

# New York Beacon

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## SCHOMBURG FAREWELL

*600 pay tribute to outgoing Howard Dodson*

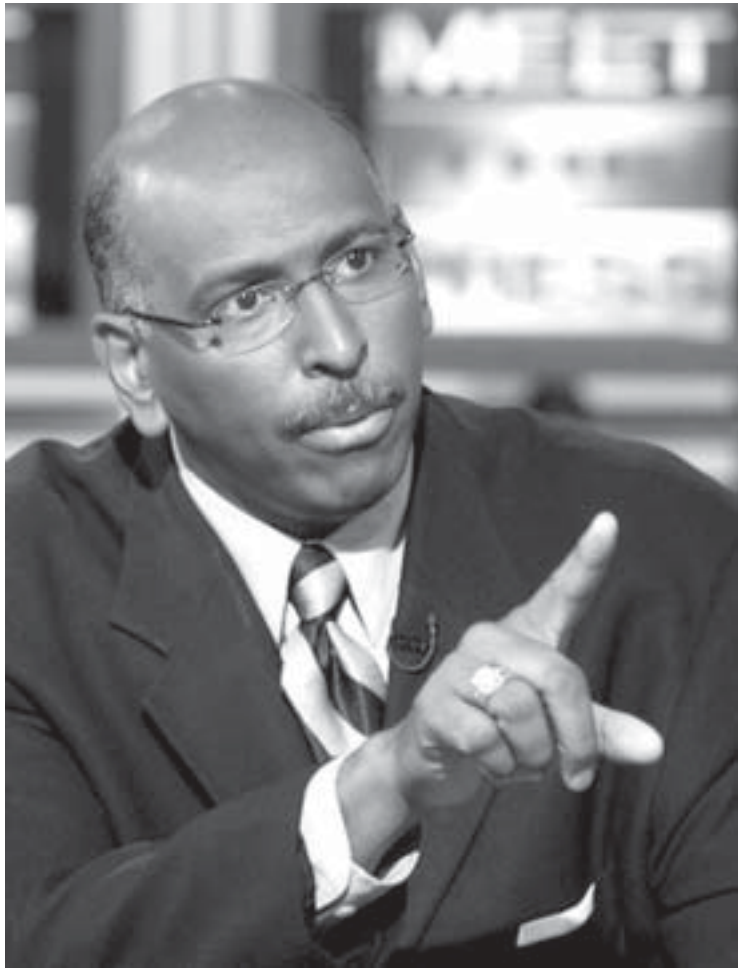


CHANGING OF THE GUARD — Howard Dodson gives key to the Schomburg Kingdom to in-coming president Khalil Gibran Muhammad

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*Ivory Coast President depllores election double-standard*

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Michael Steele

## Steele comments on future plans following RNC ouster

Special to the NNPA from the AFRO-American Newspaper

While politicians continue to debate whether the circumstances surrounding Michael Steele's withdrawal from the race for Republican National Committee (RNC) chairman were fair, he said he is still looking to make a nice living in politics. "He'll be fine," said conservative political analyst Raynard Jackson. "He'll do some TV and probably some book tours."

Reports say Steele is mulling over offers from CNN and Fox News to become a political analyst. Fox News would make the most sense, as Steele served in that capacity with the conservative news network before becoming RNC chairman.

Steele recently expressed his eagerness to return to television in an interview with FrumForum, a conservative Web site dedicated to the Republican Party and conservative politics.

Steele said he plans on "doin' some TV here and there. There's a presidential cycle coming up; I plan to play in that a little bit.

Maybe a lot."

Steele also reflected on the reasons he was unable to gain enough support to retain his position as RNC chairman, telling CNN's Wolf Blitzer that perhaps the party wanted someone with a different style.

"I've been trying to figure that one out myself as well, and I think the reality is they wanted someone different in there," Steele said. "They wanted someone who had a different tone than I did. That's fine."

He had more pointed words for some of his colleagues, especially new RNC Chairman Reince Priebus. Steele said that Priebus, who he appointed to the position of RNC general counsel, ran against Steele when he saw an opening. "I know exactly how Caesar felt,"

Steele told FrumForum. "It is what it is. I trust my friends. Well, I guess the adage is right. In Washington, you should get a dog.

"We put a lot of resources in Wisconsin over the last two years," Steele said of Priebus, who is also chairman of the Republican Party in Wisconsin. "That's what you do for the team."

## Mayor Bloomberg launches NYC Urban Technology Innovation center

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg has launched the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center, an initiative to promote the development and commercialization of green building technologies in New York City. It will connect academic institutions conducting underlying research, companies creating the associated products, and building owners who will use those technologies.

Through the Center – a partnership of the New York City Economic Development Corporation, Columbia University, Polytechnic Institute of New York University, and the City University of New York (CUNY) – green building technology companies that need real-world test sites will be joined with building owners looking to benefit from the latest developments and willing to provide a test environment.

The Center will also maintain a database of current green building technology needs and research, and it will host a series of community building forums. The Mayor was joined at the announcement, which took place at Columbia University's new Northwest Corner interdisciplinary research building, by New York City Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky, Columbia University Senior Executive Vice President Robert Kasdin, NYU-Poly President Jerry M. Hultin, CUNY Vice Chancellor for Research Gillian Small, IBM Senior Researcher Dr. Jane Snowdon and Trinity Real Estate President Jason Pizer.

"We will never meet the ambitious carbon reduction goals in PlaNYC unless we reduce the emissions from New York's one million existing buildings," said Mayor Bloomberg. "By bringing together New York City's business innovators, academics and building owners, the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center will capitalize on some of our City's greatest strengths, creating jobs and helping realize our vision of a greener, greater New York."

The NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center will promote the development of New York City's green building technology in three ways. First, it will provide companies with opportunities in buildings to test their innovations in operational buildings, which will help them improve their prod-



Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg

ucts as well as collect data on their performance, both keys to marketing their products. In exchange, participating building owners would be eligible to employ the technologies at discounted rates. Second, it will develop an information and data clearinghouse to track building technology costs, benefits, and lessons learned from deployments underway throughout the City. Third, it will host stakeholder discussions with private sector and academic institutions on green building entrepreneurship, financing and City-specific challenges.

Columbia University's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science through its Center for Technology, Innovation, and Community Engagement will manage and operate the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center. The New York City Economic Development Corporation will provide \$250,000 to help establish it, and Columbia, NYU-Poly and CUNY will provide upwards of \$500,000 worth of resources, including staff to develop the program, build the database and conduct corporate outreach. The Center will develop a sponsorship and membership structure whereby technology companies and building owners can join at various levels ranging from \$1,000 a year to \$50,000 a year. A variety of potential members, including building owners, technology companies, and other stakeholders such as utilities, financial institutions, contractors, design firms, and nonprofit organizations, have already expressed an interest in joining. The Center will seek

additional sponsors to support the expansion of its activities.

"The NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center is the latest example of our strategy to work together with the academic world and the private sector to promote innovation and spur job creation," said Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert K. Steel. "The new Center will leverage New York City's unique physical attributes, help advance our environmental objectives and support a local industry with high-growth potential."

"This initiative demonstrates our commitment to building the green economy while simultaneously ensuring the sustainability of our City," said NYCEDC President Pinsky. "Through its collection of crucial performance data and its support for cutting-edge research in the City's labs, the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center will help ensure that New York moves to the forefront in the field of clean building technology in the years to come."

"New York City's building and energy codes, enacted by the City Council as the Greater, Greener Buildings plan in 2009, will require more energy efficiency and save money for property owners, but public policy needs to work hand-in-hand with private initiative if we're all going to achieve the maximum benefits," said David Bragdon, Director of the Mayor's Office of Long-term Planning and Sustainability. "Today's partnership of city government, academic research institutions, and private industry will provide more ways to fulfill the environmental and economic possibilities of a greater, greener New York."

"By facilitating fresh ideas and producing real-world results, the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center will help more property owners and builders recognize the advantages of installing new green technologies," said Department of Buildings Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri. "This exciting collaboration among academic, industry and government experts will certainly encourage more green building and help improve the quality of life for New Yorkers throughout the City."

"Mayor Bloomberg has made New York's environmental sustainability a priority for ensuring a vibrant economy, public health and quality of life in the decades to come. His administra-

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## NYC Pension Funds are urged to report political contributions

New York City Comptroller John C. Liu and the NYC Pension Funds called on six companies to publicly disclose their political contributions on the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.

"The Supreme Court may have given corporations free rein to mix our money into politics, but the shareholders whose pensions are invested with those firms have ev-

ery right to know where that money is being spent," Comptroller Liu said. "Corporate activity in politics raises troubling questions for shareholders. Full disclosure of political activity is the only remedy to hold management accountable to shareholders."

The shareholder proposal was sent to Charles Schwab Corp. (NYSE: SCHW), Coventry Health Care (NYSE: CVH), DTE Energy Co. (NYSE: DTE), Regions Financial (NYSE: RF), Sprint Nextel Corp. (NYSE:



Comptroller John C. Liu

S), and WellCare Health Plan, Inc. (NYSE: WCG).

"Pension funds and shareholders need to demand accountability and transparency when corporations they invest in engage in political spending," said New York City Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, who is a member of the board of the New York City Employees' Retirement System. "Working with pension funds here in New York and nationwide we can continue to get corporations to reject the

political activities afforded them by *Citizens United*."

Railroad and transportation corporation Norfolk Southern recently agreed to a strong political disclosure policy after receiving shareholder proposals on the issue from the NYC Pension Funds in 2009 and 2010. Norfolk Southern will not only disclose its political contributions, but will state on its website when the company disagrees with political efforts supported by

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## Woman pleads for mercy in baby kidnapping case

By J. Zamgba Browne  
Special to NY Beacon

Ann Pettway who was nabbed this week in connection with the 1987 kidnapping of a 19-day-old infant from Harlem Hospital is seeking mercy, but the victim, Carlina White and her family are in no hurry to oblige.

Carlina's parents, Carl Tyson and Joy White said as far as they are concerned, Pettyway can rot in jail. "How can you forgive something like this? It's hard to forgive," said Carlina's mother.

In papers filed in Manhattan Federal Court on Monday, Pettway pleaded for understanding. "I suffered a number of miscarriages and really wanted a child of my own," said Pettyway in court papers.

After federal agents started to close-in on Pettyway she turned herself in to authorities shortly after Carlina was joined by her biological parents.

After stealing the infant, authorities said Pettyway boarded a train with the child for Bridgeport, Conn. She later convinced friends and relatives that Carlina was her child, although some of them remained skeptical.

Pettyway reportedly began to experience problems when she tried to make false birth certificate for the infant whom she named Nejdra Nance. But years later, when Pettyway without realizing that she was headed for trouble bust her secret wide open.

When Carlina became pregnant

and needed her birth certificate, Pettyway told her there was none because she was not her biological mother and that she had gotten her from another woman whom she identified as a drug addict.

This admission on the part of Pettyway propelled Carlina into action. She figured out that she may have been abducted. She later came across photos of herself as an infant on a missing children registry.

Carlina immediately made contract with the appropriate authorities and a DNA was taken which confirmed that she was indeed not Pettyway's child, but that of Carl Tyson and Joy White of the Bronx.

Authorities said that when Carlina was 19 days old, she developed fever and her parents took her to Harlem Hospital for treatment. It was at the hospital that Pettyway, disguised as a nurse, made a clean getaway with the infant to Bridgeport, Conn.

Now 23 years old, Carlina who has a child of her own and was living in Atlanta, Ga. when it was established that she had been kidnapped as a child, is temporarily living in the Bronx with her biological parents.

But her dad, Tyson thinks it might not be easy on her. "She hasn't been with us for 23 years, I know she wants to unite with us but she has had this other family all these years," said Tyson.

No date had been set for a hearing on the case as the New York Beacon went to print on Wednesday morning.



STATE OF THE UNION — U.S. President Barack Obama makes a point during his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, January 25, 2011. Also seen are U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Speaker of the House John Boehner.

## Obama hits road to reinforce his competitiveness message

A day after his State of the Union speech deemed by most Americans as uplifting and reassuring President Barack set out Wednesday to build momentum for his revamped economic message, calling for a new era of American competitiveness during a stop in Wisconsin, a state that will be critical to his reelection prospects.

Obama reinforced his primetime argument that the U.S. has to step up its investments in innovation and infrastructure in order to compete in the global economy and create jobs at home.

"We're going to need to go all in. We're going to need to get serious about winning the future," Obama said during a stop at Orion Energy Systems, a power technology company in the small town of

Manitowoc.

The president is calling it a new Sputnik moment, like the one in the 1950s when the Soviet Union beat the U.S. by sending a satellite into space. The challenge resonated in Manitowoc, a small city on the shores of Lake Michigan known best as the place where a 20-pound chunk of the Sputnik satellite crashed in 1962.

The stop was the first of three factory visits Obama was to make here in northern Wisconsin. He pitched forward, looking to highlight ways businesses like Orion would benefit from the proposals he outlined in Tuesday's address, including fresh investments in clean energy, research and technology.

Still seeking to convince Ameri-

cans that some of the unpopular economic decisions he made during the first two years of his administration were necessary, Obama also argued that those policies were responsible for the recovery that's begun to take hold.

"New manufacturing plants, and new hopes, are taking root, part of the reason the unemployment rate here is four points lower than it was at the beginning of last year," Obama said.

Obama's stop in Wisconsin, likely a key battleground state in 2012, underscored just how quickly the White House is refocusing on the president's fast-approaching reelection campaign. Though Obama won Wisconsin in 2008, the state turned sharply to the right during last year's November elections.



Ann Pettway

## President of Côte d'Ivoire deplures election double-standard

By George E. Curry  
NNPA Special Correspondent  
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ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire — Laurent Gbagbo, the embattled president of Côte d'Ivoire, more popularly known as the Ivory Coast, says President Barack Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and other western leaders should stop questioning the legitimacy of his re-election and accord the West African

country the same respect the United States was given in the controversial 2000 presidential election contest between Al Gore and George W. Bush.

In an exclusive videotaped interview in his presidential residence, Gbagbo said: "You in the United States, in 2000, you had an election dispute between Al Gore and George W. Bush. They did a recount of the votes. Did we go get the NATO forces to come and attack America and impose democracy on America? This is a post-electoral dis-



President Laurent Gbagbo

pute. That's why I'm [suspicious of] all those countries who are rushing in to condemn us. I don't trust them."

In three separate rulings, the U.S. Supreme Court halted the recounting of ballots in the race between Bush and Gore, allowing Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris' certification of Bush as the winner to stand. Bush's victory in Florida gave him 25 electoral votes, allowing him to defeat Gore 271 electoral votes to 266.

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Shasha (left) and her big sister Malia

## Shasha greets visiting Hu in flawless Chinese

By J. Zamgba Browne  
Special to NY Beacon

Sasha, President Obama's nine-year-old daughter always wanted to practice her skills in speaking Chinese and when the opportunity presented itself she didn't hesitate to make good use of it.

She used the White House visit by China's Prime Minister Hu Jintao to practice. Sasha actually engaged the visiting guest to demonstrate the skills she learned at Sidwell lower School in Bethesda, Md.

Prime Minister Hu appeared amused as he recounted the story of the exchange he had with the second grader following the state dinner hosted in his honor by the

President and Mrs. Obama.

Sasha attended Hu's welcoming ceremony on the White House lawn with her friends and could be seen waving a Chinese flag excitedly as her father and Hu walked around the grounds.

The two presidents paused to visit when they reached Sasha and her pals behind the rope line. "Not every child has the opportunity to try out his or her first phrases of Chinese with the president of China, but Sasha had that chance," said Ben Rhodes, White House deputy national security.

Rhodes said the anecdote illustrated Americans' desire to get to know China better with more people studying the country and doing business there.

## Congress is urged to fulfill intent of 1968 gun law, fix check system

The bi-partisan coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, led by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, was joined by Martin Luther King III and dozens of survivors and family members of gun violence victims to launch a national campaign urging Congress to take two simple but critical steps to fix our nation's broken background check system: 1) fulfill the letter of the historic 1968 gun law and ensure that all names of people prohibited from buying a gun are in the background check system; and 2) fulfill the intent of the historic 1968 gun law by subjecting every gun sale to a background check.

"The time has clearly come to finally fulfill the intent of the common sense gun law passed after the 1968 assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, by creating a loophole-free background check system for the sale of firearms," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Every day, 34 Americans are murdered with guns – and most of them are purchased or possessed illegally."

"There are those who fail to truly read the 2nd amendment," said Mayor Menino. "They ignore the need for a common sense approach to guns in our communities. The best way to respond to the heinous acts of violence we have seen in our nation's history is to prevent them from ever happening again. Lax screening in response to these tragic shootings is no virtue."

"For decades we have tolerated senseless gun violence, which has struck down too many of our fellow citizens, particularly our young people," said Martin Luther King III, president and CEO of the King Center. "If we want to create a nonviolent society, we

must enforce our public safety laws to keep the angry and dangerous few from destroying the peace and harmony of the many. I wholeheartedly join Mayor Bloomberg in calling on the President and Congress to finally deliver on the long unfilled promise to make sure that every gun buyer passes a background check. It is unconscionable to do anything less."

"President Kennedy and Senator Robert Kennedy, my uncle and my father, dedicated their lives to serving their country," said Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland and eldest child of Robert F. Kennedy. "But because of assassins armed with guns, they both made the ultimate sacrifice, and their lives of service were cut short. The 34 Americans whose lives are cut short by a gun each day may not be presidents or senators, but each life is a future cut short, a life of accomplishments left undone, and a family torn apart. We owe a duty to each victim to make their life, and their sacrifice, a part of the national movement to fix our gun background check system so it is thorough, complete and comprehensive."

"We've learned from recent shootings that it is vital that the federal gun background check system have accurate and complete information on people prohibited from possessing firearms," said former Attorney General Michael Mukasey. "President Bush supported and Congress passed a piece of the necessary reform in 2007 after Virginia Tech, and it has had a significant impact by more than tripling the number of mental health records in the system. But it is clear, particularly after Tucson, that it was just one

step on a longer path toward the effective and comprehensive background check system we need. I applaud America's mayors for their efforts to build a better system."

"As Governor of Vermont, I received an A-rating from the NRA and I strongly support the right of law-abiding Americans to own a gun," said Howard Dean. "I also believe with equal strength that felons, drug abusers, and the mentally ill have no right to guns. In fact, that's been the law in our country for 43 years since the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy. What we need now is a background check system that works to enforce the law – one that ensures that every record is in the system that belongs there and that every gun buyer goes through a background check. I stand with America's mayors in their effort to make the system work."

In 1968, after the assassinations of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Congress, at the urging of President Johnson, passed a law establishing the common-sense concept that certain categories of people including convicted felons, the mentally ill, and known drug abusers should not be allowed to possess or purchase guns.

Because no system was created for actually translating its intent into reality, the effectiveness of the 1968 act was undermined. It was not until 1993, when President Clinton signed the Brady Bill, that a national instant background check system, designed to prevent mentally unbalanced people from obtaining firearms, was created to help enforce the 1968 law.

It has become clear that the Brady Bill was not enough to fulfill the intent of the historic 1968 gun law. The

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## Bernice King declines presidency of SCLC

By J. Zamgba Browne  
Special to NY Beacon

The Rev. Bernice King, daughter of slain civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has declined the presidency of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) which was established by her father founded.

Rev. King was elected in October 2009 to lead the organization and was to be the first woman to hold the post. But reports said soon after, the SCLC's chairman and treasurer was accused of financial mismanagement, bitter fighting among the group's leadership erupted that landed the split factions in court.

Sources close to the organization said Rev. King had hoped to reinvigorate the SCLC by expanding the group's reach to more women and a younger generation. However, she remained silent as the group's troubles escalated.

Rev. King was quoted as saying she was excited about leading the organization and had looked forward to taking the helm of the SCLC. But in the end, she

and the group's leadership couldn't agree on a number of issues.

"In light of that, and attempts on several occasions to try to reach out and dialogue, this is where I have landed," said Rev. King. "Essentially, I knew that I was not going to be merely a figurehead, so I had to make a critical decision," she added.

Her decision now leaves the organization facing an uncertain future without a leader, but Rev. King reportedly stopped short of saying the SCLC should disband.

"I think that's a decision that has to be made by those within the organization," said Rev. King. "They have chapters around the country that hold the name SCLC and they are doing different kinds of work in their communities," she added.

