lack work ethic.

“I was born in public housing — Richard Allen projects. These were low-income people. But I have a brother with a Ph.D. My sister and I have master’s degrees. My oldest sister is a computer expert. We have so many exceptions of poor people. This Thursday (Dec. 15) I will be honoring the original Richard Allen Committee — a group of success stories [out of Richard Allen]. They have all given back.” Things didn’t improve after Blackwell’s retort as the floodgates of criticism opened.

“I think there is a clear ‘dog whistle’ of racial signaling, when

he talks of inner city poor,” said Daniel Cook, associate professor of Childhood Studies at Rutgers-Camden in South Jersey. “Statistically he’s referring to families and children of color.”

Charles Gallagher, chairman of the sociology department at LaSalle University, agreed, saying Gingrich was using “coded” language for Blacks and Latinos when he spoke of the “very poor,” “inner city poor” and children “in projects.”

What Gingrich also did not say outright was that if his plan to use youth as janitors in schools were adopted, it would be a matter of throwing a single brick through two windows at the same time, windows that were institutions that have long been targets of conservatives — unions as well as child labor laws.

While sidestepping labor laws, Gingrich admitted that the proposal would allow the reduction of unionized school janitorial unions and their members. “Most of these schools ought to get rid of the unionized janitors, have one master janitor and pay local students to take care of the school,” said the former U.S. Speaker of House of Representatives.

Gingrich has drawn criticism in the past from some Democrats and pundits for contending that U.S. child labor laws are “truly stupid” and should be “re-jiggered” to allow such things as children janitors in schools.

There are Blacks who agree with Gingrich’s prescription. Ward Connerly, political activist, businessman and former University of California Regent, based in California, is one of them. Connerly’s position is not surprising since, in the past, he has opposed racial preferences and quotas.

“His [Gingrich’s] observations are quite valid ...,” said Connerly last week. “America is in decline not just budget-wise ... but the infrastructure [of our families and our culture] is deteriorating. There are enormous problems in the urban core. There needs to be the right kind of tutelage to lead productive lives.”

He said Gingrich’s suggestion that “really poor” kids lack work ethic and could profit from school janitorial jobs may help remediate

the situation. According to Connerly, some young Blacks feel that doing the things required to hold down a mainstream job is “acting white.”

“This is a problem with a lot of our kids,” said Connerly. “But not just our kids [lack work ethics]. White kids too. These kids are low income and don’t see parents going to work or coming home from the job. ... There is a need for love here.”

Critics like Al Sharpton, who recently did a tour through inner city schools with Gingrich [at the behest of President Obama in an effort to heighten awareness of the problem plagued education system] agreed. He said Gingrich’s words sounded suspiciously similar to the coded language used to describe felon Willie Horton during the campaign of George H.W. Bush for presidency. He said it was also similar to the use of the “welfare queen” image by Reagan and Richard Nixon in their presidential campaigns. Now the target seems to be children as potential scapegoats for the current economic situation, he said.

“This is where we are getting into this cheap kind of race-baiting kind of poor,” Sharpton said in a radio interview. “[He is talking about] criminal kind of behavior and we need to call it out.”

“He knows better,” said Sharpton. He said this should be especially so following Gingrich’s inner city tour that included Philadelphia. “He knows these kids have parents that work and that are not making money illegally.”

According to Charles Gallagher, in the sociology department at LaSalle, “Gingrich is way off with this. He is trying to score points with white Americans that Black culture is a culture of poverty that the children learn about helplessness and laziness because their parents don’t work. This is amazing coming from a man who is supposed to know history.

“It’s not laziness,” said Gallagher, “but the lack of opportunity. The structure no longer exists for jobs based on manual labor [or entry level skills]. It’s disingenuous looking at 11- and 12-year-olds and say ‘Get a job.’” Gallagher said Gingrich failed to mention discrimination, “which is very much a part of this.”

Adds Gallagher: “He doesn’t look at the structural conditions that create poverty. It’s unbelievable that he would stoop so low as to blame 14- and 15-year-olds for the recession we’re in.” Daniel Cook, a sociologist at Rutgers-Camden said he disagreed with Gingrich’s argument that having or not having parents was key to youths having work ethics.

“Anybody who knows anything about children from less economically advantaged backgrounds, know they live in situations [in which they have to practically raise their brothers and sisters and provide unpaid care]. They are at different ages, and they have to be incredibly responsible, helping siblings with clothing, eating, getting to school. It’s not paid labor but it’s an incredible amount of responsibility.