Rev. King underscored that these groups have an opportunity to decide and redefine how they want to be projected in the public. "I think what has happened with the SCLC is unfortunate, and I continue to pray for its resurrection and growth," she continued.

Andrew Young, a top aide Dr.



Bernice King

King said the departure of Rev. King from the organization is great.

"I saw this as a lost cause a long time ago," said Young. "I tried to get Bernice to see when she wanted to revive it and it wasn't worth wasting her talents on, that we needed to let it go. That doesn't mean that there is no work to be done," he added.

Young pointed out that in the span of roughly a decade, the SCLC under Dr. King's leadership ended segregation of public facilities, gained equal access to the ballot box for millions of disenfranchised Blacks, and was the moral voice that spoke out against poverty, racism and war.

"SCLC did its work well," said Young. "But it was never any law that said we all had to stay together for the rest of our lives. I don't believe in keeping organizations alive just for the sake of the name," he declared.

The group's former chair, the Rev. Raleigh Trammel – the subject of the federal and internal investigation was indicted last week on charges including grand theft involving a meal program for low-income seniors in southwest Ohio.

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# 6 Letters from Thurgood: Segregation is un-American, too

By Kenneth J. Cooper  
Special to the NNPA from  
thedefendersonline.com

As the Cold War with the former Soviet Union unfolded, Congressional investigators hunted for Communists in the American film industry, a search best exemplified by the "Hollywood Ten" case. A federal grand jury indicted ten writers, producers and directors in 1947 for contempt of Congress for refusing to tell the House Un-American Activities Committee whether they were members of the Communist Party. They were convicted and imprisoned for as long as a year.

Thurgood Marshall, the first Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), Inc., had a different idea about what kind of "subversive" activities the committee and its predecessor were actually trying to stamp out in investigating Hollywood. Over the objections of the NAACP-LDF board, Marshall filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the convicted men's appeal, arguing "the writers involved were those among the writers in Hollywood who had been most friendly to Negroes."

The italics appear in his original letter to Walter White, the NAACP's secretary, and is reprinted in a new collection of Marshall's correspondence, *Marshaling Justice: The Early Civil Rights Letters of Thurgood Marshall*, edited by Michael G. Long. At the time of Marshall's letter, LDF was still a part of the NAACP, making White at least nominally his boss. LDF became a separate entity in 1957.

"Of course, there are others in Hollywood, like some actresses, such as Bette Davis, and some producers, such as Walter Wagner, who claim to be friends of the Negro, or something of that sort, but I have yet to see anything that any of them have done for Negroes, and I have yet to see where any of them have made any contributions to the cause, even for the purpose of getting tax exemptions," Marshall wrote in the Dec. 20, 1948 letter. "On the other hand, the writers in this case have taken

the position in their actual work in Hollywood in writing scripts of giving the Negro as fair a break as they could possibly do."

White and the LDF board feared that defending the suspected Communists would taint the civil rights organization with red, reducing public support and fundraising. It was a sensitive issue at the time, in part because Communists did infiltrate some local branches of the NAACP. Marshall vigorously opposed those stealth efforts because, in his view, Communists were trying to use Black Americans to advance a cause different from their own.

But, Marshall believed Black interests were at stake in the Hollywood Ten case and cited independent evidence to back his stance.

"It is not unworthy of notice that as long as Hollywood was producing the regular run-of-the-mill of anti-Semitic, anti-Negro pictures, led by the Birth of a Nation, the Un-American Activities Committee was not interested in investigating 'communism in Hollywood,'" Marshall wrote. "It should also be noted that the greatest impetus to the investigation of communism in Hollywood came shortly after pictures such as Gentleman's Agreement and the few pictures in which the Negro was given any semblance of decency. Perhaps there is no connection in fact, but there is an undisputed connection in timing.

"On the question of timing," he continued, "it should also be noted that immediately after the Hollywood writers were cited for contempt, the Hollywood producers had every script in production and ready for production checked as to references to Negroes, and all decent references to Negroes were stricken from the scripts. This is not hearsay but comes from a confidential report from an investigator for Time magazine." White was not pleased when he learned the independent-minded Marshall had filed a brief in the case, despite the NAACP-LDF board's vote to stay out of it.

"Is it true that the NAACP filed a brief amicus in the Hollywood Ten case?"



Thurgood Marshall

an irritated White opened a Nov. 16, 1949 letter to Marshall.

Because three Communist front groups had also filed briefs, White argued that defending the Hollywood Ten "has done us no good." He said other Hollywood types resented that Marshall had identified the 10 "as the only ones who have worked" for the "more decent picturization of the Negro on the screen." White's assessment was that, except for a few speeches made by one, Dalton Trumbo, "all the accused have rendered only lip service while non-Communists have made pictures like *Home of the Brave*, *Lost Boundaries*, *Intruders in the Dust*, *Pink* and other pictures and documentaries already made or to be made."

Marshall's defiance in filing the brief, White wrote, "has materially lessened the influence of the NAACP in Hollywood." Long, editor of "Marshaling Justice," says in a note that Marshall ignored White's contention that he had violated a board decision.

Besides Trumbo, the members of the Hollywood Ten were Alvah Bessie, Herbert Biberman, Lester Cole, Edward Dmytryk, Ring Lardner Jr., John Howard Lawson, Albert Maltz, Samuel Ornitz and Adrian Scott.

In 1947, Marshall had sent a memo to Roy Wilkins, then White's assistant, citing revisions in two unidentified scripts to back his assertion that the House committee's "interpretation of 'communist propaganda'

is anything in opposition to the status quo of the country as demonstrated by the well-known stereotypes " about Black people.

In the first example, Marshall wrote on Oct. 30, 1947 that one script initially contained "a line providing for a white actress to call a Negro actress 'Mrs. Bigby.' This has been changed so that the Negro actress will be called by her first name."

In the second instance, "a white actress, in talking to a Negro actor at a race track, asked him to give her the name of a horse to bet on, and he was to reply very politely, 'Madam, I do not know anything about horse racing or gambling.' This line has been struck out entirely."

Starting at least in 1940, Marshall had other ideas about what kind of "subversive activities" the predecessor to House Un-American Activities Committee, then known by the last name of its chairman, Texas Representative Martin Dies, Jr., ought to be investigating. As the panel prepared for hearings in Dallas, Marshall wrote to Dies, a Democrat, to suggest expanding its probe beyond alleged Communists to perpetrators of racial violence in the city against a Black juror who was assaulted in the county courthouse and homeowners who had moved into previously all-White neighborhoods.

"We strongly urge that this investigation include the activities of the Ku Klux Klan and other groups active in Dallas County," Marshall wrote on Sept. 27, 1940. "If your committee proposes to hold hearings in Dallas and is sincere in its efforts to investigate 'subversive' activities, it seems that it should investigate the brazen invasion of the constitutional rights of Negro citizens by certain groups in Dallas."

Long, the book's editor, does not indicate whether Dies responded and, if he did, what if anything the committee chairman said about Marshall's recommendation to turn the investigative power of Congress on a resurgent Ku Klux Klan.

*Kenneth J. Cooper, a Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, is a freelancer based in Boston. He also edits the Trotter Review at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.*

## Over 450,000 CUNY students facing mid-year tuition hikes

Are the never-ending state and city budget cuts to higher education pushing students and CUNY to the limit?

According to a recent survey by Sally Mae, parents devote 37% of their income and savings to pay for college expenses, a situation that is further exacerbated in New York by the extremely high cost of living in addition to tuition costs.

The majority of CUNY students come from very low-in-

come families, more than 60% of students at the community colleges and 46% of students attending the senior colleges come from households earning less than \$30,000 a year, and the 5% tuition increase in Spring 2011, coupled with the anticipated 2% increase in Fall 2011 could be the straw that broke the camel's back.

Reeling from a four million mid-year budget cut from the Mayor, with further cuts on the way, CUNY has lost nearly a

quarter of a billion dollars in public funds over the past three years. This hearing analyzed how the tuition increase will further exacerbate CUNY's extremely high dropout rates and how they will affect the surging enrollment which is putting CUNY beyond capacity.

"Governor Cuomo said in his inauguration speech: no new taxes or fees. Yet just several weeks later, students at CUNY started a new semester with an additional

\$115 dollars in tuition bills for students at the senior colleges at \$75 dollars extra at the community colleges, a 5% increase, with more increases on the way. These increases come at a time of rising financial hardship for many of New York City's families. The cost of living has been steadily on the rise, particularly in regards to rent and transportation.

Accordingly, decisions that affect the ability of

these young people to achieve economic success through their education at CUNY must be taken with the most careful consideration," said Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.

"CUNY's budget proposal is right not to accept further scarcity for CUNY – but wrong to visit that scarcity on students rather than insisting on higher funding from the state," said Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress.

“I definitely thought  
this only happened  
in movies.

# I still can't believe I won!”

-Nordstrom Scholarship Recipient



Shade Akinmorin,  
Burlington County  
Institute of Technology



Chad Coviel,  
Science Park High School



Ivelisse Tirado,  
Science Park High School



Omaru Washington,  
Science Park High School



Sara Torres,  
Science Park High School

## NORDSTROM SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AWARD WINNERS

At Nordstrom, we believe helping young people in the pursuit of their academic goals is an exciting investment in our future. With this in mind, we are proud to present this year's winners of the Nordstrom Scholarship program. These five remarkable students from New Jersey have been chosen to receive scholarships based on academic achievements, community service, school involvement and financial need. Each will receive a \$10,000 scholarship to a four-year accredited college of their choice. More information for the 2011 school year is available at [nordstrom.com/scholarship](http://nordstrom.com/scholarship).

# NORDSTROM

# Editorial

## New York Beacon

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

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

William Egyir: *Managing Editor*

### News reports do not mirror reality in Côte d'Ivoire

By George E. Curry  
*NNPA Columnist*

According to news accounts, Côte d'Ivoire is a tense, unsafe paralyzed West African country because of a contested presidential election in which incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo refuses to cede his office to Alassane Ouattara, whom the international community – especially France and the U.S. – has proclaimed the winner of the recent presidential election.

There are almost daily reports that the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is drawing up military plans to invade the country and drive Gbagbo from his regal presidential palace. On Dec. 19, the U.S. State Department issued an advisory stating: "This Travel Warning is being issued to inform U.S. citizens that based on the deteriorating political and security situation in Côte d'Ivoire and growing anti-western sentiment, the Department of State has now ordered the departure of all non-emergency personnel and family members. The Department warns U.S. citizens to avoid travel to Côte d'Ivoire until further notice." Charles Steele, Jr., a childhood friend and former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and I were invited to visit Côte d'Ivoire by an African support group based in Paris. Our association with them began after Jean-Paul Guerlain, former president of the perfume company that bears his family's name, made an offensive comment last October 15 on French television. Recalling a conversation he had with his wife,

Guerlain said: "One day I told her – and I still called her Madame – 'What would seduce you if one was to make a perfume for you?' and she told me, 'I love jasmine, rose, and sandalwood.' And for once I started working like a n— —. I don't know if n— ever worked that hard." A coalition of activists called "no to Guerlain! No to negrophobia" began weekly protests in front of one of Guerlain's boutiques to protest the comment and to demand a fuller apology from the perfume firm and its parent company, Hennessy-Louis Vuitton (LVMH).

Patrick Lozes, president of the Paris-based Council of Black Associations in France (CRAN), asked Al Sharpton to meet with company officials in Paris. Sharpton couldn't work the meeting into his schedule, but asked Steele and me to go in his place.

After meeting separately with the protesters and company officials, we were able to broker a settlement that ended the public protests and brought both sides together to work on an expanded diversity initiative for LVMH. When we were invited to visit Côte d'Ivoire by some members of the Paris collective to get a first-hand view of conditions there, we accepted.

Charles Steele, who is more of an optimist than I am, saw this as a possible opportunity to repeat our success in Paris. But, after reading about the African leaders who had tried to arrange a truce, I did not share my homeboy's unbridled optimism. At best, I thought, we would be able to observe events in Côte d'Ivoire for ourselves and draw our own conclusions.

Air France Flight #27 from

Washington's Dulles Airport to Paris' Charles DeGaulle Airport on Jan. 7 – exactly a month after we had first met with LVMH officials in Paris – had just lifted off when a flight attendant offered me a dozen or so newspapers, most of them written in French. I selected the Washington Post, the European edition of the Wall Street Journal and USA Today and reclined in seat 3L for what I thought would be an uneventful flight to Paris, where I would stay overnight before heading to Abidjan. A four-paragraph Associated Press story in USA Today shattered that expectation.

Under the headline, "U.S. hits Gbagbo with broad sanctions," it began: "The Obama administration imposed wide-ranging sanctions on Ivory Coast's Laurent Gbagbo and members of his inner circle as punishment for his refusal to step down after his defeat in November's presidential election."

It continued, "The sanctions bar U.S. citizens from doing business with Gbagbo; his wife, Simone Gbagbo; and allies Desire Tagro, Pascal Affi N'Guessan and Alcide Ilahiri Djedje. Any assets they have in the United States are frozen."

For the first time, I seriously thought about the prospect of our being in physical danger. If things were as bad as they were saying, I thought, maybe it wasn't too late to back out. But, the journalist in me and the fact that I had given my word to the activists in Paris propelled me to continue the trip. Charles, now an Atlanta businessman, met me in Paris and the

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### Gasoline prices — Here we go again

By James Clingman  
*Blackonomics*

Depending on where you live, if you drive something other than an electric automobile, you are feeling the results of rising oil prices, and subsequent gasoline prices. Haven't we been at this place before? Didn't we complain and moan about the high price of gas a couple of years ago? We even organized "Gas Out Day" in an effort to get lower prices at the pump. What happened? Why are we back at the same place once again so soon? Excuses abound for the latest rip-off of consumers by...hmmm, I wonder whom – or what. Some attribute escalating gasoline prices to simple supply and demand; others say it's the OPEC oil cartel; still others blame the speculators who bet on future oil prices; some say it's government taxes levied on each gallon we purchase; and a few "insiders" say it's all in the hands of the IMF and the World Bank. Whoever or whatever it is, I know it's sure taking a chunk out of my pocket. How about you? What's the little guy to do? Is there no answer, no way to ease the pain at the pump? Of course, we can always find ways to drive less and make sure we are not frivolously taking "old Betsy" out for a spin; you know, like our parents did in the "good old days" when gas was 30 cents a gallon. Conservation will surely decrease demand, but will that bring the price down, per basic economics, as we have been taught in school? Some say, "Absolutely not."

If there is a hidden hand controlling oil and gas prices, and there probably is, the little people have virtually no chance of impacting prices. You know how greedy those hidden hand folks are – they used to want billions, but now it's trillions in profits.

Back to solutions. Conservation is definitely within our personal control. Then there is collective leverage through an affinity program of some kind. Maybe local groups can organize thousands of consumers and make a commitment to purchase gas from a few selected stations, that is, if

those stations offer some kind of group discount. Organizations like the Collective Empowerment Group, headquartered in Prince Georges County Maryland, could lead the way.

I have said before: If gas prices are too high, just increase the supply. How? By refusing to patronize certain brands or stations, on a local level, those stations will surely have a greater supply on hand and will more than likely be a bit more amenable to offering better prices per gallon.

Gotta sell that stuff to somebody. In Great Britain it takes about 70 pounds to fill up the average gas tank. Convert that to U.S. dollars and it's about \$112.00. Looks like we may be headed that way, folks. Are you ready? You better hurry up and buy yourself a bicycle or a moped or something more economical.

The bottom-line is this: Somebody out there is manipulating the price of oil. The good news is that big bad China is making a move that will at least curtail our fuel demise in the short run. A recent report disclosed that China is taking actions that will lower the price of oil on the world market. It reported, "Crude prices dropped early in the day, slumping after reports from China that the government was taking more steps to discourage risky bank lending."

"China is one of the largest oil consumers in the world, but a recent crackdown on bank lending has raised fears that China's economic recovery — and its appetite for oil — could falter," the report continued. It just goes to show you what collective leverage is all about.

Yes, we are being ripped off and, knowing that, what sacrifices are we willing to make to respond to it? This is a personal decision we all must make, and then we must be disciplined enough to follow through on whatever solution we pursue. The oil thieves count on us to just whine and complain, and then go to the gas pump to fill up. Maybe \$5.00 per gallon gas will change our complacency into creativity when it comes to how much we spend on gasoline, as well as where we spend our dollars.

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## Reagan was no friend of Blacks

Earl Ofari Hutchinson

It is no surprise that former President Reagan's son, conservative political consultant Michael Reagan would add his unabashed and wildly inaccurate historical revisionism about Reagan with his absolutely ridiculous assertion in a *Fox News* op-ed piece that dad, Reagan was a "better friend of blacks" than Presi-

dent Obama. Normally that would be the cause for hysterical laughter except that that fits in with the inevitable sanitizing of former President Reagan's image and legacy as the nation approaches the centennial commemoration of Reagan's birth in February.

Race is exactly the one issue that Mike can make absolutely no claim to truth about Reagan on. Reagan and Reagan

officials waged a by now well-documented open war against civil rights leaders and did everything politically possible to roll back civil rights gains during his eight years in office. That war began months before he took office. At his now infamous presidential kick-off campaign rally at Neshoba, Mississippi in 1980, held virtually a stone throw from where the three civil rights

workers were murdered in 1964, Reagan shouted to a lily white crowd that "I believe in states' rights." He laced his campaign speech with stock racial code words and phrases, blasting welfare, big government, federal intrusion in state affairs, and rampant federal spending. The message was that if elected he'd not only say and do as little as possible to offend the white South, but actively undermine

civil rights. At his first press conference the week after his inauguration, Reagan lashed out at affirmative action programs. He told reporters, "I'm old enough to remember when quotas existed in the United States for purposes of discrimination and I don't want to see that again."

That was just the start. During the 1980 presidential cam-

# Opinion

## Is there really a deficit crisis?

By Julianne Malveaux  
NNPA Columnist

In the wake of the State of the Union Address there is likely to be much partisan conversation about the direction of our nation. President Obama will address the economy and jobs, and Republicans will talk about the health of the economy, and about cutting budgets in their rebuttal.

Citing growing deficits, both parties are concerned that spending is out of control. Yet some spending is absolutely needed to create jobs, just as \$700 billion of spending was needed to bail out banks. It intrigues me that the same folk who eagerly bailed banks out have now suddenly discovered the concept of budget cuts and are pushing them, even as they have added to the deficit by insisting on extending Bush tax cuts.

President Obama has furthered the notion that there is a budget crisis by appointing Erskine Bowles and Alan

Simpson to make suggestions to manage the federal budget deficit.

The Bowles/Simpson commission would trim about \$4 trillion from the federal budget in the next decade by increasing the Social Security retirement age, freezing federal pay, leveling Pentagon spending, and making other cost-cutting suggestions.

There were 18 people on the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, and 14 had to approve the suggestions for them to be accepted, but only 11 went along with some of the draconian plans that were announced, so the suggestions are only suggestions.

It is important to raise questions about the nature of the deficit crisis. Is this a cyclical crisis, connected to the economic downturn? Is it more structural, something that would have occurred without the downturn? How should it be managed, and will there be equal pain around curtailing the deficit, or will only one or two sectors pay for the challenges the deficit creates.

For example, there has been talk of raising the social security retirement age for years, and always we have looked at an across the board age increase, whether workers are high income or low, whether they have pensions or not, whether their work is physical or not. It's entirely different to ask a professor to work until 70 than it is to ask a waitress to do so, but these plans increase the social security retirement age do not seem to take these things into consideration, thus continuing a class based economic inequality that also creates racial inequality. Is this our goal? To widen gaps instead of narrowing them? Increasing the social security retirement age indiscriminately will do this.

Similarly, the attack on federal employees is an attack that has a differential impact by race and gender. Women and people of color are both more likely to be employed by the federal government, but also more likely to get more equal pay in the

public sector than in the private sector. United for a Fair Economy released their annual State of the Dream report last week. Entitled, Austerity for Whom, the report explores the ways that so-called budget cutting measures actually hit women and people of color more severely.

White women earn 82 cents for every dollar White men earn in the public sector, compared to 71 cents in the private sector. Black men earn 80 cents to the White male dollar in the public sector, but a scant 57 cents for every dollar in the private sector. Black women earn 73 cents to the White male dollar in the public sector, but 56 cents in the private sector. Latino men earn 86 cents to the White male dollar in the public sector, but just 48 cents to the dollar, while Latina women earn 71 cents to the dollar in the public sector, but just 46 to the White male dollar in the private sector.