The picture he paints because

asked the remainder of the class whether anyone else did not accept homosexuality. A student raised his hand, and McDowell ordered him out of the classroom as well.

In this case, the teacher became the bully, and the students who opposed his homosexual agenda became his victims.

A 14-year old openly gay student who supported McDowell at subsequent school board meeting appeared on the “The Ellen DeGeneres Show” to discuss his speech. The student was rewarded with a \$10,000 academic scholarship by a digital media company.

The Thomas More Law Center (TMLC), a national public interest law firm based in Ann Arbor, Michigan filed the lawsuit on behalf Sandra Glowacki and her son Daniel in the federal District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. TMLC is representing the family at no charge.

The lawsuit claims that Daniel Glowacki’s constitutional rights to freedom of speech and equal protection have been violated by the policies and actions of the school district and McDowell. Among other things, the lawsuit seeks nominal damages, a declaration that the school policies and actions violate the Constitution, and injunction to prohibit further constitutional violations.

In cooperation with the NEA, the MEA, and the HEA, and in furtherance of the national agenda of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (“GLAAD”), the School District permitted the celebration of “Spirit Day” at Howell High School on Oct. 20, 2010. On Spirit Day, people who support the acceptance of homosexuality wear the color purple.

In fact, the School District permitted its teachers to sell purple t-shirts with the slogan “Tyler’s Army” to students and teachers to promote the 2010 Spirit Day. “Tyler’s Army” is a reference to

of class divisions is incorrect.”

LaSalle University’s Gallagher said the focus of Gingrich’s argument — tying the minority families to their economic level — is reminiscent of the work of Daniel Patrick Moynihan who blamed young Black women who got pregnant without looking for marriage as a reason for the ills in Black upward mobility.

Some have said that Gingrich’s comments are another effort to pin Black and Hispanic economic levels on their own family backgrounds.

Regardless, some local political leaders agree with City Councilman Curtis Jones, who argued recently that Gingrich’s comments would be helpful to President Obama campaign. “It’s the best thing that could have happened,” said Jones. “With Gingrich running it makes us see that whatever Obama did wrong, Gingrich proves that it could be a lot worse.

Tyler Clementi who committed suicide after a video of him having sex with another male student in his dorm room was posted on the Internet.

Senior Trial Counsel, Robert Muise, handling the case, stated: “Homosexual activists, with the willing and complicit support of public school districts and teachers’ unions throughout the country, are using our public schools to foist their destructive agenda on our children, thereby creating a hostile learning environment for those students who oppose this agenda on religious and moral grounds. This case is just one example of the pernicious effect these activists are having on our students and in our community. We intend to stop it.”

The Howell School District and the Michigan Education Association (“MEA”), which is a subsidiary of the National Education Association (“NEA”), along with the Howell Education Association (“HEA”), which is a chapter of the MEA, have forged a symbiotic relationship and have worked with one another to adopt policies, that promote homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle and to prohibit religious opposition to homosexuality. The school district has promoted the concept that religious opposition to homosexuality is equivalent to bullying, hate speech, and homophobia in order to eradicate such opposition.

The Thomas More Law Center defends and promotes America’s Judeo-Christian heritage and moral values. It supports a strong national defense and an independent and sovereign United States of America. The Law Center accomplishes its mission through litigation, education, and related activities. It does not charge for its services. The Law Center is supported by contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations, and is recognized by the IRS as a section 501(c)(3) organization. You may reach the Thomas More Law Center at (734) 827-2001 or visit our website at www.thomasmore.org.

Student sues school district for punishment over homosexuality

(from page 3)

National lesbian TV host, Ellen DeGeneres got in on the anti-Glowacki campaign. Daniel even became the subject of a school assembly.

The incident occurred on October 20, 2010, the day that Daniel’s Economics class teacher, Jay McDowell, wore a purple “Tyler’s Army” t-shirt, as part of a national campaign promoted by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation to highlight alleged “bullying” of homosexuals.

Rather than teach academic courses that day, McDowell decided to spend the entire day promoting this national pro-homosexual agenda, which included

showing his classes a video concerning such “bullying.”

Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of TMLC, commented: “Rather than teach the required economics curriculum for which he is paid, McDowell, with the full knowledge of school officials, used his position of authority to promote his homosexual agenda at taxpayer’s expense. This case points out the outrageous way in which homosexual activists have turned our public schools into indoctrination centers, and are seeking to eradicate all religious and moral opposition to their agenda.”

Thompson added, “It defies common sense for schools to ban all sorts of unhealthy foods while at the same time promoting the homosexual lifestyle, which hard sta-

tistics show increases drug abuse, suicides and reduces the life expectancies by several years. Schools that promote such lifestyles are engaging in a form of child abuse.”

The incident all started when McDowell ordered a student in his classroom to remove her confederate flag belt buckle because he was offended by it. Daniel pointed out the teacher’s obvious hypocrisy: the teacher can promote a message that might be offensive to students, but students can’t wear clothing that expresses a message that is offensive to the teacher.

In total disregard of his professional responsibilities as a teacher and the constitutional rights of his students, after ordering Daniel to leave the classroom, McDowell

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Giants stunned by Redskins, continue '06 redux

By Jason Clinkscales

It's happening again, isn't it? Those who were there in 2006 may remember when the New York Giants started strong with a division-leading 6-2 record, entering the second half of the season. Then, going against strong defensive teams in November and December, Big Blue lost four straight and six of the final eight games. Despite backing into a wild card berth, New York fell to the rival Philadelphia Eagles and an offseason of finger-pointing. This could be more maddening than that infamous season as a similar slide continues as the Washington Redskins handed their northern rivals a stunning 23-10 loss at MetLife Stadium this past Sunday, pushing New York into another undesirable win-or-lose scenario.

Against one of the NFL's consistently underrated defenses, Eli Manning couldn't get into any rhythm. Though he completed 23 of his 40 passes for 257

yards, he threw three interceptions and no touchdowns. Washington themselves, added a strong pass rush that led to three sacks and drive-killing penalties to this recipe for disaster. The play calling was a bit frustrating as well; despite solid rushing from Ahmad Bradshaw (ten carries, 58 yards, 1 TD) Brandon Jacobs (eight for 33 yards) early on, New York preferred to throw the ball more, despite uneven play from Hakeem Nicks, Victor Cruz and others.

Defensively, this was a game where the Giants managed to do some things right. Redskins QB Rex Grossman is far from elite, maybe just as far from good, but interceptions by safety Kenny Phillips and cornerback Corey Webster were confidence boosters for a shaky secondary. However, Big Blue couldn't recover from two Washington touchdowns in the second quarter; a Grossman pass to Santana Moss and a 6-yard run by Darrel Young. The Redskins, despite some



Coughlin on hot seat again

struggles offensively, had a more balanced playbook as they controlled the clock much of the game thanks to a team-total 123 rushing yards.

Controlling your own playoff destiny doesn't seem to be all that it's cracked up to be, especially these days in the New York metropolitan area. With both the Giants losing their grip on the NFC East and the Jets barely holding onto

the last wild card spot, Saturday's 'road' game has an extra, if not odd, feel to it. Desperation will set in for both teams, but maybe more so for the 'visiting' Giants, who need to win these final two games to win the division as it's the only way they can make the postseason.

The Jets' defense, for all of its bravado, is not nearly as fearsome as the last two seasons. However,

this will be the first time that Manning and company will see the highly regarded cornerback Darrelle Revis. If the Giants wideouts continue to drop passes as they have much of the season, this opportunistic Jets' secondary will have a field day with potential turnovers. For the sake of Giants fans, the offense shouldn't be in such a giving mood on Christmas Eve.



Eli Manning

A state of limbo

By Marc Rasbury

There is no organization in professional sports that is more unstable than the New Jersey Nets.

Not only will they be playing in another city/state next year, there is no guarantee that their two best players will be on the roster by the All Star break and their owner is considering running for Russian Prime Minister. So it is an understatement to say that this team is in a state of limbo.

The Nets are packing their bags and boxes getting ready for their upcoming move to Brooklyn. That can not make for a stable situation, not for the team or their fan base. It is going to be hard for the current fans to embrace the organization when the team has one foot out the door. Brooklyn is awaiting the Nets arrival with open arms. The Borough of Kings would be one of the top ten largest cities if it was a city. Things are going to be hot and exciting in the new Barclay Center next season, but for now, there will be an uneasy feeling at the Prudential Center.