The solution may not be to maintain a large public workforce, but any solution will

include an awareness of these differences and, perhaps, a strong Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce anti-discrimination laws. Who wants to bet that the EEOC will be another of the budget cutting casualties? In an anti-regulatory climate, the combination of federal employment cuts, and an indifference to enforcement of anti-discrimination laws is designed to increase the racial unemployment gap.

It makes sense that the deficit should rise during an employment crisis. While we should be careful with our resources, we should certainly not cut budget and federally funded opportunities significantly in a recession. The so-called deficit crisis could be a more complex crisis, if we don't put people back to work, no matter what it costs.

*Dr. Julianne Malveaux is president of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, NC. Her latest book, Surviving and Thriving: 365 Facts in Black Economic History can be ordered at [www.lastwordprod.com](http://www.lastwordprod.com).*

## Nuclear Energy: An economic lifeline for local communities

Special to the NNPA from the  
Washington Informer

The latest unemployment numbers reveal that African Americans seeking work still are among the hardest hit by the economic downturn. The 16 percent unemployment rate among African Americans hovers around a 25-year high, and remains six percentage points above the national average.

With unemployment concerns top of mind, leaders in the African-American community are joining President Obama in calling for additional federal support for new job opportunities in the clean energy sector, including nuclear energy. This fast-growing sector offers the promise of thousands of well-paying, long-term jobs in communities across the United States.

There is a broad coalition ready to support nuclear expansion and leverage the benefits derived from more nuclear energy plants. We recently joined more than 50 leaders from business and academia from within the Hispanic and African-American communities along with labor and industry representatives to focus on how safe, reliable nuclear energy facilities can benefit minority communities.

The open dialogue, hosted in Washington D.C. by the Clean and Safe Energy (CASEnergy) Coalition, focused on

workforce development, educational partnerships, and supplier opportunities for minority communities and businesses.

Such a discussion is timely given continued trends in unemployment. Unlike many sectors that are contracting, there are numerous employment opportunities available in the energy sector, especially in nuclear energy. During the past few years, more than 15,000 new jobs have been created in anticipation of building new nuclear projects around the country. These jobs are well-paying, with university, community college, and labor training programs that are preparing the next-generation workforce in many disciplines. Clearly, there is an increasing need for long-term partnerships between business, labor, and minority groups to best leverage these job opportunities.

Nuclear energy is an economic success story – a story all Americans should be part of. One of the great values of nuclear energy is its ability to transform communities with new jobs and economic development. The 104 reactors in operation around the country each contributes an average of \$430 million a year in total economic output for their local communities. That money comes in salaries, materials, and state and local taxes for better schools, roads, hospitals, and other infrastructure.

Each plant requires 400 to 700 workers to run it. Additional

training for some of those jobs can take as little as two years, with the prospect of an immediate payoff. Average annual starting salaries in the industry range from \$65,000 to \$80,000. What's more, unlike many positions in today's economy, jobs at nuclear plants can't be shipped overseas.

And, the nuclear energy industry is hiring now: nearly 40 percent of the nuclear energy workforce will be eligible to retire during the next five years, meaning the industry will need to hire as many as 20,000 workers to replace those that leave.

New jobs in the nuclear energy sector are available to minority communities through the pursuit of the workforce training and feeder programs available at historically Black institutions such as Clark Atlanta University and South Carolina State University. Industry and labor strive for a diverse workforce and supplier network, and programs are in place to help achieve this goal. These are the jobs of the future, powered by a clean energy portfolio, as nuclear power combines with emerging energy alternatives such as solar and wind to produce power that our digital economy demands.

And, because nuclear power plants generate virtually no air pollution, the communi-

ties around them don't have to trade air quality for jobs. According to a report released by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in 2004, more than 70 percent of African Americans live in counties in violation of federal air pollution standards. But, because nuclear plants emit no greenhouse gases or air pollution during the production of electricity, they can produce jobs and energy while protecting our air quality.

The economic and environmental benefits of nuclear power are important to note when considering policies to support a clean energy future. First, as the cleanest form of 24/7 baseload power, nuclear energy is needed to responsibly meet our rising electricity demand—forecasted to grow by 28 percent by 2035. Second, as part of a sustainable energy policy, we need energy sources such as nuclear power that limit carbon emissions and other pollutants. Nuclear energy generates about 70 percent of all low-carbon electricity our nation uses every year.

Work is well underway building two new reactors near Waynesboro, Georgia, the nation's first advanced reactor technology. More than 1,500 people already are at work at the state's largest construction project ever. At peak construction, about

3,500 new jobs will be created, along with up to 800 full-time positions once the reactors are producing electricity. President Obama supported this project earlier this year when he announced a federal loan guarantee that will help Georgia Power gain access to financing for that project at lower rates. Democrats in Congress also support nuclear energy, led by Congressman James Clyburn, a leader within the Democratic party who is also supporting the expansion of nuclear energy's role in the nation's electricity mix. They are among several leaders, in both political parties, active in this effort.

The diverse group of leaders gathered at CASEnergy's first business and minority roundtable speaks volumes about the shared desire to identify new career options and business opportunities for our respective communities. Now is the time to fully engage the African-American community so it is fully aware of the benefits that the nuclear energy sector has to offer—both by way of job creation and clean electricity production.

We encourage you to join in the discussion to make sure others are involved to help strengthen the network, ensuring our communities are in the best possible position to act on the opportunities presented.

# African Scene



Nigeria rebels threatening 'ferocious attack' on oil sector

## Nigeria rebels threatening 'ferocious attack' on oil sector

*Special to the NNPA from the GIN*

As the Nigerian government busies itself with upcoming elections, conditions in the oil-rich Niger Delta have been allowed to fester. This week, the rebel Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) issued fresh threats against the Nigerian oil industry.

In a press statement signed by "Jomo Gbomo", MEND said it would soon commence a "ferocious attack" on the sector and called for "immediate evacuation" of residents who live close to oil storage depots.

Deadly toxic fumes and spills have created an environmental nightmare in the Niger Delta Region. At the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency, calls reporting damaging spills come in at the rate of two every 45

minutes, a special report by the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) found.

Grossly underfunded, the Agency had a budget of \$3.39 million in 2007 or only three percent of the amount budgeted for inspections and audits at the agency's U.S. counterpart.

The agency is a "watchdog without teeth," Ben Amunwa, a researcher at U.K. environmental group Platform told the WSJ. "Show me where are an oil spill has been properly cleaned," said Geert Ritsema of Friends of the Earth Netherlands. "There is no such place in Nigeria."

Next week, oil giant Royal Dutch Shell PLC faces questioning by the Dutch Parliament about years of spills in the Niger Delta and the threat of major accidents like the one at a BP deepwater well in the Gulf of Mexico in April.

## Uganda preparing to vote with Chinese guns, tanks

*Special to the NNPA from the GIN*

Heavy equipment, including tear-gas vehicles, water cannons, and pepper sprayers has been reported moving into the suburbs of Kampala, as the Feb. 18 date for national elections nears.

"Are you planning to cause trouble during the upcoming elections or afterward?" quipped Ugandan reporter Tabu Butagira. "Then prepare for an aggressive confrontation with the police, who have imported more than a dozen new vehicles for crowd control."

Close to 14 million Ugandans are expected to vote next month in the fourth general election since President Yoweri Museveni came to power almost a quarter century ago.

Member of Parliament Hussein Kyanjo and administration critic said he suspects the police have imported the anti-riot gadgets "to prepare for repression. The police are not acting out of the blue and the timing raises suspicion."

But Mary Karooro-Okurut, spokeswoman for the ruling party of President Museveni, called Kyanjo's allegations

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## U.N. Africa group rejects war in Ivory Coast

*Special to the NNPA from the GIN*

The Africa Group of the United Nations Security Council has declared itself opposed to the military option in Cote d'Ivoire as a solution to the standoff between incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo and the reputed winner of November elections, Alassane Ouattara.

The group upheld the position of neighboring Ghana against war. The African group is made up of Gabon, Nigeria, and South Africa.

At a meeting this month, the group addressed the evolving refugee situation in Ivory Coast, recognition of Mr. Alassane Ouattara as winner of the elections, and finally a ruling against the use of military force.

The U.N. is scheduled to approve an additional 2,000 troops for the region in response to requests by U.N. commanders in the West African nation who want protection for their peacekeepers and vehicles.

African Union mediator from Kenya, Raila Odinga, is reportedly preparing to return home after two days of unsuccessful meetings with the incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo.

Prior to his appointment as mediator, Odinga was a strident critic of the incumbent chief: "Gbagbo must be forced out, even if it means by military force, to get rid of him," Odinga told a press conference in Nairobi.

"The world must be pre-



Laurent Gbagbo



Mediator R. Odinga

pared to move, even with military force, to preserve democracy," he said. Odinga was also critical of the 53-member African Union, arguing it was time the pan-African body turned words into action against Gbagbo.

Raila was himself a victim of a similar standoff that brought about his eventually being appointed Prime Minister in a power sharing arrangement with President Mwai Kibaki that many feel has not been constructive for the country.

## Wikileaks is spark to 'People Power' uprising in Tunisia

*Special to the NNPA from the GIN*

The 'people power' movement that ousted Tunisia's strongly un-

popular leader, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, last week was sparked by revelations in U.S. diplomatic cables released by the

whistleblower website WikiLeaks. The cables provided a laundry list of the North African leader's alleged thefts and misrule.

But, it was the widely-publicized suicide of a young college-educated fruit vendor, humiliated by police and a symbol for thousands of graduates without hope of a job, that was the final straw that broke the camel's back. Workers, students and the jobless jammed the streets despite tear gas, rubber bullets, and batons - upwards of 70 were shot - demanding Ben Ali's resignation.

Tunisian cyberactivists launched an all-out electronic rebellion against the Ben Ali regime. Facebook, Twitter, and internet blogs were the main source of news for the better part of the uprising. Efforts by the President to cling to power were roundly rebuffed and the Ben Ali family escaped Friday into exile in Saudi Arabia. Only one African leader was heard to defend the 74-year-old autocrat. Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi said he was "pained" by the fall of the Tunisian government and blamed U.S. ambassadors for inten-



Tunisia rally during the uprising that toppled the government

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Oprah's sister Patricia

## Half sister surprises Oprah Winfrey

By J. Zamgba Browne  
Special to NY Beacon

Although television talk show queen Oprah Winfrey claims that nothing surprises her, she may have gotten the shock of her life. On last Thanksgiving Day Winfrey came face-to-face with a half-sister she knew absolutely nothing about.

It turned out the half-sister, Patricia, had been searching for years for the identity of the mother who gave her up for adoption in 1963. Patricia, 48, said she learned in 2007 that Winfrey was her blood relative.

She immediately looked for Winfrey's niece, the daughter of talk show host other half sister also named Patricia who passed away years ago.

For her part, Winfrey said she heard about her half-sister last November. She said she was nine years old and living with her father when her mother gave birth

to Patricia and gave her up for adoption. "I never even knew my mother, Vernita Lee was pregnant," said Winfrey. She called her meeting with Patricia "the miracle of all miracles."

Patricia's first meeting with her famous half-sister happened after she went through a DNA test that established that indeed she and Winfrey were blood relatives.

Following the meeting, Winfrey was quoted that she was impressed how Patricia handled the situation. "She never once thought to go to the press," said Winfrey. "She never once thought to sell her story," she added. Patricia said she decided against such a move because "I didn't want to hurt anyone."

Patricia said she often thought about her childhood upbringing — "the time I spent in foster care." She said her first attempt to locate her biological mother was when she was 20 years old. "I tried and tried, but gave up after I didn't succeed.

## Group's forum to target Cuomo's war on unions

The Freedom Party and the South Bronx Community conference will hold a Labor / Community Forum focusing on Governor Cuomo's war on the unions. The forum will be held on Saturday, Jan. 29 from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Hostos College, 149 Street and Grand Concourse, Bronx NY.

Speakers include Ramon Jimenez Esq., Freedom Party candidate for Attorney General; Chris Silvera, Local 808 Teamsters; Benita Johnson, Local 100 Transport Workers Union; Ed Figueroa, 32BJ Schools Division SEIU; Michelle Keller, DC37; Mike

Gimbel, Local 375, DC37; Lizette Colon, Hostos Chapter Chair PSC/AFT; Dwight Peters, President of the Student Association, Bronx Community College; NYC Councilman Charles Barron, Larry Holmes, Bail Out the People Movement.

"The wage freeze is just for openers. Cuomo will push for more massive layoffs in public transit, more hospital closings, more school closings and semi-privatizations. The attack will hit African American and Latino workers the hardest," said Kamau Brown of the Freedom Party Bronx Committee.

## How Baby Boomers can retire despite a downturned economy

By Charlene Crowell  
NNPA Columnist

More than 10,000 baby boomers will turn 65 each day during the next two decades, says AARP, the nation's leading organization on elder issues. The generation that grew up with changes in social mores, music, and more now faces a particularly challenging time to leave the workplace.

But what's a person to do with the rest of their lives, if they were born between the years of 1946 and 1964? Especially when current economic trends and measures are more down than up, who can really afford to retire?

Kiss goodbye the days of secure pensions and gold watches for decades of service. According to the Employee Benefit Research Institute, only 15 percent of the workforce today has a traditional pension plan. Instead, 401(k)s in the private sector and 403(b)s in public and not-for-profit organizations are the likely alternative plans.

These benefits are tied to stock market performance. When the market performs well, benefits boom; but conversely, benefits diminish when the market performs poorly.

Also gone are the days when owning a house meant sure-fire wealth building. Eleven million Americans now owe more than their home is worth. Boomers hoping to downsize to smaller spaces may find that while unemployment hovers near 10 percent, prospective homebuyers may be waiting for the job market to improve before making such a large and long-term investment.

When disposable funds are fewer than in workplace years, older consumers can be particularly at-risk to incur debts that tarnish the golden years. Or as the O-Jays sang, it's that 'al-

mighty dollar' that can change you — especially when there's not enough to provide for yourself or your family.

For example, long-time homeowners with title to their homes or nearing the end of mortgage payments might be lured into a reverse mortgage. As a loan against market value, reverse mortgages can be a transaction that enables borrowers to turn that value into ready cash without selling the property.

However, before signing on the dotted line for a reverse mortgage, borrowers should clearly understand that they are signing an end of life loan.

Full repayment is required when either the borrower passes away or no longer lives in the residence for more than a year. Any absence due to year-long extended health care, such as rehab or assisted living facilities will make the loan due.

Overdraft, another debt trap, may offer a convenient way to pay for purchases; but if there is no cushion in the account or consumer checkbooks aren't accurately balanced, overdraft fees that average \$34 per transaction can quickly siphon off disposable income.

Even worse, consumers only learn of the charges after the statement arrives. Rather than incur the risk of overdraft fees that each year strip \$23.7 billion from checking account holders, it is better to decline overdraft than to accept it. Unauthorized overdrafts strip fees from Americans 55 and older at the level of \$4.5 billion per year. Nearly \$1 billion of that comes from people who are heavily dependent on Social Security income.

Even worse than overdraft fees are payday loans that promise quick and easy cash without credit checks. In recent months, many payday lenders be-

gan accepting unemployment checks or disability benefits as income. Yet what the marketing and advertising do not share is how only a very small percentage of payday borrowers are actually able to retire their short-term loan in two weeks. The vast majority of payday borrowers — 12 million each year — become trapped into a turnstile of repeat loans and high-cost fees that result in more money being paid for interest and fees than the amount borrowed. Meanwhile, payday lenders reap \$5 billion annually.

The sobering reality for everyone is that there will always be lenders that would like to take away some of your hard-earned income and savings, just as financial advisors have an array of recommended strategies for preparing for retirement in a post-recession era.

But, it is far wiser for people regardless of age to make regular savings a part of your financial plan. With every paycheck, start and keep saving. Emergencies, unexpected expenses, and vacations, can all be managed, if dollars are set aside on a consistent basis. If you're unable to begin saving right now, consider saving a portion of any tax refund received this year to offset the amount of money you expect to need over the year. Ideally, everyone should have a personal financial cushion that enables them to maintain their lifestyles without going into debt.

A keen awareness combined with a sensible and practical personal strategy can together chart a path to sustainable financial growth in spite of any market downturn. To paraphrase the words of the O'Jays, don't let money — or lenders — fool you.

Charlene Crowell is the Center for Responsible Lending's communications manager for state policy and outreach. She can be reached at: [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).

## Liu says CityTime as it is holds NYC hostage

Comptroller John C. Liu stated the following in response to questions about a review released of the technology behind CityTime that casts serious doubts on whether the system could be run independently without the project's developer:

"New York City taxpayers paid hundreds of millions for the full, custom development of CityTime from scratch. A decade later, CityTime is not only overdue, overpriced and wrought with allegations of fraud, but today we learned

that it doesn't even come with a user manual.

"The CityTime product as it currently stands may allow the vendor to maintain an indefinite monopoly on the development and maintenance of New York City's timekeeping system," Comptroller Liu continued. "The emerging product holds the client — the City of New York — hostage to one company, the project's developer. Proprietary systems like this require a relationship in perpetuity, which stifles competition, fails to ensure superior goods and

services, and is a poor business practice that the City simply cannot afford."

The September 28, 2010 agreement allowing the deployment of CityTime not only required for there to be no additional cost for deployment, but that an independent subject matter expert be retained to assess whether the system, once fully deployed, could be operated without the project's developer.

The report found that the "existing documentation is not currently sufficient to al-

low another entity to assume responsibility for the operations and maintenance of the application... Given the size, scale and complexity of the project, it is consistent with industry practice to develop formal knowledge transfer documentation... The lack of formal knowledge transfer planning and documentation increases the risk that the City will continue to be reliant on vendor support of the application."

The report also issued seven "high priority" recommendations due to "significant nega-

tive impact to the ability of one or more firms, the City, or combination of the two to maintain and operate CityTime without the implementation of the recommendation."

Subsequent to the assessment, Comptroller Liu instructed his representatives on the Office of Payroll Administration and the Financial Information Services Agency Boards of Directors to ensure that all deficiencies caused by the vendor are cured at no additional cost to taxpayers, and to explore all options including ceasing deployment of new users.

# Opinion

## China: New opportunities for African American businesses

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

In the wake of the tremendous White House welcome and state visit of President Hu Jintao of China to Washington, D.C. and Chicago, IL, President Barack Obama was successful in continuing to improve the overall relations between the United States and China. It is strategically important for African American business leaders to explore ways and means to develop and expand economic ties with China. Timing is important. We should not take for granted what is happening throughout the world in 2011, when it comes to doing business with China.

In particular, the Black American business community should always be seeking new opportunities to expand and grow. If we are ever going to get the majority of African Americans out of poverty, it will be through education and economic empowerment. The world is changing to enhance international trade and commerce. African American spending power as consumers is a trillion dollars annually. We buy a massive amount of products that are made in China. It is past time for us to see our situation differently from an economic perspective.

The truth is Chinese business leaders are eager and interested in developing joint business ventures with African American business leaders. Beyond being consumers, we should be ready to move more to be in the productive side of the U.S. and global economy. What better place in the world would it be for African Americans and other minorities to do business than in one of the world's rising economic pow-

ers? Today, China is also the leading trading partner for all of Africa. African business owners are finding profitable success through numerous joint ventures with their Chinese counterparts.

I encourage many of the existing African American Chambers of Commerce in Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago, New York, Georgia, Florida and in other cities across the United States to accelerate their outreach to China. President Obama has opened the business development door wider than ever before for new business proposals and ventures to be established with Chinese business leaders. It is urgent, therefore, for African Americans to be at the forefront in seeking out these real opportunities.

In all of the leading economies in Africa, China has emerged as a reliable and substantial business partner. South Africa's first African billionaire is Patrice Tihopane Motsepe, whose business interests span a wide array of diverse ventures including African Rainbow Minerals that has done extremely well in gold, ferrous metals, base metals, and platinum. Chinese business leaders have reached out to Motsepe on a number of ventures in South Africa and throughout other regions of the continent of Africa.

Champion Motors International, Inc (Chamotor) is headquartered in Sunrise, FL and led by Philippe Lenoir. Chamotor has regional offices in South Africa and in China. Chamotor China has manufacturing plants in six different provinces of China. Chamotor is now a global business and is a leading manufacturer and distributor of high quality mass transit vehicles and industrial equipment. Chamotor's main product line includes luxury coach and urban buses, light duty commercial and heavy industrial trucks, electric vehicles as well as a line of construction and agriculture

equipment. Chamotor's manufacturing capabilities are based on a strategic joint venture partnership in China.

Dr. Willie Wilson, owner of Chicago's Omar Medical Supplies company, is another success model of how an African American businessman in the United States established a multi-million dollar business venture with China. I know Dr. Willie Wilson personally and he is a visionary business leader who has a genius for entrepreneurship. Dr. Wilson

is role model not only for business success, but also for giving back to the African American and other communities. In fact, Dr. Wilson was somewhat ahead of the pack because he has been building factories and working with China for many years.

I salute brothers Motsepe, Lenoir, and Wilson for their business success and for their leadership building strong bridges of economic development with China that has in turn helping to improve the quality

of life in Africa and in the African American community. The NNPA readers should spread this word. China is a new economic power base for African people. Let's hope that these new business opportunities in China will help us to have a stronger hand in ending poverty in our communities.

*Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. is senior strategic advisor for the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) and president of Education Online Services Corporation.*

## Racial health disparities

By Judge Greg Mathis  
NNPA Columnist

Republicans, trying to make good on campaign promises, are working hard to repeal the 2010 healthcare law that, once fully implemented, will provide health insurance in some form for all Americans. Those who supported the law realize that it's imperfect, but recognize that the law's passage was an important first step.

Over time, the law will save billions of dollars and ensure that Americans, regardless of income, can access medical help when they need it.

A new study shows us that money will be saved in other ways, too. A report released by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reveals shocking racial health disparities. Billions of dollars are spent each year treating illnesses in advanced stages. With healthcare more readily available, it is safe to assume that chronic conditions can be treated regularly and early, avoiding costly hospital stays and saving the larger public money in the long run.

It's never been a secret that race and income play a part in the quality of medical care an individual receives. But, these numbers are shocking. In a country as rich as America, the expectation should be that all children live through infancy and grow into healthy adults.

However, children born to African-American women are three times more likely to die before they make it to their first year than those born to women of other races. If the child does make it to adulthood, they will be twice as likely to suffer from high blood pressure and much more likely to suffer from heart disease or have a stroke than their White counterparts. And, unfortunately, their chances of contracting HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is shockingly higher than that of Whites.

Granted, each of these illnesses are preventable. Personal responsibility – eating right, exercising, practicing safe sex – goes a long way in making sure an individual is not afflicted with these diseases. However, if one does find themselves struggling with one of

these illnesses, they should be able to access quality medical care early and often and not have to worry about costs. If the diseases go untreated, the long-term effects go far beyond the individual: society ultimately pays - \$7 billion to be exact.

That's how much is spent a year treating preventable diseases in this country. And, African Americans have twice the rate of preventable hospitalizations than Whites.

Before Republicans continue with their plan of repealing the healthcare law, with no workable proposal for a replacement, they should first think about what price the country will have to pay if they are successful.

The Republican party should not only leave the current healthcare law intact, they should sit down with Democrats and strategize to improve it.

One of those improvements should be funding more community clinics in urban areas – clinics that educate and counsel residents on disease prevention. The Republican party needs to realize that honoring campaign promises is important but only if that promise is in the best interest of the entire nation.

## S. Africa's Black economic empowerment program has failed

By Harry C. Alford  
Beyond The Rhetoric

Oh, it was a great moment when Black South Africans freed themselves from the yolk of apartheid being administered by the White Afrikaners. However, we must remember that civil rights and political clout without economic empowerment will become borrowed events. The leaders of South Africa have recognized this and are trying to formally do something about it. So far there have been little results. What they have implemented is the Black Economic Empowerment Program.

According to Wikipedia, "Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is a program launched by the South African government to redress the inequalities of apartheid by giving previously disad-

vantaged groups (Black Africans, Coloreds, Indians and Chinese – declared as Black in June 2008 – who are South African citizens) economic opportunities previously not available to them. It includes measures such as Employment Equity, skills development, ownership, management, socioeconomic development, and preferential procurement.

After the end of apartheid in 1994 and with the advent of majority rule, control of big business in both the public and private sectors still rested in the hands of white individuals. According to Statistics South Africa, Whites comprise just under 10% of the population, meaning that most of the country's economy was controlled by a very small minority. BEE is intended to transform the economy to be representative of the demographic make-up of the country."

It sounds like a noble cause

but there is just one thing. It is not working. It is poorly implemented and is wrought with corruption, fraud, and misrepresentation. A few colored and Asians are getting the lion's share of the business while the Black population continues to be left out of the economic infrastructure. Among the 295 companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, Blacks account for just 4% of chief executive officers, 2% of chief financial officers and 15% of other senior posts (The Economist). Entrepreneurship is basically void and a start in this area is desperately needed. Even President Jacob Zuma seems to agree.

"Instead of redistributing wealth and positions to the Black majority, they have resulted mainly in a few individuals benefiting a lot," he says, "while leaving the leadership

of most big companies in White hands. The Black masses, the intended beneficiaries, have hardly gained." Well, Mr. President, what are you going to do about it?

South Africa must turn this opportunity into a success. Affirmative Action is written into its constitution so there can be no legal challenges of a direct and aggressive program. That being the case they should look at models that have worked. There has been no more successful model than our Small Business Administration's 8(a) program. This business development program has made more Black millionaires than all of the other economic empowerment programs combined. South Africa needs to form an agency such as the Small Business Administration and begin working on a program that will work.

In addition to business de-

velopment there should be a pool of capital set aside for business start up and expansions. Capital is the "life blood" of any business and to try and implement an economic empowerment program without ready reserves becomes an impossible task by itself.

Here again, the SBA lending programs can be emulated or even improved with less paper work.

The South African government must set aside a pool of contracts for participants in the program to compete for. There can be some subcontracting also but prime contracting is the key to business growth. Develop large Black owned businesses and demand that they subcontract to other Black owned firms.

Black should be Black. They must not aggregate all ethnic groups under the label of Black. They should separate and moni-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)



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Dr. Wayne Riley

## Meharry prez named chair of NIH Advisory Council

President and CEO of Meharry Medical College, Wayne J. Riley, M.D., MPH, MBA, MACP, has been named chair of the National Advisory Council on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health, effective February 2011.

As the chair, Dr. Riley will serve as a liaison and national spokesperson on issues

of minority health and health disparities, will assist John Ruffin, Ph.D., director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), in facilitating meetings of the advisory council and will serve as a conduit between Ruffin and the council when there are pressing matters.

The National Advisory  
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

## Audrey J. Bernard to receive McDonald's Esteemed Black Media Legend Award

Audrey J. Bernard, lifestyles and society editor and fashion and beauty editor for the New York Beacon has been selected as one of Irving Street and McDonald's esteemed 2011 Faces of Black History. The "esteemed Black Media Legend" honorees were selected as trailblazers who have impacted the Black community through their positive achievements.

A. Curtis Farrow, president & CEO, Irving Street, will present the esteemed honorees with their awards at a special luncheon to be held during Black History Month at the 2011 Faces of Black History Award Ceremony on Tuesday, February 1, 2011 from 12:00pm-3:00pm at the legendary Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 301 Park Avenue, New York, New York. Irving Street will also unveil its souvenir 2011 Faces of Black History poster.

"Your trailblazing spirit and achievements are an inspiration to all Black Americans," said Farrow at a press conference. "As someone who has impacted the Black community through your achievements and led through your positive example, Irving Street and McDonald's are honoring you as one of our 19 esteemed Black Media Legends."

Ms. Bernard who also toils for the *EUR*, the *Harlem News Group*, the *Philadelphia Observer* and *Radioscope* will be joined by fifteen other exemplary Black Media Legend honorees including Sade Baderinwa, Fred "Bugsy" Buggs, Gary Byrd, Brian Custer, Tim Daughtry, Lewis Dodley, Funkmaster Flex, Ed Gordon,



Audrey J. Bernard

Janice Huff, Otis Livingston, Scott Pierce, James Shipley, Craig Treadway, Charles Williams and Malachy Williams.

Look for images of all 16 Black Media Legend honorees on the free commemorative 2011 Faces of Black History Poster, trayliner and other print materials and/or ads. While supplies last, the commemorative posters will be given away, with no purchase necessary, at all 650 McDonald's restaurants throughout the New York Metro region, which includes New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. These free posters are coveted by school teachers and professors across the region, which uses them as part of their Black History curriculum.

McDonald's is the world's best-known brand and is the global leader in food service. There are 650 McDonald's restaurants, owned by 100 fran-



A. Curtis Farrow, CEO, Irving Street

chisees, located throughout the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut tri-state area.

McDonald's has been a long-time supporter of the Black community, and its Black History campaign is an extremely successful yearly event created by Irving Street "with great pride to salute and honor Black History makers throughout our community," stated Farrow.

Irving Street specializes in public relations, consultation, event planning, musical entertainment, jingles, television production, commercials, corporate industrial productions, live theatrical productions and tours.

In the crowd pleasing business since 1995, Irving Street operates under the proficient leadership of Farrow, an Emmy Award winner and a veritable powder keg of energy and talent whose producing and directing credits span the US and abroad.

## Fairfield honors 3 at annual MLK Vision Awards Dinner

Fairfield University's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Vision Awards Dinner honored several of its own members during an evening dinner reception held at the Barone Campus Center. The event recognized those who exemplify their commitment to the ideals and values of Dr. King.

The awards presentation was part of the university's week-long celebration honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. This year's recipients included Danke Li, Ph.D., associate professor of history; Meredith Marquez, associate director of student diversity programs; and Shawne Lomauro, a double major in economics and politics with a minor in peace and justice.

A resident of Scarsdale, N.Y., Li is a highly regarded teacher, who enlivens the classroom. Her academic credentials include a master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. She is also the author of "Echoes of Chongqing: Women in Wartime China." In her book, Li talks about the struggles of women during China's War of Resistance against Japan. Elizabeth Hohl, a colleague of Li's and a visiting professor at Fairfield said, "Dr. Li is an excellent scholar. Her work reflects a deep and abiding concern for those who have been overlooked." Hohl said it is Li's ability to com-



Danke Li

bine scholarship with activism that sets her apart. "She is always a voice for those who are ignored or marginalized," she said.

Marquez, a Shelton resident, works in the Office of Student Diversity Programs. She is known on campus for giving the underrepresented population a voice, and colleagues refer to her as a mentor and role model for students. During a three-year period, Marquez was responsible for the implementation of the "Cura personalis"-care of the whole person-



Shawne Lomauro

mentoring program at the university. Melisa Jaquez, a staff member in the residence life office nominated Marquez for the Vision Award based on her understanding of cultural competence, and her insistence that others learn the art of tolerance and multiculturalism. In particular, Jaquez said, "Meredith Marquez on a daily basis, runs programs that are geared towards educating the community about social justice. She is our go-to professional."

Lomauro, who is a senior



Meredith Marquez

from Freehold, N.J., has a distinguished academic career at Fairfield University. She has been inducted into Alpha Sigma Nu (National Jesuit Honor Society), Omicron Delta Epsilon (Economics) and Pi Sigma Alpha (Politics). In 2009, the university initiated a campus-wide activism program, and Lomauro was responsible for coordinating the multi-event summit titled "Dare to Act-Act to Change." Fairfield University's John Suggs said the event brought the campus community together to consider the

mission of social justice. Suggs, who is the assistant director of the Center for Faith and Public Life at Fairfield said, "When I consider those who have consistently demonstrated a commitment to the values of Dr. King, one name stands alone-Shawne Lomauro." Suggs also noted that as a resident assistant, Lomauro works hard at guiding and mentoring future student leaders. "Her quiet and clear steadfastness as a leader personifies the values and ideals of both Dr. King and the university," he said.

# Health

## Families get motivation to lose weight

By Sandra Jordan  
Special to the NNPA from The St. Louis American

Bkm Fitness Boot Camp, located inside the Jamestown Mall in North St. Louis County, is a hotspot of weight loss, motivation, and inspiration to better health and nutrition.

Clients attribute their dip in the scales to positive motivation from Briant K. Mitchell (thus, the name Bkm), owner and certified trainer at the facility. And, he does it family-style. His wife Felicia works there as well, along with other certified trainers. In addition, whether they are new or seasoned members, most feel like family.

"In 2010, I had 44 clients get their overall weight loss goal. Of those 44, I had three who did over 100 pounds - two of them in one year," Mitchell boasts, like a proud trainer. "My biggest loser, she lost 155 pounds in 18 months - following my meal plan and workout." Mitchell said three physicians he trains approved his low carb meal plans - and it is for people with diabetes and high blood pressure. "You eat six small meals a day," he said. "The most important meal of the meal plan is breakfast."

Mitchell's rules are simple - lose weight and have fun. "As life-changing as weight loss is, you must have fun with it or you probably won't stick with it," he said. Profanity is not allowed at this fitness center, and the vari-

ety of music in the routines appeal to most everyone. Mitchell said do not let the term "boot camp" scare you.

"They think it's hard and it is hard," Mitchell admits. However, when they scream, its positive motivation. "Are we going to push you? Absolutely," he said. "That's what we do, but you still go at your pace and of course, you must have fun." Fun can also be addictive.

"Some clients try to attend six and seven times a week, two and three times a day, and I'm like, 'Whoa, time out - your body needs rest,'" Mitchell said.

Monee Collins of Ferguson, Missouri has been working out at Bkm five to six times per week during the last year. She got her health and fitness hookup from a friend on Facebook who attended Bkm.

"I just one day came to check out the boot camp and I went to a class the next day and I loved it. On the spot I said that I was ready to join this," Collins said.

"By me loving the boot camp so much, I went home the very same day and I told my mom about this place." Okay - she coerced her mom off her retirement couch in Collinsville, Illinois to avoid the inactivity and subsequent weight gain.

"She dragged me here and I love it, I really do. And, I think I have lost maybe 15 pounds," Crawford said. Now, she comes four to five times a week. "After I talked to my mom and she came, the whole family came," Collins said.

When she said her whole fam-



Price Traci Nave, her sister, Melissa Miller and Miller's daughter, Taylor Miller are one of many groups of families, church members and coworkers who are losing weight and learning about nutrition at Bkm Fitness Boot Camp, located in Jamestown Mall in North. St. Louis County. (Photo by Wiley.)

ily came - she meant it. Collins has at least 15 relatives, including her mom, two sisters, nephews and cousins, who work out at Bkm. She happily brags that she was first.

What Bkm offers to all ages and all sizes is supportive, uplifting motivation that builds self-esteem and keeps people working toward their health goal. Most clients have joined after observing the noticeable results of friends, coworkers or family members.

"I went from 165 at Bkm and I'm at 137-138 and I've maintained it for the last four months," Collins said. Her sister, Jacqueline Collins of St. Louis is having amazing re-

sults that continually astonish her. "I've been here seven months, and I've lost 52 pounds - can you believe that?" Jacqueline Collins said. "I've got 32 pounds to reach my goal, but in the back of my mind, oh my God, I am ecstatic." And, she worked hard for it.

"I am here at least five days a week and on a couple of days, I do two routines [two one-hour sessions]," she explained. "I enjoy it because of the results."

At the morning senior exercise class recently, Cynthia Ringo, pastor at Christ Deliverance Ministry in University City received a trophy for meeting her 2010 weight goals. Ringo is one of 20 church

members who are working out and losing weight at Bkm. "He takes time with us, it's not a quick fix thing," Ringo said. "He has passion for wanting to help people."

They even call their church crew the CDM Bkm Group."Bkm offers hour-long boot camp sessions, spinning classes, weight training, and personalized sessions. He said strength training is important, particularly as you age.

"Osteoporosis - African Americans are affected by that, and doing the strength training, it strengthens their bones, add years to their life," Mitchell said. Taylor Miller, is a high school teenager who makes it to Bkm several times per week and has lost about 14 pounds.

"I love it. It's getting ready for soccer and it helps you get into a prom dress and going to college, so the better the body to start off with," she said. Her mother, Melissa Miller, and aunt, Traci Nave, also attend and are getting results.

"The last time I went to the doctor, my cholesterol has gone down and so that's a wonderful thing to me and my doctor was excited that I finally lost the weight that she had been asking me to lose for several years," Nave said.

"He just actually helped me more with my nutrition. Some things that I thought I knew, I didn't know, so he educated me," Melissa Miller said.

For more information about Bkm. Go to [www.bkmbootcamp.com](http://www.bkmbootcamp.com).

## Confronting a cancer diagnosis: Steps to consider

Special to the NNPA from the National Cancer Institute

There are few things more unsettling than sitting in front of a doctor and hearing the words, "you have cancer." Whether you have already experienced that conversation, or you know someone who has, those difficult words can leave one in an emotional place that is unlike anything else. How would you handle such news? What if you are with a loved one or a friend when they get that diagnosis? What does a cancer diagnosis mean, and what should the next step be?

Although the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) primary mission is to conduct, support, and coordinate cancer research, it also has a role in collecting and disseminating information about cancer. In that role, NCI serves as a source of important information for patients and their family and friends, including information about how to communicate with their health care providers. Many people have never spoken with a health care professional about cancer, and knowing what to do and who to talk with from the start may be critical in getting the best

possible treatment and outcome. For many African Americans, a serious disease like cancer can be a shared family experience. It is not uncommon for family members to rally around a cancer patient. Family or friends can assume various roles in gathering information and in helping make decisions.

These tasks include learning about the specific cancer type that has been diagnosed, selecting a physician, getting a second opinion, assessing insurance coverage, and identifying a place to receive treatment.

Here are some important things to consider when confronting cancer: Learn about the disease and treatment options. The first thing to do is to educate yourself as much as possible about the type of cancer you have been diagnosed with as well as possible treatment options.

You can do this any number of ways, starting with talking to your doctor. Information is also available through NCI. You can begin with the NCI web site, [cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov) ([cancer.gov/espanol](http://cancer.gov/espanol)). You can also call the NCI's toll-free Cancer Information Service, 1-800-4-CANCER and speak to a specialist who can answer your questions about

cancer and also direct you to additional information, including publications).

Learn about which physicians treat cancer patients. Most physicians who treat people with cancer are medical doctors (they have an M.D. degree) or osteopathic doctors (they have a D.O. degree). These doctors often have advanced training in a specialty or a subspecialty. For example, medical oncologists are internal medicine doctors who manage the treatment regimen of cancer patients, and hematologists are internal medicine doctors who focus on diseases of the blood and related tissues. Radiation oncologists use radiation to treat cancer, and surgeons perform operations.

Find a doctor. Most people will get a referral from their primary care physician, but you can also consult a local hospital or cancer center, or access a list of specialists from local or national medical societies. Friends and family can also help you identify a doctor, especially if they have already dealt with cancer.

Ask questions. There are some basic questions you can ask your doctor before your treatment

begins. Shock and stress after the diagnosis can make it hard to think of everything you want to ask the doctor. It often helps to make a list of questions before the appointment.

To help remember what the doctor says, you may want to take notes or ask whether you may use a tape recorder. Some people want to have a family member or a friend with them when they talk to the doctor—to take part in the discussion, to take notes, or just to listen. You do not have to ask all of your questions at once. Suggested questions are available in the NCI publication, *What You Need to Know About Cancer*, available on [cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov) ([cancer.gov/espanol](http://cancer.gov/espanol)).

After consulting a doctor to learn about the disease and recommended treatments, consider obtaining a second opinion. Sometimes people worry about this. They are afraid it may seem like they don't trust their first doctor. Not at all. What they are doing is seeking an additional evaluation of their medical condition from another professional. It is quite common to seek a second opinion, and most physicians welcome another doctor's views. Your

health care plan may even require that you get a second opinion. In fact, your doctor may be able to recommend a specialist for this consultation.

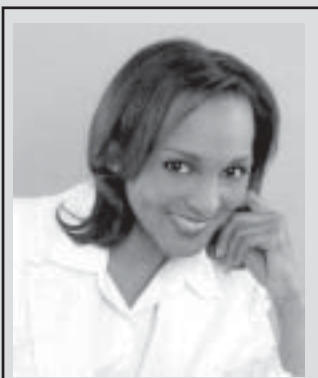
Finally, when confronted with a cancer diagnosis (whether your own or that of someone you love), just remember to collect yourself and take a deep breath. Most times, you don't need to rush to make a decision. You will make the best decisions, if you give yourself the chance to get the best information you can. You can trust that the information you receive from NCI is up-to-date and accurate. So, if you want to find the facts for a loved one or for yourself, turn to NCI today.