Last season GM Billy King pulled off one of biggest trades when he acquired Deron Williams after he failed to land Carmelo Anthony. Now his biggest chal-

lenge is keeping him. Williams has made it be known that although he likes playing here, he is going to wait and see what moves the organization makes to improve their roster. You know that King is trying his best to secure the services of one Orlando's man child Dwight Howard who is the most dominant inside presence in the game.

Howard combined with Williams could be one of the best inside-outside duos but King will have to give up a King's ransom, no pun intended, to pry Howard away from the Magic. They do have multiple first round picks and Brook Lopez to entice Orlando. Lopez is emerging as an inside force. He is not Howard especially on the boards and yet he could be considered as nice consolation prize as opposed to losing Howard altogether and there will be a number of talented players coming out of college this spring. Therefore, the proposed deal might make sense.

Sasha Vujcic, Anthony Morrow and Jordon Farmer are the only other players currently on the roster worth speaking of so expect Billy King to be very busy in the upcoming weeks.

If the thin roster and the move to Brooklyn were not enough now owner Mikhail Prokhorovis



Avery Johnson

considering running for Russia's Prime Minister. Can you imagine him negotiating an arms treaty and

a NBA deal at the same time? The only thing we know about the Nets upcoming season is that

major changes are on the horizon. Other than that LIMBO is the theme of this campaign.



Marc Rasbury

BEACON SPORTS



Knicks eye a championship this season

By Derrel Johnson

When the New York Knicks signed Amar'e Stoudemire in the summer of 2010, he proclaimed "The Knicks are back." The team backed up his claim by making it to the playoffs for the first time since 2004.

Although they were swept by the Boston Celtics in the playoffs last season, Amar'e and his teammates will have more expectations this year.

While Amar'e was surrounded by role players like Wilson Chandler, Raymond Felton and Danilo Gallinari last year, this season he begins with a co-star in Carmelo Anthony who is arguably the most talented scorer in the game. The recent addition of Tyson Chandler should prove big, as he makes the Knicks perhaps the most talented front line in the NBA.

Amar'e and Carmelo will have to learn to play with each other, something that they didn't have a chance to do last season after a February 2011 trade brought Carmelo to the Knicks. The shortened pre-season and training camp won't help either, so look for the Knick to be a team that improves as the season contin-



Tyson Chandler



Carmelo Anthony

ues.

The Knicks will have to give more effort on the defensive end of the court as well, as they gave up 105.7 points last season, good for 27th in the league. Assistant Coach Mike Woodson was hired for that purpose, and Chandler certainly will make a difference on that end.

Chandler is a player whose impact is much more powerful than his numbers. His 10.1 points, 9.4 rebounds, and 1.1 blocks per game last season won't get him drafted in the first round of your fantasy league, but his impact on the defense and the locker room of the Dallas Mavericks was the addition that won them the championship last year. Toney Douglas supplied a lot of defensive energy off the bench last year, and he will be expected to do that from the starting line up this season.

On the offensive end of the court, The Knicks have huge question marks in the back court with Douglas as the starter. Mike Bibby was signed in the shortened off season, but his 3.6 points per game during the playoffs last season for the Miami Heat have led many to think that he can't be a major contributor. Ironically, the signing, and, ultimately the health of Baron Davis may determine how far this team goes. Without Davis, I see the Knicks as a four seed. If Davis is healthy, that makes the Knicks an even

tougher playoff out and a legitimate championship contender.

Rookie Iman Shumbet has looked good in practice and in the first preseason game, where he scored 16 points on 6-11 shooting, with two assists and two turnovers. Knicks head coach Mike D'Antoni has praised his effort. "I thought Shumpert played well. He can get a shot any time he wants to.

He shoots the ball pretty well. He can definitely defend. He's athletic, he's long. There's a lot of good stuff. Again, this is just one baby step and he's got to do it a lot, but you can tell that the kid can play" D'Antoni said after the first preseason game Saturday against the New Jersey Nets.

Landry Fields looks to put an awful playoff performance behind him in which he scored just seven points in the four-game series. If he worked diligently on his game in the off season, we should see improvement.

But this season will come down to Amar'e Stoudemire and Carmelo Anthony. These two NBA superstars combined for over 50 points a game last season, and will need to be in that area on a nightly basis to compete with the NBA elite this season.

If these two superstars play to their capability, and if D'Antoni manages their minutes and the rotation well, the Knicks will not only make the playoffs this season, but have a shot at a deep playoff run as well.