NCI leads the National Cancer Program and the NIH effort to dramatically reduce the burden of cancer and improve the lives of cancer patients and their families, through research into prevention and cancer biology, the development of new interventions, and the training and mentoring of new researchers. For more information about cancer, please visit the NCI Web site at <http://www.cancer.gov> or call NCI's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).

# THE ADAMS REPORT

Fashion, Beauty . . . . . & Stuff

By Audrey Adams



Audrey Adams

## Sale! Signs—Part Two

home, return it to the store (if you can't shop honestly what's the point . . .).

If you purchase something, check the store's return policy, because you may need to follow the guideline above.

Before you even consider shopping, remember that you probably have more than you need, and perhaps by using a little creativity and accessories you can work magic with what you already own.

Remember, the clothes that you wear (or don't), can't collect interest nor increase in value (okay, unless we're talking Chanel originals-and I mean sewn by Coco herself).

Money is a powerful tool. Use it wisely to empower yourself. Used unwisely, the debt you incur will enslave you.

Face it, you can shop until you drop but buying something new won't necessarily help you look or feel better-that comes from the inside. If you have money to spend and you sincerely want to shop for something or if you saved up to shop that's one thing; but shopping for the sake of shopping can become a problem.

There is plenty of time this year to invest the money you'll save in something that will re-

sult in rewarding you with a spiritual, emotional or financial return. Before you shop, stop and think about it. See you next week.

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*Audrey Adams, former director of corporate public relations and fashion merchandising for ESSENCE and model and assistant commentator for the world renowned EBONY FASHION FAIR, motivates and inspires women through her syndicated columns and motivational speaking engagements and web site, The Adams Report.com. E-mail your fashion, beauty and lifestyle questions or comments to her at info@theadamsreport.com*



Karen Cheeks-Lomax

## Anti-human trafficking task force is launched

On February 9, 2011 key Federal, State and local law enforcement and non-governmental agencies will come together officially for the second time to continue the work of the "Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force," which was officially launched last month.

Spearheaded by the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA), My Sisters' Place, and the Pound Ridge Police Department, the aim of this multidisciplinary task force is to bring together key responders from various disciplines and backgrounds that work together on a consistent basis to identify and assist victims of trafficking across Westchester County through proactive investigations.

According to David Ryan, chief of the Pound Ridge Police Department and a founder of the Task Force, "we have already had a major case of human trafficking in Pound Ridge and we know there are more cases out there that need to be brought to light."

"There are a diversity of circumstances that make Westchester County a prime location for human trafficking," says Karen Cheeks-Lomax, executive director of My Sisters' Place. "For example, there is a sizeable immigrant population and a variety of industries and liv-

ing circumstances requiring the presence of all types of workers." My Sisters' Place has been designated by New York State as the social service provider for cases of human trafficking throughout the Lower Hudson Valley Region, including Westchester County.

"The Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force joins the ranks of more than 42 other task forces that have been formed across the United States to combat human trafficking," according to Ali Boak, co-founder and president of IOFA. "We are modeling this Task Force on standards set by the United States Justice Department and on best practices gleaned from both national and international efforts of multi-disciplinary anti-trafficking task forces." Boak, who has worked to set up more than eight task forces in New York City, Latvia, and the Dominican Republic, is advising the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

According to Westchester County Board of Legislators Majority Leader Peter Harchkham, whose office hosted the meeting, "the launch of the Task Force brought together representatives from key Federal, State, and local agencies for the first time to work in a concerted effort to develop a coordinated community response to combat human trafficking in Westchester County."

## Joyce 'Coupon Diva' helps consumers maximize savings

By Ayana Jones  
Special to the NNPA from The Philadelphia Tribune

Some consumers are turning to Joyce "Coupon Diva" House when it comes to maximizing their savings.

House has perfected the use of coupons, rebates, and free offers for food, clothing, toys, household items, and automobile services. "What I say to people is everybody can create their own little stimulus package," said House, a retired registered nurse who hails from West Philadelphia. "It's a way of thinking. We as consumers have pretty much given away a lot of our power. I believe that as consumers we should decide how much we pay for goods and services and we don't. The biggest thing I want to get people to see is if you spend a small amount of money on the things that you need, you'll have more money to spend on the things you want," added House, who hasn't paid for essentials such as deodorants, toothpaste, toothbrushes and women's sanitary products in more than 30 years. House has numerous items that's she managed to procure for free.

She wants consumers to realize that coupons are not trash. According to the Promotion

Marketing Association Coupon Council, shoppers have saved approximately \$2.6 billion by utilizing coupons for packaged products.

"I want people to see that coupons are money. They're made out of paper just like \$5s, \$10s and \$20s," said House, who saves 90 percent on her grocery bill due to coupons.

"Pretty much every company has incentives for you to utilize their products. You just have to figure out how to utilize them." Due to her frugal lifestyle, House was able to provide for her family of three children, while pursuing a nursing degree.

"We decided what we were going to eat by what was on sale," said House, who started using coupons after the birth of her first child.

House routinely utilizes coupons printed in circulars and newspapers. She's rescued discarded coupons from recycle bins and the seats of El train. One reason why House is successful at netting good deals and free items is because she's not brand specific. She knows the importance of learning a retailer's policies inside-and-out, which could translate into more savings, if something is incorrectly scanned. By paying attention to store policies, House has utilized one particular supermarket's coupons at a

competitor.

She routinely conducts seminars or private consultants for her clients on topics including as navigating through circulars, matching coupons to the shopping list, knowing store policies, learning the true worth of a coupon and unit pricing. She also conducts shopping trips with her clients. House makes herself available to clients for 30 days after the initial consultation.

"I spend a lot of my time in the supermarket re-shopping for people and I try to show them that you can get more for your money," House said. She has noticed people who have Access cards are not utilizing coupons.

"People who are using Access cards don't realize that they can use coupons too and when they shop they are (buying) convenience foods, whereas you can get vegetables or fruits for free or under a dollar," she said. "I want people to pay attention. You can't keep saying how hard it is if you're not utilizing what's out here to help you."

House has appeared on the "Strive to Survive" consumer segment of NBC 10, The 10! Show, The Today Show, and TLC's Extreme Couponing.

Contact Tribune Staff Writer Ayana Jones at (215) 893-5747 or AJones@phillytrib.com

## School communities rally against Mayor's attacks on public education

Parents, students, and teachers across the city last week took different actions protesting Mayor Bloomberg's "destructive education policies." Individual schools picketed, signed petitions and letters, and disseminated flyers to spread awareness about school closures, charter takeovers, impending budget cuts, and the damaging effects of mayoral control.

The day culminated with a press conference on the steps of Tweed at 4:30, where Fight Back Friday participants and stakeholders from schools facing closure and co-location shared their concerns.

A public school student, Martha Eckl-Lindenberg, and her mother, Corinna Lindenberg, delivered an invitation for the City-Wide Rally to Stop School Closings and Charter Takeovers scheduled for January 27 to Cathleen Black.

As Lisa Donlan, president of CEC1 said, "Since Cathy Black is on a 'Listening Tour'; she should come and listen on the 27<sup>th</sup> to the many parents, teachers, and students who oppose the policies she is now charged with implementing. We invite the new Chancellor to learn what we demand for our schools and communities: help schools succeed, don't close them; support public schools not privately managed charters; end the co-location invasions and segregating admissions policies; and provide sufficient and equitable resources to all schools."

Antoine Bogard, a member of Grassroots Education Movement, a co-sponsor of the event added, "Public schools belong to the communities in which they are

housed; no local, state or federal governmental agency should impose their will on communities without their consent. It is wrong for the New York City Department of Education to make unilateral decisions without the agreement of the communities where those schools are located. GEM stands firmly against the destructive policies of school closings and charter takeovers, we should be fixing our schools, not closing them and we certainly should not be turning our schools over to private corporations. Ms. Black would stand to learn a lot from the actual stakeholders in education were she to accept our invitation and come to our rally on the 27<sup>th</sup>."

Said Jeronimo Maradiaga, a 2003 alumni of JFK High School in the Bronx, "Closures, charter school takeovers, phase-outs, and other policies by an administration bent on privatizing our public schools are devastating policy failures that destroy communities and adversely impact student's lives. As a former Kennedy alum, I'm proof positive that a school—even one that predominantly serves a poor, Black, and Hispanic demographic—can adequately serve its students. That is, of course, if it is sufficiently supported by the Department of Education. When I recently visited Kennedy, what I saw was a neglected and forgotten school: students denied textbooks and veteran teachers being pushed out by a principal with no ties to the community."

Added Stefanie Siegel, teacher, Paul Robeson High School in Brooklyn, "Having the verdict of phase out delivered to a school is equivocal to a slow, painful death. Everyone suffers and so much of the human spirit is destroyed. There



Michael Bloomberg

might be schools that have reached a state of demise that make phase out the only possible option, but Paul Robeson High is not one of those schools. Phase out is a worse option than straight out closure; everyone in the school sits and watches as students, resources and staff diminish and the new incoming schools grow. No child deserves that fate."

Noah Gotbaum, president of CEC3, a district that has

been voraciously fighting charter takeovers from Eva Moskowitz and her HSA charter chain added this, "The DOE continues to undermine the very system they are charged with running – and pits students, parents and schools against each other in the name of false 'competition' - by co-locating increasing numbers of charter schools in our school buildings against the wishes of our communities. Unwanted char-

ter school co-locations - including the proposed Upper West Success Academy at the Brandeis High School Complex - would make Robin Hood turn in his grave: they rob resources and opportunities from the many, in the name of "choice" for the few."

Khem Irby, CEC member from district 13, where several schools are facing co-location and closures continued, "The PS 9 and MS 571 school community should come together and not allow DOE and others to divide them while sneaking in a new charter school that is only looking for space and not designed for District 13 families. The Uncommon model should not be allowed to grow in District 13. CEC13 and Presidents' Council 13 is developing a solution for both schools which a new charter school cannot solve."

Fight Back Fridays began last June when school communities united to fight proposed budget cuts and other disastrous educational policies. This year, Fight Back Fridays have continued throughout the city. Michael Solo, an educator at John Dewey High School said, "John Dewey High School has engaged in Fight Back Fridays throughout the year in an effort to raise awareness concerning the destructive policy of school closures. While Dewey received a reprieve and is not currently on the closings list, our future is uncertain. We stand in solidarity with the 25 schools facing closure in the coming days and we look forward to continuing our contribution to the effort of fighting for real reforms that would transform our public education system so that all of our children receive the public education they deserve."

Participants in Fight Back Friday and parents, educators, and students across the city have ex-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 25)

## College retention rates improving at 2-year schools, declining at 4-year

The first-to-second-year retention rate at U.S. two-year public colleges has risen to its highest level in 27 years of research, while the retention rate at four-year private colleges has dropped to its lowest level in that time, according to data from ACT, Inc.

Overall college retention rates—the percentage of first-year, full-time students who return to the same institution for their second year of college—remain relatively stable. Just two-thirds (67 percent) of all first-year students at U.S. two- and four-year colleges returned their second year of school, compared to 68 percent in 2005 and 66 percent last year. The data were gathered in ACT's annual survey of more than 2,500 two-year and baccalaureate colleges and universities across the country.

"College retention is a very challenging problem facing our nation," said Jon Whitmore,

ACT's chief executive officer and former president of San Jose State University and Texas Tech University. "If we are to meet the goal set forth by President Obama to increase the number of young adults who earn a college degree, we must not only ensure that more students have access to college, but also make certain that they are well prepared to succeed once they get there."

Retention rates continue to be substantially lower at two-year than at four-year institutions overall. The gap, however, has narrowed in recent years.

The percentage of students at two-year colleges who returned to the same institution for their second year of school has been trending up, from 53 percent in 2005 to a record high of 56 percent currently. The retention rate at four-year private colleges, in contrast, has been trending down, from 75 percent in 2005 to 72 percent currently.

The reasons for this shift may be related to problems in the economy, according to Wes Habley, ACT's principal associate, who has been conducting analyses of retention data for the not-for-profit organization since 1985.

"With many jobs gone and fewer new jobs available, high school graduates and newly unemployed workers may be seeking the fastest, least expensive route to gainful employment," said Habley. "Two-year colleges tend to be less costly than four-year schools and offer programs that provide entry into specific jobs. Those factors may increase students' motivation and incentive to come back for their second year."

Two-year public colleges, according to Habley, also tend to be more responsive to the marketplace than four-year institutions.

"Community colleges are typically more driven by local economic factors and employment needs than are four-year colleges and universities," he said. "As a result, students can often see a more direct link from the program to a job."

The decline in retention at four-year private colleges was also evident in another finding of the research. This year, retention rates at four-year private colleges (72 percent) fell behind those at four-year public colleges (74 percent) for the first time ever. This outcome may also be related to the economy, suggested Habley.

"Students are better able to afford to return to public colleges than to private schools due to their lower costs," said Habley. "That can play a huge role in a poor economy."

The most recent (2010) version of ACT's periodic research report,

**What Works in Student Retention**, suggested that retention practices have changed in the U.S. over the past several years. Colleges are increasingly using learning assistance measures (such as remedial courses, study groups and tutoring) to help students stay in school. Those measures have moved ahead of academic advising and first-year transition programs to become the top-ranked cluster of retention practices used at four- and two-year colleges.

It was the fourth study of its kind conducted by ACT since 1980. The project surveyed college officials across the U.S. regarding their institution's efforts to retain first-year students.

"Unfortunately, the themes of this periodic study haven't changed much since 1980," said Habley. "Many students still enter college unprepared to succeed, and retention and completion rates haven't changed a lot over the years."

# AUDREY'S SOCIETY WHIRL



By Audrey J. Bernard  
Lifestyles & Society Editor

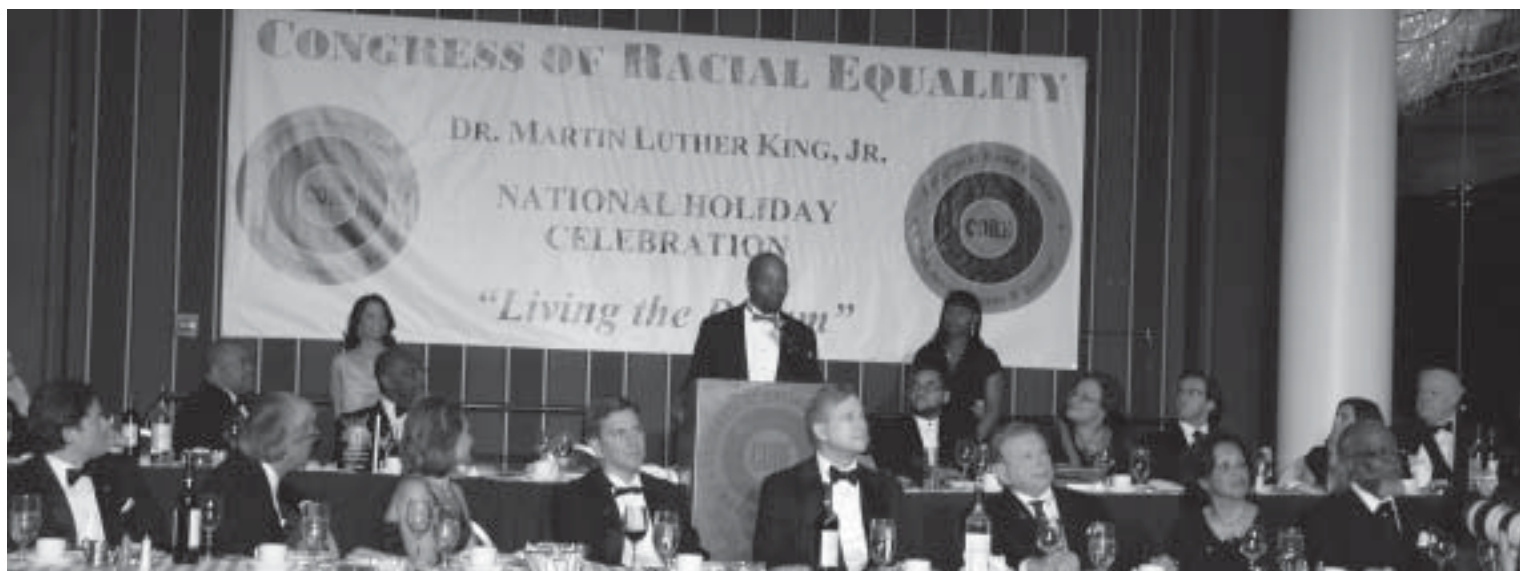
Every year, in observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) hosts an annual Ambassadorial Reception and Awards Dinner in New York City in an effort to bring together the most diverse elements — internationally and domestically — to reflect on how far we have come and commit to even greater progress in the areas of, world peace, justice and brotherhood.

The yearly event has garnered rave recognition for being one of the most popular King's day celebrations. Dr. King's reliance on nonviolent activism became a hallmark of the civil rights movement and primarily responsible for its continued success. The example it set has become widely admired in American politics and was embraced most recently by the highly controversial Tea Party movement.

On Monday, January 17, 2011, the honorable Roy Innis, national chairman, CORE; Herman Cain, president & CEO, THE New Voice, Inc.; Dr. Herbert I. London, president, Hudson Institute; Joseph Lovece, Jr., president, Northstar

## 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

# CORE invites Tea Party activists to its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. gala



Roy Innis, national chairman, Congress of Racial Equality with distinguished dais guests

Foley Contracting; George Holmes, executive director, CORE; and the King federal holiday committee hosted the 26<sup>th</sup> annual MLK, Jr. dinner at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers, 52<sup>nd</sup> Street & 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York City.

With the recent success of the Tea Party, some of its most vocal leaders attended the dinner including Mr. Cain who has been talked about as a potential presidential candidate in 2012; newly elected Congressman Allen West; David Webb, co-founder of Tea Party 360, a NYC-based tea party organization; and Rachel Campos-Duffy, wife of Congressman Sean Duffy, served as a guest presenter. The Duffy's have been very involved in the Tea Party and Congressman Duffy received substantial Tea Party support in his run for Congress.

As for the naysayers and negative press reviews, CORE's executive director, George Holmes, offered, "Cain, West and Webb have

been very pivotal in growing and leading the Tea party movement. This would run contrary to how most critics describe the Tea Party, as all three are African-American."

The civil rights organization uses the awards dinner to recognize individuals, who through their words and actions, have helped to further equality. This year, CORE honored Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s niece, Dr. Alveda King, founder & president, King For America; Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference; and the incomparable old school group, The Delfonics, who thrilled the crowd with a surprise performance of their hit songs, "La La La Means I Love You," and "Didn't I Blow Your Mind."

President Ronald Regan signed the holiday into law in a historic Rose Garden ceremony 25 years ago on January 20, 1996 after

calls for a national holiday to celebrate the most recognized name affiliated with the Civil Rights movement after his assassination in 1968.

Ironically, some 25 years later, the son of President Regan, Michael Reagan, founder & chairman, The Regan Group International, was the keynote speaker and delivered a powerful speech which evoked fond memories of Dr. King's rare legacy that helped serve as an inspiration to so many.

"We at CORE are proud of how we always manage to bring people from disparate backgrounds together to celebrate Dr. King's legacy," stated CORE's national chairman Roy Innis. "In this case we are even more pleased to bring the Tea Party people to our dinner as they have exemplified the spirit of Dr. King and are living the legacy that he helped establish in American politics."

The prestigious celebration kicked off with a reception in the

Empire Ballroom followed by dinner in the Metropolitan Ballroom. Andrew Breitbart, founder, Breitbart.com, served as Master of Ceremonies and an electrifying performance was provided by Alice Tan Ridley, a finalist of "America's Got Talent." Bishop Harry R. Jackson, chairman, High Impact Leadership Coalition delivered the invocation.

"Never has it been more important to emphasize the successful history of nonviolent activism as it was practiced by Dr. King," stated Mr. Innis. "With the country becoming more and more polarized over political issues and the American dialogue becoming more contentious, I am very proud that we can look to the Tea Party as an example of how to make your voice heard in America — at the ballot box and in the halls of Congress. Dr. King would surely be proud of the Tea Party as an heir to his legacy," concluded Mr. Innis.

(Photos by Gerald Peart and Seitu Oronde)



Honorees The Delfonics with their manager Maurice Hart



Prestigious Martin Luther King, Jr. award



Roy Innis, Michael Reagan, Niger Innis



Roy Innis, Jimmy 'The Rent is too Damn High' McMillian



George Holmes, Alice Tan Ridley



Roy Innis, Commissioner Myrtle G. Whitmore

# President of Côte d'Ivoire deplures election double-standard

(from page 2)

On Oct. 31, 2010 there was a presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire. A run-off election was held Nov. 28, 2010 between Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara, a former prime minister under President Felix Houphouët-Boigny and an economist for the International Monetary Fund. The chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) announced that Ouattara was the victor, which pleased Sarkozy and other western leaders who had been supporting Ouattara.

Gbagbo, who was first

elected president of the former French colony a decade ago, said those supporting Ouattara ignored the second part of a two-step electoral process. After some of the ballots were challenged by Gbagbo, the Constitutional Council – the equivalent of the U.S. Supreme Court – ruled that Gbagbo won the run-off with 51.45 percent of the votes, three percentage points higher than Ouattara's 48.55 percent.

"In our constitution, the Independent Electoral Commission is just an administrative body. It organizes the election and it proclaims the provisional results," Gbagbo

explained. "The only institution which by law proclaims the final results, proclaim who won the election and who receives the oath of president is the Constitutional Council."

Sarkozy expressed support for Ouattara before the Constitutional Council issued its ruling.

"The Independent Electoral Commission has announced the results, which signal a clear, indisputable victory for Alassane Ouattara," Sarkozy said on Dec. 4, 2010. "After verification of the votes, the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon

endorsed the result of the ballot and congratulated President-elect M. Ouattara. Following this, President Obama and the European leaders, like me, saluted Alassane Ouattara's victory."

Sarkozy was relying on a 2007 peace agreement that required the United Nations to certify election results. However, Gbagbo asserted that as a sovereign nation, no outside institution is above his country's highest court.

After throwing out voided ballots, the Constitutional Council concluded that Gbagbo had defeated Ouattara 2,054,537 to 1,938,672.

The Constitutional Council is composed of six counselors and a president. Under the constitution, the president of the National Assembly appoints three of the jurists and the president of the country picks three, plus the president of the Constitutional Council.

Critics argue that given its makeup, it is not surprising that Council ruled in Gbagbo's favor. Gbagbo does not deny that most of the justices are his friends, but said that is no different from the president of the United States appointing members of the Supreme Court, pending Senate confirmation.

Gbagbo also noted that the Independent Electoral Commission was heavily packed with Ouattara supporters, a point mentioned in some of the Constitutional Council's documents.

In a signed appeal to voters, dated Nov. 27, 2010, Gbagbo and Ouattara agreed, "We solemnly pledge to accept the election results as declared at the close of polls by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Constitutional Council."

Article 98 of the constitution proclaims, "The decisions of the Constitutional Council are not susceptible to any recourse..."

Instead of accepting the ruling by the country's top court, however, Ouattara claimed victory and called for the physical removal of Gbagbo from Côte d'Ivoire.

He remains ensconced in the Golf Hotel, protected by United Nations troops. The only way to reach or leave the hotel is aboard a U.N. helicopter.

Côte d'Ivoire, once known as the Paris of Africa, is the world's largest producer of cocoa. Its downtown skyline is dotted with impressive skyscrapers. The country is slightly larger than New Mexico and has a population of approximately 21 million.

Ethnic, geographical, and religious factors are part of the tension between supporters of each candidate. Gbagbo is a Christian from the Bete ethnic group and

lives in the south. Ouattara is a Muslim, a member of the Dioula group, whose supporters are mostly in the northern part of the country, a section held by rebels who initiated a civil war less than two years after Gbagbo became president.

Gbagbo said he was under pressure to hold elections in 2010 even though the international community that now opposes him never insisted that rebels lay down their guns as part of the peace process.

"Many Americans don't even know what is Côte d'Ivoire," said Gbagbo. "When I was in the U.S., I was obliged to say we are between Ghana and Liberia... So when they tell them there's a dictator somewhere in a country called Côte d'Ivoire who lost the election and doesn't want to go, they take it. It's very easy when it concerns Africa because they say, 'Well, it's Africa.'"

Gbagbo, a former college professor, has a Ph.D in history and wrote his dissertation on French colonization of Africa. He said many of the problems on the continent stem from the relationship between African leaders and their old colonial powers.

That alone, however, does not explain why there is such widespread opposition to Gbagbo. The U.N., France, the U.S., the African Union, the Central Bank of West African States and the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) all assert that Ouattara is the duly elected president.

When asked about African opposition to his remaining in power, the prideful Pan-Africanist became subdued, selecting his words carefully.

"English-speaking countries that were colonized by Great Britain do not suffer the pressure from their colonial power as former French colonies," Gbagbo stated. "The French have a stronger impact on its former colonies than English-speaking superpowers. That's a factual situation. Other than that, our French-speaking countries are more fragile than English-speaking countries."

In other words, some African leaders feel intense economic pressure to do the bidding of France.

Not everyone accepts that explanation.

Abdul-Rahma, writing in a column for GhanaWeb.com, said: "...The Ivorian problem is not an issue of colonial imperialism, but a determined effort by a tyrant to defy the will of his people and of the international community."

Some critics are trying to use the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and other troubled Black countries as an excuse to reintroduce colonialism.

In his Jan. 11 column in the *Wall Street Journal*, Bret

## Gbagbo recalls his special connection to Blacks in the U.S.

By George E. Curry  
NNPA Special Correspondent  
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**ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire** – Laurent Gbagbo, who has served as president of Côte d'Ivoire for 10 years, has always had a special connection to the United States.

"I visited the United States many times," he recalled in an exclusive interview with the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) News Service. "The first time was in 1980." As part of his study abroad, he visited New York, Washington, Boston, Philadelphia, and Memphis, which holds a special place in his heart.

"I visited Memphis, the city of the blues," he recalled. "...I saw B.B. King in Memphis, with his big earring and his guitar. I saw him perform. I saw John Hooker. I saw him perform. But, the artist I loved dearly and I have all of his documented life is Ray Charles.

"Ray Charles' life is a real defiance of nature. This is a man who when 5 years old, lost his brother. The seventh year, he became blind. Fifteen years, he lost his mom and his dad. So, when he was 15, he could not see, he had no parents, but when he died in 2004, he was one of the richest performers in the world. This is what I call a fighter. I like people who fight to make it in life, who start from scratch and reach the top level of their life. The fight of his life is more important to me than his voice."

Gbagbo also said he was inspired by civil rights fighters in the U.S. "When we were young, we listened to everything. I listened to Cassius Clay, who became Muhammad Ali. I listened to Carmichael – Stokely Carmichael – whom I met before he died. I met him in Senegal. He was in Guinea, where he married Miriam Makeba. I listened to Malcolm X and then Martin Luther King.

"For us young Africans who were far from the United States, we didn't know what was the best attitude, the best path to follow to end what was not an



President Laurent Gbagbo

inside problem to America. It was a worldwide problem, the problem of segregation of Blacks. We are Black so we felt concerned about what was happening in the United States." And, he paid special attention to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Among all the problems we have, Martin Luther King has indicated one important way to resolve the problems: triumph without war," Gbagbo said. He said he noticed how King used non-violence in dismantling racial segregation in the U.S. and how South Africa, to a less extent, used non-violence to eradicate apartheid.

"Black Americans should not think that the teachings of Martin Luther King are only for them," he said. "It's a teaching. It has to be implemented, it give results, extraordinary results."

And when Gbagbo visited America, he made an extraordinary effort to visit Memphis.

"In Memphis, I saw the motel

where Martin Luther King was killed," he recalled. "We went to see the room. There were some flowers at the door where he was shot. After that, I saw that the place had been changed into a foundation, a Martin Luther King Foundation. It's a good thing." Gbagbo recently announced that he has asked Charles Steele, Jr., immediate past president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the organization co-founded by King, to create the Charles Steele Jr. Peace and Nonviolence Center in Abidjan. Gbagbo said he would be the first volunteer to undergo special training in nonviolence.

Once that's established, he won't have to make so many trips to Memphis to rekindle the memory of Dr. King.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 35)

# Beacon On

## 'Dreamgirl' Jennifer Hudson christens 'Disney Dream' cruise ship

By Audrey J. Bernard  
Lifestyles & Society Editor

PORT CANAVERAL, FL- Walt Disney Company president and CEO **Bob Iger** and Walt Disney Parks & Resorts chairman **Tom Staggs** joined a host of Disney characters to officially christen Disney's newest gem in the ocean, *Disney Dream*, on Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2011. The weather perfect day was filled with pomp, circumstance and wonderment!

Oscar-winning actress and Grammy Award-winning singer **Jennifer Hudson**, who was named Godmother of the 130,000-ton ship, attended the gala ceremony and joined scores of singers and dancers for a lively send-off which was attended by thousands of guests from all over the world including celebrities, media and members of the public.

After an explosive performance, Hudson, joined by Iger and Staggs, and surrounded by the Disney Family of characters, christened the new *Disney Dream* cruise ship. The excitement mounted as a helicopter hoisted a 16-foot champagne bottle across the bow of the *Disney Dream*. And as fireworks lit the sky and warmed the hearts of onlookers the newest luxury liner was welcomed to the Disney Cruise Line family.

Ironically, Hudson's dreams of stardom began when she was a performer on the Disney Wonder ship in 2003 and went on to star in the "Dreamgirl" movie and win an Oscar for her dynamic performance. After breaking the ceremonial bottle of Champagne, thousands set sail to Disney's private island, Castaway Cay in the Bahamas.

"For over a decade, Disney Cruise Line has been making vacation dreams come true for millions of families and we continue that tradition today with the launch of the *Disney Dream*," Iger said. "The mix of imagination and innovation found on the *Disney Dream* is unparalleled and elevates the family cruise experience to new heights."

The new, 130,000-ton ship accommodates up to 4,000 guests and features themed areas for children, teens and adults, and interactive entertainment throughout the ship, and industry firsts including the first "water-coaster" at sea.

The ship will sail three-, four- and five-night cruises to the Bahamas, calling Port Canaveral home. The Dream is the newest Disney Cruise Line ship and will have its maiden voyage Jan. 26, 2011. The luxurious cruise liner joins the 2,700-passenger **Disney Magic** and **Disney Wonder**, with the **Disney Fantasy** scheduled to join the fleet in 2012.

"The addition of the *Disney Dream* provides an opportunity to extend our horizons and open up Disney cruising to more families," Staggs said. "From the majestic beauty of Alaska, to the culture and history of Europe, to the fun and sun of the Caribbean, families looking to take a Disney cruise have more options than ever before."

(Photos courtesy Disney/Gene Duncan, photographer)



Oscar-winning actress and Grammy Award-winning singer Jennifer Hudson (left) poses Jan. 19, 2011 at Port Canaveral, Fla. with Walt Disney Company president and CEO Robert A. Iger (middle), Walt Disney Parks and Resorts chairman Thomas O. Staggs (right) and a ceremonial bottle of Champagne at the christening ceremony for the new Disney Dream cruise ship.



Dream Come True-Fireworks light up the sky over the new Disney Dream cruise ship at gala christening ceremony

# The Scene



(L-R) Denise, Diandra, Dennis, Jr and their grandfather Don Thomas (New York Beacon's entertainment editor) stand in front of Mickey Mouse statue displaying Disney Dream celebration poster during post christening celebration held at Port Canaveral, Florida  
(Photo taken by one of passengers)

(from page 27)

That afternoon we headed back to Florida, as we enjoyed the rest of this fabulous Disney Dream.

During that evening, we went to dinner at the Royal Palace. Our 3 servers were great and they took care of all our needs. After dinner, we went to the gift shop and brought souvenirs for our family and ourselves.

Denise and I went to the Teen Club Vibe to hang out with the teens and Disney counselors made smoothies for us. We had smoothies and nachos and then we went over to the big plush pillows and sat down. They put on the movie "Cool Runnings" and we watched the movie. We got up and left because we were really tired and had to get up early the next morning.

When we woke up the next morning, we had to get ready quickly and pack up our bags. The housekeeper who was taking care of our stateroom came and took our bags. Afterwards, we walked downstairs and went to the Royal Palace for breakfast. We were served by our 3 waiters for the last time on the Disney Dream.

Breakfast was delicious and

after that, we exited the ship. We went downstairs and grabbed our luggage and proceeded through customs. After that, we boarded the Disney Cruise Coach buses which would take us back to the airport.

It was raining outside and we were so sad to leave. When we arrived at the Orlando Airport, we checked our luggage and went to the gate to wait for our Jet Blue flight. Our flight was originally supposed to be at 12:25, but was delayed to 1:30. We just sat around in the airport chatting about the fabulous time we had until it was time to board the plane.

It was a bumpy plane ride because of the bad weather in New York City but we landed in John F. Kennedy airport around 4pm. We retrieved our luggage from baggage claim and my father met us outside. It was very weird because we were just in such nice hot weather a couple hours ago and now we returned to this horrible weather in New York. When we were driving home, we were thinking about how beautiful the Disney Dream Cruise Ship was and all of the things we did. We had a great time and we hoped that we can experience something like that again.



(L-R) The Coke Clan darn yellow safety jackets before swimming in 9 feet of ocean in the Bahamas to checkout the Pelican Plunge floating platform water slide (in background) during Disney Dream activities at Castaway Cay Island  
(Photo: Don Thomas)

# 22 Equal access dominates discussions during NNPA confab

NEW YORK BEACON, January 27, 2011 - February 2, 2011 newyorkbeacon.net

By Richette L. Haywood  
NNPA Contributor

St. Thomas, VI – Equal access. Those two words dominated discussions, during the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) 2011 Mid-Winter Conference. Recognizing the need to grow its reach into federal and corporate arenas, the oldest and most influential Black newspaper association had executives/consultants from the top 25 Fortune 500 companies and industry insiders present the publishers with concrete lessons learned and best practices to expand its penetration into those markets during the country's economic recovery.

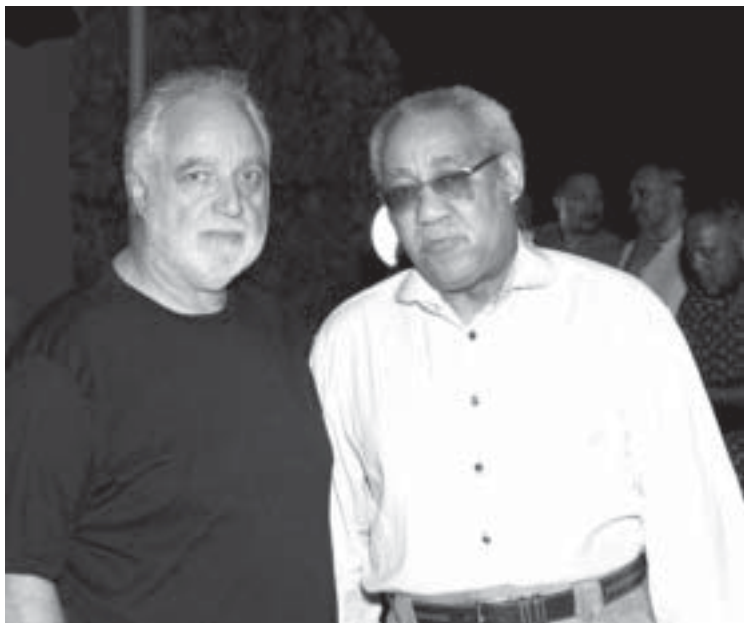
"We pride ourselves on being very on point. We focus on the influence that we have. And, we have a responsibility to enhance the quality of life for our Black brothers and sisters," NNPA Chair Danny J. Bakewell, Sr. told the group. Collectively, the association needs to implement a strategy to gain equal access to advertising revenue. Based upon an audit of the country's Black owned and operated newspapers, Chuck Morrison, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Uniworld, pointed out that the Black Press had no advertising reciprocity, based on the data he compiled. Specifically, he said that of the top 25 companies with a significant market share in the African American community, some firms did no advertising with the Black Press during the review period. The 13 worst offenders, in alphabetical order were; Allstate, Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler, Coke, Kraft, Johnson & Johnson, Miller Coors, Nissan, Pepsi, Sony, Toyota, U.S. government and Walt Disney. The companies that consistently spent advertising dollars with the Black Press, in alphabetical order, are; AT&T, Comcast, Ford, General Motors, Home Depot, and Macys.

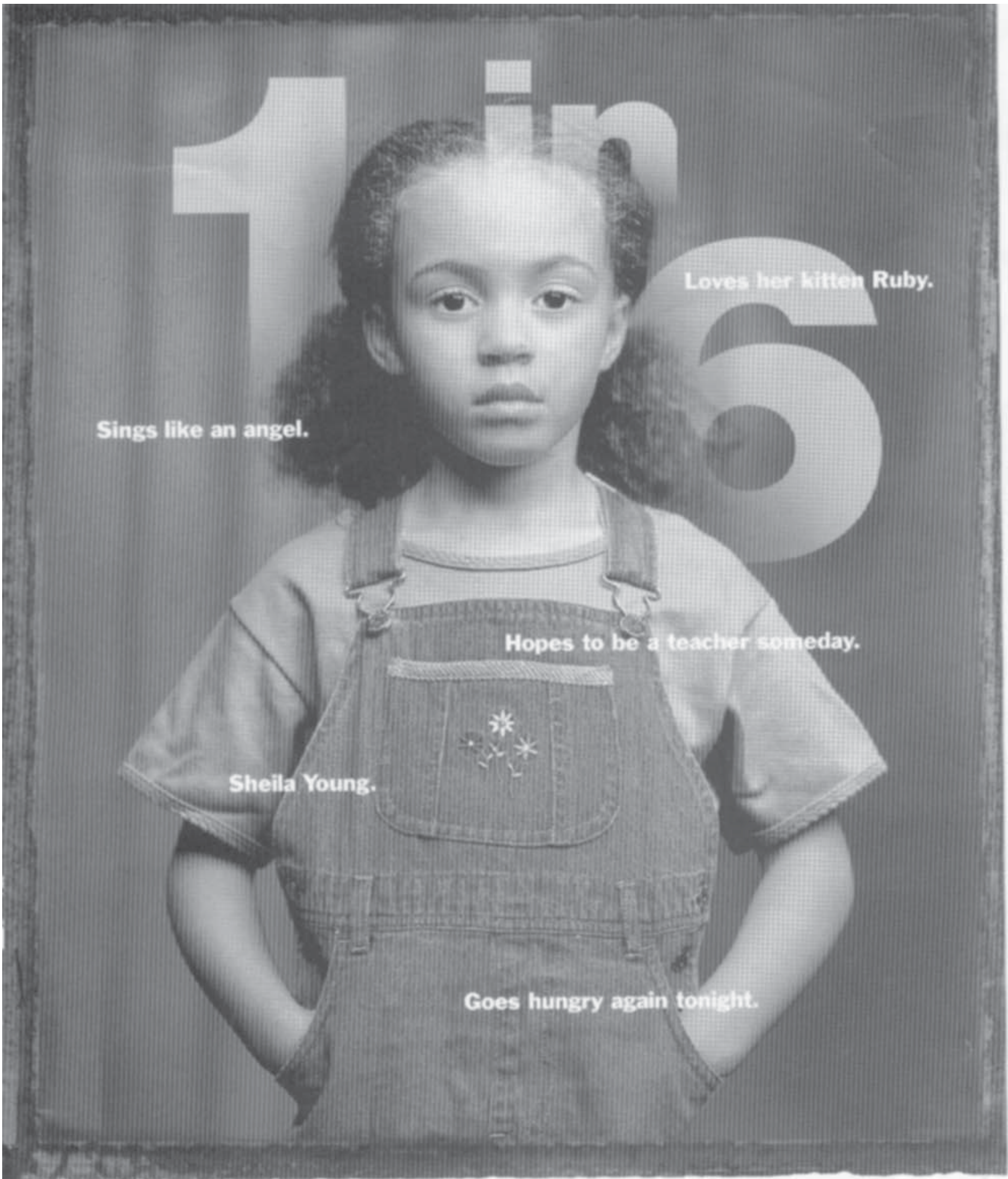
Developing strategic approaches positioning the Black Press to gain equal access to federal and corporate advertising dollars were discussed during several workshops. Dennis Hunn, NNPA Executive Vice President Advertising and Marketing stressed "... we need to know where we are, de-

fine where we need to be, and, finally, develop a step by step plan to describe how we get there." Among the strategies discussed to help the newspapers generate revenue was marketing and special events. In addition, as a part of its overall strategy, the NNPA is developing an enhanced infrastructure to expedite execution of its internal processes.

The call for equal access did not end with its members. But, extended to the people of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, the conference site. Mr. Bakewell told the publishers the association's support of the U.S. Virgin Islands 30-year agreement with the owners of locally produced Cruzan Rum, was the right thing to do. The Black Press will continue to support economic development in St. Thomas, specifically as it applies to the competition between St. Thomas and Puerto Rico to secure the manufacturing rights for Cruzan Rum. Nathan Simmonds, Senior Policy Advisor for the United States Virgin Islands told the publishers "the benefits of the rum agreement are not just paper deals." Economically, the agreement with the company will generate \$50 million in revenue this year and is projected to triple within in the next six years. Applauding the publishers for not "believing the hype", Mr. Simmonds said "thank you for getting the facts and utilizing your power of the press to help us move forward."

During the closing night Salute Dinner, award winning actress and author Victoria Rowell thanked the membership for its coverage of the on-going challenge faced by Blacks to gain equal access to jobs in the entertainment industry. She commended the association for its support that recently resulted in the hiring of the first African American writer on the popular daytime soap opera "Young and the Restless", where she appeared for 17 years. "This is only step one" said Rowell, referring to the three time award winning writer being hired on a six week trial basis for the show. "None of this could have been expedited had it not been for you. The Black Press has always been good to us. We have a long way to go in Hollywood. But, none of this could have happened, the way it happened, had it not been for the Black Press. We need access. And, this is what the fight is about."





Sings like an angel.

Loves her kitten Ruby.

Hopes to be a teacher someday.

Sheila Young.

Goes hungry again tonight.

**One out of every six children in America is living in a state of poverty.** And that's one too many American dreams broken. One too many American childhoods at risk, threatened by the daily struggle to secure enough food, enough shelter, enough medicine just to survive. Nearly 12,000,000 precious lives hanging in a brutally uncertain balance. Sixteen percent of all our children **POVERTY.** — a poverty rate that's higher than any other age group. But who cares to notice? **America's forgotten state.**



Designer Irina Shabayeva

From the moment I laid eyes on **Irina Shabayeva** as a contestant on Project Runway's sixth season, I knew she was special. It came as no surprise that the Russian born, Brooklyn, NY-raised designer went on to win the top prize by impressing the judges and fashionistas week after week; and her final runway show at Bryant Park pushed her over the top and established her seat at the exemplary designer's table.

The Parsons New School design graduate is as book smart as she's fashion savvy. Recently, she entered into a dream retail partnership with Macy's, I-N-C International Concepts. The fresh new designer premiered her new line at Trump SOHO on Tuesday, January 18, 2011. The line is set to debut on February 19 in 40 Macy's stores including the flagship store in Herald Square; Union Square (San Francisco); Aventura and Miami International (Miami); State Street (Chicago), and on Macys.com.

The collection is fresh, fluid, *funtastic* and fabulous! Shabayeva's stunningly beautiful 13 piece first capsule collection will take fashionistas from day to night. The line includes colors and patterns inspired by a Rubik's Cube with strong splashes of bright bubblegum brights against black ground party tones.

The collection features form fitting dresses, tops, skirts, jackets, and denim. And the best part of her ingenuity is in the tag line; affordable prices that will range from \$40.00 to \$150.00. Standout pieces included a very sexy and curvy little black dress, embellished all over with sparkly studs and jewels and worn by Shabayeva. The designer has also created a *sexsational* shoe line in shades of black, ecru, pink and gold. *Shaba-daba-do!*

**CATWALKIN'** with Fashion & Beauty Editor Audrey J. Bernard

# Shabayeva's collection is fresh, fluid, *funtastic* & fabulous!



Tim Adams (Chief Private Brand Officer, Macy's Merchandising Group), Irina Shabayeva (designer), Nancy Slavin (Senior Vice President of Marketing-Macy's)



Irina Shabayeva (designer), Freddie Leiba (fashion stylist)



Irina Shabayeva collection for INC exclusively at Macy's



(from page 17)

pressed immense frustration with the Bloomberg administration for not truly listening to education stakeholders. At the heart of this issue is mayoral control and the rubberstamp board, the Panel for Educational Policy.

Muba YaroFulani, parent and member of the Coalition for Public Education, co-sponsors of the rally on the 27<sup>th</sup> explained that,

"Under mayoral control the DOE continues to fail our children in the traditional NYC public schools and has used the destructive action of closing our schools within this city. Closing our schools is no more than a business deal for the Mayor, not a solution for our children. CPE/CEP says end mayor control, now."

Tom Siracuse of the Manhattan Local of the Green Party NYS, a co-sponsor of the rally, continued, "We are firmly opposed to the closing of schools

and extension of privately run charters through the process of Mayor Bloomberg's top down business model of Mayoral Control. This approach demoralizes communities dividing teachers and parents. We support a democratically governed school system with full parent and teacher involvement. The schools are not a business and students are not commodities."

Parents, educators, and stu-

dents have also highlighted the inequitable and racially charged nature of Mr. Bloomberg's educational policies. Both the recent fight at the John Jay Campus and the epic fight at Jamaica High school, are clear cases where historic issues of inequity and lack of DOE support have led to these schools being undermined.

Said John Yanno, a teacher at John Jay and a member of GEM, "We are fighting for justice. The John Jay Campus community is demanding the DOE make this commitment to all schools. The schools in John Jay have been underfunded and allowed to deteriorate. The fact that funds to fix our crumbling school are contingent on the co-location of a selective school is a slap in the face of every student in our building. The DOE needs to commit itself to improving the three schools already located in the John Jay Campus."

Concluded James Eterno, a teacher and UFT Chapter Leader at Jamaica High School, "Creating separate and unequal schools in

NYC is not what the Supreme Court had in mind when they decided the landmark *Brown v Board of Education* decision back in 1954 but that is where we have ended up under Bloomberg's reign. Now is the time to stand up and say stop the madness of school closings and co-locations and fix the public schools we have."

Fight Back Friday participants included: PS 24K, PS 15K, Jamaica High School, John Dewey High School, Lehman High School, PS 165, Murry Bergtraum, James Baldwin, Humanities Prep, Paul Robeson, The Academy for Environmental Leadership, The Earth School, PS 3K among others. Endorsers included: Grassroots Education Movement (GEM), CEC1, Concerned Advocates for Public Education (CAPE), Coalition for Public Education (CPE), Manhattan Local of the Green Party NYS, Youth on the Move (a program of Mothers on the Move), Center for Immigrant Families (CIF), and New York Collective of Radical Educators (NYCORE).

## South Africa's Black economic empowerment program has failed

(from page 12)

tor each group. You can't tell me that the colored, Indians, and Chinese endured apartheid in an equal manner to Blacks. The typical executive in South Africa makes \$80,000 per year.

A typical Black makes \$800 per year. This disparity is intolerable and must be dealt with immediately. Entrepreneurship and business development are the direct ways to

correcting the situation.

Collectively, South Africa is a financially strong nation. It is the only first world nation on the continent of Africa.

The problem is the distribution of wealth. Some of the richest families in the world reside in South Africa while the poverty levels rival many third world nations. The crime and violence are rampant and soon, if they don't address it, it will evolve into rebellion and than full scale revo-

lution. The time for change is immediate and the potential for greatness is obviously attainable, if the leaders would become more accountable and take their people to greatness. There is no other nation on earth with such potential for great change. God bless South Africa.

*Mr. Alford is the co-founder, president/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce®. Website: www.nationalbcc.org. Email: halford@nationalbcc.org.*

## Uganda preparing to vote with Chinese guns, tanks

(from page 10)

"laughable hallucinations".

South African professor Tinyiko Sam Maluleke, recently returned from Uganda, in a recent article, commented on the President's recent venture as a rap music recording star and remarked on the length of his service: "Here is a man in power for 25 years — Ugandan youngsters have known no other president and now they also know him as a rap artist. "But must Museveni rule for-

ever? What does it say about the country? How will Ugandans ever know what they are missing unless they give themselves a Museveni-less five years?"

Eight candidates are in the lead for the upcoming vote. Long time opposition figure Warren Kizza Besigye Kifefe appears still short of votes to beat President Museveni.

Other candidates include Norbert Mao, former U.N. Ambassador Olanna Otunnu, and Beti Olive Kama, of the Uganda Federal Alliance, on an anti-corruption platform.

## Wikileaks is spark to 'People Power' uprising in Tunisia

(from page 10)

tionally creating chaos. French officials also defended the leadership in their former colony.

The uprising has fired up activists in other African and Arab states. "I feel like we are a giant step closer to our own liberation," remarked Egyptian human rights activist Hossam Bahgat. "...literally days ago the (Tunisian) regime seemed unshakable, and then democracy prevailed without a single Western state lifting a finger."

Ben Ali's excesses and an unbroken 23-year reign were tolerated by western nations because he co-operated in the "War on Terror."

But, in diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, U.S. Ambassador William Hudson admitted that Tunisia was riddled with corruption — from bribery and corruption among security forces and police, to influence peddling, kickbacks, to outsized avarice by the Ben Ali family.

"The main problem is that there has long been a double standard, under both Republican and Demo-

cratic (U.S.) administrations, of looking the other way when the dictatorship happens to be a U.S. ally..." said Professor and Middle East expert Stephen Zunes.

"We have just seen something we haven't witnessed in a North African, or Arab, country for donkey years, said Ugandan journalist Charles Onyango-Obbo. "Africa has the world's youngest, and also poorest, population. We could be seeing the beginnings of their uprising, which could be the defining feature of our politics for the next 25 years."

## News reports do not mirror reality in Côte d'Ivoire

(from page 8)

following day we flew to Abidjan with Boston Goke, a member of the Paris collective, who is fluent in both French and English. Except for the local and U.N. soldiers, there was nothing unusual about the airport in Abidjan. There were the usual whining overhead fans, taxi drivers looking for newly-arrived passengers, and lines of people boarding and exiting planes.

The ride downtown was a stark reminder that we were in a developing country. There were the usual tin shacks that make our wooden shotgun houses in the U.S. seem opulent. Some kids were running around in their birthday suits and reminders of poverty were everywhere. Unlike many Third World countries where

visitors are besieged by beggars, people here were always trying to sell us something — water, batteries, DVDs, clothing and everything else imaginable.

No image stood out more than the piles and piles of garbage throughout the city, an example of the toll that a national crisis has exacted on residents.

And, people of all ages shifted through filthy trash. There were also wealthy sections of the city, recognized by marked a protective U.N. vehicles stationed nearby.

Prior to arriving in Côte d'Ivoire, I had visited four countries in Africa — Egypt, Ghana, Senegal, and Nigeria — as well as the back roads of Cuba. But, none of those trips came close to matching the sight of the glistening skyline that characterizes downtown Côte d'Ivoire. There are markets throughout the city,

all crowded with local residents.

Unlike the western world, people here are not consumed with the nation's intractable political crisis.

"People here just want peace and jobs," a woman who divides her time between Paris and Côte d'Ivoire told me. "We've had the election. We want one of them to step aside so that we can go on with our lives."

Contrary to news reports, many are already doing just that. 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, [www.georgecurry.com](http://www.georgecurry.com) You can also follow him at [www.twitter.com/currygeorge](http://www.twitter.com/currygeorge).

## Mayor Bloomberg launches NYC Urban Technology Innovation center

(from page 2)

tion has recognized that our universities generate the scientific knowledge and technological innovation central to maintaining both our urban environment and our economic dynamism," said Columbia University President Lee C. Bollinger. "With Columbia's deep history of pioneering research in engineering and applied science, we are proud to join with the City and our academic partners in hosting this public-private collaboration that will lead to new sustainable solutions and new entrepreneurial opportunities in New York."

"Polytechnic Institute of New York University is proud to bring to the NYC UTIC partnership our innovative scholarship in engineering smart cities," said Jerry M. Hultin, President of NYU-Poly. "New York City, with its intellectual and financial might, is the ideal laboratory to advance technology that will improve the quality of life for urban dwellers, who now comprise more than half the world's population."

"CUNY is delighted to be a partner in the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center — a

wonderful example of a collaborative project between city government, academic institutions and the business community," said CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. "With the goal of accelerating the deployment of sustainable technologies to our city's buildings, NYC UTIC will have a significant impact on our local economy. We are pleased to join with our academic partners, Columbia University, and NYU-Poly, and thank Distinguished Professor Robert (Buz) Paaswell and Michael Bobker, Director of the CUNY Institute for Urban Systems' Building Performance Lab, for leading the CUNY arm of this collaboration."

"IBM plans to collaborate with the NYC Urban Technology Innovation Center to apply advanced computing technology — such as cloud computing, real-time analytics, and supercomputing, for example — to help make New York City a global leader in deploying smart-building technologies," said Dr. Katherine Frase, Vice President, IBM Research. "This approach will help building owners in the city increase the attractiveness, efficiency and sustainability of their real estate through significant improvements in how they use energy, water and other resources."

# WHAT'S GOING ON

By Victoria Horsford

More than 600 New York culturati, celebrities, and fourth estaters attended the Schomburg Center's 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala and Tribute to Howard Dodson, an event of great scale, inspiration and imagination, which was held at Harlem's Aaron Davis Hall on Jan. 24. The evening boasted multiple celebrations. It was a celebration of the evolution of Black culture from its African genesis to the New World and beyond, in a multi-media, all-star program produced by theatre/dance luminary George Faison; and it was a celebration of the Schomburg stewardship, Howard Dodson, the departing Schomburg Chief and Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Schomburg director-designate. During a poignant moment, Dodson presented a symbolic key to Muhammad who expressed his euphoria while "receiving the key to the Schomburg kingdom." It was the perfect pre-Black History Month fete.

## BREAKING NEWS

HAITI is commanding lots of media attention and it is not about its post-earthquake holocaust. Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Baby Doc Duvalier, 59, returned to his native island in the sun and no one understands why. His visit was not a surprise because he had to obtain a diplomatic visa, obtained with the approval of the French and American governments. Stories about Baby Doc's health are plentiful ranging from a lupus condition to his battle with pancreatic cancer, which would explain his frail look. Last week's NY Carib News reported that exiled Bertrand Aristide would return to Haiti imminently.

Why has Duvalier returned? According to his 1/21 press conference remarks he says that he returned to help the country. Yeah, right! Some speculate that he returned in a ploy necessary to extricate \$6 million in "locked" funds from his Swiss bank account. One of the most provocative media stories about Baby Doc's return was the Amy Goodwin Democracy Now interview with Haitian journalist Kim Ives, Haiti Liberte editor. Ives said, "Duvalier's presence will allow the US and France to install their preferred candidate in a run-off election set for February" He continued, "The international community has threatened current Haitian President (Preval) with exile if he does not comply with the results of last November's election," which means withdrawing support for Jude

Celestin, who came in second of the top three presidential candidates, from a crowded field of contenders. Ives emphasized. "Outsiders want a contest between Mirlande Manigat, a neo-Duvalierist and Michel Martelly, a musician" Entire interview is accessible online.

Recommended reading about post earthquake Haiti includes Haitian activist Patrick Elie's essay "Haiti Is Controlled by Foreign Governments and Foreign Interests" and Wesleyan Professor Alex Dupuy's essay "Haiti: Transformed Into the Republic of NGOs."

## POP CULTURE

Congrats. The NY Daily News, the city's premier tabloid newspaper named African American Robert Moore, 40, managing editor.

BET Co-founder Sheila Johnson partners with the HuffingtonPost to launch new HP section, "HuffPost Global Black," its first ethnic category which debuts in March. A HP Latino section is in the works to debut this year.

New television broadcast syndication queen Wendy Williams will host a new, half-hour, dating show, LOVE TRIANGLES, which is described as a "cross between a game and a talk show" with lie detectors." Love Triangles debuts an April 18 launch. Re: flagship The Wendy Williams Show, on 1/25 Wendy did hour-long hot topics, the latest gossip, which is her métier. Wendy, do more of same coupled with more audience interaction.

Congratulations to St. Lucia poet/writer Derek Walcott won the prestigious T.S. Eliot Prize for Poetry on January 24, for his latest collection, "White Egrets."

## EDUCATION OPPS

The US Department of Education and its partners are hiring professionals with graduate degrees and four-years employment experience to work as managers in education systems across the country. The managers' salary ranges from \$85,000 to \$95,00 plus benefits. The Broad Residency in Urban Education, a nationwide leadership development program, places participants in full-time management positions in state and federal departments of education school districts and charter management organization. Visit [www.broadresidency.org](http://www.broadresidency.org) for more extensive program info. Application deadline is 2/7.

WANTED: The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History seeks nomina-



**CHANGING OF THE GUARD**—Howard Dodson gives key to the Schomburg Kingdom to Khalil Gibran Muhammad

tions for its \$10,000 National History Teacher of the Year Award given to the best American history and/or social studies teacher (grades K-6) in the USA. Finalists in all 50 states are awarded \$1000. Nominations are open to public: students, parents, teachers. Sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, Preserve America and History (The History Channel), the \$10,000 National History Teacher of the Year Award nomination deadline is February 1. Visit [gilderlehrman.org/nhtoy](http://gilderlehrman.org/nhtoy) or [emailnhtoy@gilderlehrer.org](mailto:emailnhtoy@gilderlehrer.org) or call 646.366.9666 for Award and Nominations specifics.

## JAN/FEB EVENTS

Now until January 30: Check out storewide sale of clothes and accessories at Harlem's premier boutique, The Scarf Lady, which closes its doors on 1/30. Founding fashionista Paulette Gay died last month. Located at 408 Malcolm X Blvd, 130/131 Streets. Scarf Lady hours are Tuesday/Saturday, 12-7 pm and Sunday, 12-6 pm.

January 27/31: Ebony, Fashion Fair Cosmetics and Macy's will celebrate the life of fashion icon Eunice Johnson with a month-long Tribute/Retro-

spective tour, at national Macy's outlets, which debuts at Macy's Herald Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, NY, on January 27. The Tribute, a new incarnation of the Ebony Fashion Fair Shows, will showcase some of the haute couture designs from Mrs. Johnson's private collection, many of which were featured in the annual touring Ebony Fashion Shows, themselves fundraisers which benefited Black charities. Designs by Stephen Burrows, Yves St. Laurent, Lanvin and B. Michael are the centerpiece of the Tribute to Eunice Johnson, visionary and wife of John Johnson, founder of Ebony and Jet magazines, a part of the Johnson Publications empire. The Eunice Johnson Tribute begins its national 10-city tour on February 1. Last Sunday's Macy's ads in the NY Times and NY Daily News announced the Tribute and Celebration of Black History Month. Visit [macys.com/celebrate](http://macys.com/celebrate) for more info.

February 3 is NON-PROFIT DAY in Brooklyn. The Neighborhood Technical Assistance Clinic (NTAC) hosts its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Capacity Builder Awards, which are given to six individuals and corporations who have played significant roles in building, shaping

and bridging communities, at the Concord Baptist Church of Christ, located at 833 Marcy Avenue, corner of Madison Ave, Brooklyn, 11216. The 2011 NTAC Awardees are Richard Brown, VP American Express; The Patrina Foundation; JP Morgan Chase; Macy's; and Jasmine Thomas of the Surdina Foundation. Valerie Oliver Durrah is the NTAC executive director For more info, call 718.455.3784 or [jotform.com](http://jotform.com).

February 4/5/6: The National Black Touring Circuit, Woodie King, Jr., Producer/Director, in association with the Voza Rivers/New Heritage Theatre Group and the Dwyer Cultural Center present a revival of "When the Chickens Came Home to Roost" starring Ted Lange and Marcus Naylor a riveting, spellbinding drama about the dissolution of the relationship between Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, starring Ted Lange and Marcus Taylor. Written by Laurence Holder in 1981, "When The Chickens Came Home To Roost" will be performed at the Dwyer, located at 258 St. Nicholas Avenue, 123 Street, Harlem. All ticket are \$20. For performance schedule and reservation, visit [www.theatermania.com](http://www.theatermania.com) or call 866.811.4111.

February 12: The African American Museum of the East End Presents its first Benefit fundraiser, the WINTER CRYSTAL BALL, at 230 Elm Street, Southampton, NY, from 8 pm to midnight. Patrons are encouraged to dress to impress. Among the evening offerings are music by Diversified Sounds, all night cash bar, and 50/50 raffle. Tickets are \$30. For more info or reservations, call 631.965.0721 or 631.369.6163.

February 14: Marcia Gay Harden, Mira Nair, Deborah Roberts, Leslie Uggams, Verinca Webb, Lynn Whitfield and the Apollo Theater are the key players of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual DINING WITH THE DIVAS LUNCHEON, a celebration of extraordinary women, benefiting the Apollo's Education and Community Programs. Divas will be serenaded by the Abyssinian Baptist Church Women's Choir at the Apollo at 253 West 125 Street Harlem. For info, contact [sharland.norris@apollotheater.org](mailto:sharland.norris@apollotheater.org) or 212.531.5330.

AQUARIAN BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS to Faye Rodney, Lois Bellamy Paula Bodin, Joyce Coppin, Vonetta Horsford, Oprah Winfrey, Chris Rock Jerry Springer, Tatyana Ali, Michael Jordan, Sonny Stitt, Kerry Washington and Derek Walcott.

Victoria Horsford is a Harlem-based culture historian/journalist and public relations consultant. Email: [Victoriahorsford@yahoo.com](mailto:Victoriahorsford@yahoo.com)



By Don Thomas

*A Fantastic Voyage*

# Our amazing experience aboard the Disney Dream Cruise Ship

By Denise, 17, Diandra, 15 and Dennis Coke, Jr 11

Our journey to the new Disney Dream Cruise Ship christening launch celebration started on a cold Tuesday, Jan., 18 afternoon. We woke up and were so excited to begin our adventure. We took showered and dressed and headed to the airport around 2:30 pm, as our father Dennis Coke, Sr., drove us, (Denise, Dennis Jr., Diandra and our grandfather Don Thomas to John F. Kennedy airport. It was so weird because we had a 5:20 flight on Jet Blue and we had to be at the airport a little earlier to go through security scanning. We were finished with everything around 3pm and we went to our gate to wait to board the plane.

We boarded the plane around 5pm and took off. We landed in Orlando, Florida around 7:30 and we were picked up at the airport by the Disney Magical Express. It was so weird because we just came out of the cold New York City weather into this beautiful, humid Florida weather.

The Disney Magical Express took all the invited guests to the different hotels located inside Disney World and we waited for our stop at the Grand Floridian Hotel located in the Magic Kingdom. The hotel was absolutely beautiful. When we walked in our jaws dropped and our eyes almost popped out of our heads. The architectural design of the hotel was extraordinary and it resembled hotels that you only see in the movies.

We were so excited as we were jumped for joy. We checked in and made our way to our hotel room. After we got situated, we walked to the café and got some pizza, juice and snacks to last us for the night. We went to bed afterwards because we had to wake up very early the next morning to leave the hotel and head to the buses to Port Canaveral where the Disney Dream Cruise Ship was located. We were so tired but we had to get up because if we didn't get to the buses on time, they would leave us. After we were finished getting ready, we walked over to the building where the buses and breakfast was located. They gave everyone a colored paper bag with a Disney character on it which indicated what bus we would board. We were on the pink Minnie Mouse bus. When they called our card, we all boarded the bus and they took us to Port Canaveral.

It was a 90 minute ride and when we arrived at Port Canaveral, we started smiling with joy. The ship looked huge from



(L-R) Diandra Coke, Denise Coke, Dennis Coke, Jr and their grandfather Don Thomas (New York Beacon's entertainment editor) strike a pose in front of The Disney Dream Cruise Ship when they disembarked at Port Canaveral, Florida (Photo taken by one of the passengers)

the outside and we couldn't wait to get on. We got off the bus and had to wait on a long line of more than 4000 invited guests for scanning to make sure we weren't bringing anything illegal on the ship. Security was tight but only because they cared about our safety. After that, we walked outside to where they were having the inaugural Disney Dream Cruise Ship christening celebration.

The celebration was stunning. All the different aspects that made "Disney magic" were performed in their own specific way from Disney Princesses to Disney's High School Musical. Each had their own little delightful aspect of what image they were trying to get across. First, we were introduced to the owner of the Disney Company and some "Imagineers" who helped create the Disney Dream. They explained to us that the ship traveled all the way from Papenburg, Germany to Port Canaveral, Florida just so we could have the pleasure of sailing on the ship that day.

Next, we were entertained by the Pirates of The Caribbean who

brought out a posse of at least thirty men and women on stage and had a pirate ship filled with actors dressed up as pirates. Fireworks exploded from the stage as the show proceeded.

The Disney Princesses elegantly walked across the stage with their ballroom gowns and their Princes. Each brought up a little Prince and Princess as they sang together. The Mighty, Mighty Wildcats marching band made their appearance next accompanied by cheerleaders, dancers, and singers. Mickey Mouse broke it down with his dancing skills and gave everyone a big familiar laugh. At last, former "American Idol" and Academy Award winning "Dreamgirl" actress/singer Jennifer Hudson, who was named Disney Dream Cruise Ship Godmother came out and sang her heart out.

It must have been a great honor for Jennifer Hudson because she once worked on the Disney's Cruise Ship as a headlining singer and now she was receiving great recognition with such a praiseworthy title. With the cracking of

a huge bottle of Champagne during the christening it was finally time to board the ship.

When we boarded the ship, we were amazed by the elegance. When we first got on the ship they announced our names the Coke family like we were big stars. We were eager to check out the ship and all of its activities because we knew there was a lot to do on board. We checked out our stateroom located on the 9<sup>th</sup> Deck and it was amazing. Everything was organized and laid out for us and we loved it as soon as we stepped foot inside.

There was a master bed and a pull out bunk bed for us to sleep in and everything was exceptionally neat. There were two bathrooms. One to use and one to take a shower. The best part was going onto the Deck and looking into the ocean. After seeing the room we checked out some of the activities. We ate lunch at a buffet called Cabanas and the food was delicious. Throughout the trip there was one thing that most people loved: the food. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner were first class service and every-

one loved it. The first night on the Disney Dream, we ate at The Enchanted Garden and we had our own sitting booth. It was so nice and the food was really good. One thing we personally liked was the Walt Disney Theatre because it was actually like Broadway, because the actors performed excellently and were beautiful, as we experienced a live stage show called "The Golden Mickey's: A Timeless Tribute."

The main reason most people liked the ship was because it had something for all age groups. There was small baby and toddler play houses. The Edge was for ages 11 through 13. The Teen Vibe Club was for ages 14 through 17. 18 and older had clubs for them only. When we got to the Bahamas' Castaway Cay Island, we had a blast. It was about 85 degrees and everyone came from the boat to experience the wonder of the island. We had to wear yellow safety life jackets to swim out to the Pelican Plunge floating platform water slide. It was very exciting and we had a good time.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

# The Village of Harlem gives its music idol a grand sendoff!

Edited by Audrey J. Bernard  
Lifestyles & Society Editor

Iconic music director/producer **Ray Chew** who has seen many contestants swept off stage during It's Showtime At the Apollo's legendary Amateur Night has himself been swept off his feet by Fox who has chosen him as the new musical director for its reality juggernaut show, American Idol, starring Randy Jennifer Lopez and Steven Tyler.

Chew will replace the show's longtime music director Rickey Minor who left at the end of season 9 to lead The Tonight Show band after Kevin Eubanks' departure. The Harlem born and raised music phenom will maintain his residency in the East Coast and will commute and live in Los Angeles during the tapings.

Chew, 42, is a product of the Harlem community and although they don't want to see him go as they have nurtured, encouraged and supported his musical passion and allowed him to grow in a village steeped in tradition and legacy, they are happy to see the result of their love.

On Wednesday, January 26, 2011, Lloyd Williams, Harlem Chamber of Commerce, Jonelle Procope, The Apollo Theater, Marva Allen, Power of One Foundation, Leonard Burnett and Brett Wright, Uptown Magazine, and Chew's gorgeous wife, Vivian Scott Chew, hosted a "Thank You Harlem: A Celebration" party at MOJO, 165 Saint Nicholas Avenue at 119<sup>th</sup> Street, Harlem, New York.

The widely respected music man has performed at the helm of award winning musical events – live and televised – with artists across every genre including Jennifer Hudson, Rihanna, Prince, James Taylor, Anita Baker, Queen Latifah, Barry Manilow, Ludacris, Smokey Robinson, Pastor Shirley Caesar, Fantasia, Aretha Franklin and Quincy Jones.

In addition to being an industry staple for prime time musical events, Chew has served as bandleader and personality for several network television series including NBC's The Singing Bee, BET's Sunday Best, and the longest running syndicated television series — It's Showtime At the Apollo.

Ray's relationship with artists spanning multiple genres and producers in various fields of television has placed him at the forefront of many landmark musical events in recent memory.

With a career that has taken him from Harlem to Hollywood, the media's fascination with Chew is steadily growing. Chew says his career has af-



*"Music is the universal language. Even when I am in countries where people don't speak English, I can communicate through music." — Ray Chew*

forded him the opportunities to reach and teach others. "Music is the universal language. Even when I am in countries where people don't speak English, I can communicate through music," says Chew, who has performed all over the world.

One of his most recent projects was the critically acclaimed Carnegie Hall Presents-Honor! A Celebration of African-American Cultural Legacy, curated by Jessye Norman, for which he served as musical director for two shows during the month-long, New York City wide event.

Chew also served as musical director for the Apollo Theater Foundation, the long-standing maestro of both the famed Amateur Night At The Apollo and the syndicated TV program "Showtime At the Apollo," where he celebrated 15 years before the ground-breaking program closed production in 2008. His other monumental highlights of a young but robust music career include:

February 2010: "SOS Saving Ourselves – Help for Haiti". Telethon – featuring Wyclef, Justin Bieber, Mary J. Blige, Chris Brown, Gloria Estefan, India.Arie, Akon and Kirk Franklin – aired on

MTV, BET and VH1 to raise funds for organizations dedicated to helping Haiti after the devastating earthquake. (Musical Director/Producer)

June 2009: 2009 BET Awards – the first show to pay tribute to Michael Jackson after his untimely death. The world's immediate grief called for tributes from the industries' brightest starts, including Beyoncé, Ne-Yo, Ciara and Jamie Foxx. (Musical Director)

January 2009: Inaugural Neighborhood Ball television special (ABC-TV) – the President and First Lady share their first dance featuring Beyoncé singing "At Last". During the celebration Ray performed with entertainment luminaries Sting, Stevie Wonder, Mariah Carey, Alicia Keys, Mary J. Blige and Shakira & conducted the all star tribute to President Obama, featuring Adam Levine, Wil.I.Am, Faith Hill with Stevie Wonder performing "Sign, Sealed, Delivered." (Musical Director)

August 2008: Democratic National Convention – Denver, CO. Ray and his hand picked national band performed throughout the four day convention, including the culminat-

ing events at Invesco Field where he performed "America the Beautiful" with Michael McDonald and produced the National Anthem for Academy Award winning vocal powerhouse Jennifer Hudson. This production is featured on the commemorative inauguration CD-DVD set "Change Is Now." (Musical Director)

Chew's behind the scenes work as musical director includes Donald Trump's Miss USA and Miss Universe and pageants (2007 - 2010) as well as international variety show SUTASI: the search for Asia's hottest contemporary music talent. His other on stage television specials includes BET's Celebration of Gospel (2006 - 2010) and BET Honors (2008 - 2010).

Chew and his company Chew Entertainment produced A Night of Inspiration – an all-star concert that sold out Carnegie Hall in the spring of 2010 where he conducted a 53-piece orchestra for featuring artists from the gospel and secular community joined by a 125 voice mass choir.

Chew's vast recording career with top selling artists and scoring for film and television includes diverse recordings ranging from timeless artists – Diana Ross and Donny Hathaway to Grammy award-winning artist Alicia Keys.

His signature sound can also be found on Lil Wayne's chart topping album *The Carter III* in "Comfortable" – a track produced by Kanye West, featuring Babyface. Ray is a Governor for the Grammy organization NARAS, where he also serves on



Vivian and Ray Chew

the Education and Diversity Committees.

Ray Chew has a career that spans over 25 year in recording, television and live presentations. He has penned several million selling hits with Diana Ross as well as recording 6 of her albums. He also worked as a musical director/arranger with Ashford and Simpson for 20 years, recording 7 of their albums including their only live

record "Performance."

In television, he has been a staff musician with CBS, FOX and NBC where he served as arranger/writer/pianist with 'Saturday Night Live' during the "Eddie Murphy Years". He has continued his television career as musical director for "It's Showtime At The Apollo" as well as musical director for the Apollo Theatre Foundation.

Chew's album discography includes: Chaka Khan, Teddy Pendergrass, Grover Washington JR., Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway, Gladys Knight and the Pips, The Spinners, Stephanie Mills and most of R&B's classic elite. He has also worked with today's top contemporary artists such as: Missy Elliot, Brian McKnight, Yolanda Adams, Monica and Rakim.

His exceptional work ethics includes arranging and orchestrating for the feature film "Baby Boi" starring Tyrese, live string arrangements for the Angie Stone project, "Mahogany Soul" and live string/score arrangements for the Will Smith movie, "Ali."

One who never forgets the importance of giving back, he gives to the community in a variety of ways including school programs and working with the New York City Housing Authority for over 5 years.

His company, Chew Entertainment, which he shares with his wife and partner Vivian Scott Chew, works in artist development and support with J Records, Arista, Universal, MCA and Elektra.

He is also working alongside Vivian on launching a foundation called Power To Inspire Foundation. The goal of Power to Inspire will be to aid and encourage the passion of students in the inner city, ages 9 - 19, who dream of working in the music industry. This is not limited to students who want to be performers but to students who are interested in any area of music industry – from performance to producing to executive positions.

"My wife and partner Vivian Scott Chew are veterans of the business with the understanding that for us, it's about what kind of mark that we leave on the industry," he proudly offers. "We both have an entrepreneurial spirit that we need to follow, so our goals are to develop and bring to market new and exciting talent. We have ongoing and annual corporate events that we do. We have a team of managers and workers that help us navigate each of our events."

Last year the couple was honored by the Urban League of Long Island in Sag Harbor for their commitment to community service and musical mentoring to young adults.



Internationally Renowned Artist, Sir Shadow, creates live drawing art project in 300 rooms at Bowery's Whitehouse Hotel in the East Village of Manhattan. Sir Shadow is creating art work in all 300 rooms. Each room will feature Sir Shadow's original art work drawn on the walls. (PICTURED) "Playing The Party." This live project is one of a kind! at the Hotel, located at 338-340 Bowery, New York, New York, 10012. (212) 477- 5623. Check out the artwork *now* until Sun., Jan. 30, 2011, from 2pm- 7pm Contact: Sir Shadow at (917) 723-6784 sirshadow2001@yahoo.com Visit his website: www.sirshadow.com (D.T.)



Diandra Coke 15 (left), gives "high five" before dining at the Enchanted Garden restaurant aboard the Disney Dream Cruise Ship.

(SEE STORY ON PAGES 27 & 21)

(Photo: Denise Coke)

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# Jazzy Bob Baldwin is definitely an unsung hero who is raising funds on behalf of Haiti

Compiled By Don Thomas

Contemporary/Smooth Jazz musician Bob Baldwin, a native of Mount Vernon, New York is unquestionably an unsung hero when it comes to the the Jazz genre. Every year brings excitement to the Baldwin musical house, and this year is no different.

After receiving the blessings from the estate of the late Pop icon Michael Jackson in February, 2010, Bob's first release of the new decade (his 14th overall) is simply titled "Never Can Say Goodbye", a tribute to Michael Jackson (release date: 6/22/10), which showcases the harmonic sophistication of some of Jackson's works from the 70's - 90's.

"At this point in my career, it's really about taking my gifts and using them to help others, feed people, and develop people's careers, giving them some valuable lessons in music along the way, as well as how to conduct yourself in a business setting, both on a local and national platform," says Baldwin.

Most recently, it's been about creating programs that speak to these needs as well as feeding the musical palettes of our incredible music audience, which has a double benefit.

Baldwin was the Curator of the NewUrbanJazz at the Arts xChange in White Plains, New York, with the blessings of Arts Westchester, with the hopes that it will continue. "We had an incredible lineup of people and the response from the community has been wonderful. It was a nice shot in the arm for Westchester residents," Baldwin says.

2010 also brought forth the desire to produce two shows on behalf of Haiti. "Westchester Musicians for Haiti" was able to bring together some of the cream of the Westchester crop under one musical umbrella to raise some funds for the Arthur Schweitzer Hospital in Deshapeles, Haiti. He also produced the "Jazz for Haiti", which featured a different blend of Contemporary and Latin Jazz at the Newark Symphony Hall (Chieli Minucci, Dave Valentin, Ruben Rodriguez, Chembo Corniel, and up and coming shining stars like Ragan Whiteside, to name a few), raising awareness of the tragedies of Haiti and shining some light on the American Red Cross, who has assisted tremendously in that region.

Although he has been

running his production company since 1997, Baldwin has released 5 records on 5 different labels since 2000. With labels collapsing and going out of business more now than ever, his last 4 discs still manage to reach the Billboard top 10 Contemporary Jazz.

The pianist tries to never allow his business acumen go to waste. He independently produced his CD (distributed through the powerful Virgin/EMI Network) "Bobbaldwin.com", which sold an impressive 60,000 units. He also used his business skills to develop and negotiate his recording deals with upstart labels 215 Records, NuGroove Records as well as Narada Jazz, all of which have since gone under.

Baldwin's radio program "NewUrbanJazz Lounge w/ Bob Baldwin" is changing the sound of contemporary jazz in the midst of the debilitating hierarchy that is smooth jazz, which has lost over 18 stations in the last 20 months. The radio show covers contemporary jazz going back to the 70's, which helps secure it's legacy, but also brings to light new artists and fuses Urban and Brazilian flavors. It's the perfect fix for contemporary jazz fans from all walks of life and later this year, look for an all out internet blitz for the new programming.

## HOW IT ALL BEGAN....

Bob Baldwin was born in Mount Vernon, New York. His father, Robert Baldwin, Sr., also an accomplished jazz pianist and upright bassist in his own right. Dad's brief Pianist career included working with Keter Betts (Ella Fitzgerald's main bassist) and Art Davis (the last bassist for the legendary John Coltrane), both Westchester residents.

Little Bobby Baldwin used to go to his dad's jam sessions around county and studied the masters of the Westchester region, such local stars like Lou Derry, Jimmy Hill, Fred Smith, Carmen Leggio and others.

Fortunately, this journeyman was blessed to be taught to play the piano by his father at age 4. Meanwhile, we should seriously consider his musical influences as a youngster with the likes of the aforementioned Hancock, Stevie Wonder, Patrice Rushen, Chick Corea, EWF, Joe Sample, Ramsey Lewis, Miles Davis, George Duke. His musical voicings are a by-product of these artists.

Yes, it's obvious this cast of prominent players made a profound impact on Baldwin's musical journey. Even after studying account-

ing, business and broadcasting in college, he never strayed far from his first love.

In 1986 he formed the The Bob Baldwin/Al Orlo Project in New Rochelle, New York. The The Baldwin/Orlo Project performed at the legendary Bottom Line in New York City leading to his first production with trumpeter Tom Browne. This opportunity led to his first album and eventually to his two-album deal with Atlantic Jazz Records.

The Project also proved to be a stepping stone for other band members. Many went on to work as instrumentalist men for some of the most popular jazz and



Bob Baldwin

pop bands in the world including: Spyrogyra, Michel Camilo, Paul Simon, Luther Vandross, Roberta Flack, The Silos, The Average White Band, The Temptations, Ben E. King, the Broadway play "Mamma Mia," and Chick Corea.

In 1989, Bob met Herbie Hancock at his Sony Innovators performance in Beverly Hills in 1989, which also inspired him during his own formative years. With Baldwin's natural ability to weave life's experience into music while creating inventive harmonies, he doesn't really need to fill his releases with high-powered guest appearances.

However, he has used the likes of Roy Ayers, Gerald Albright Dean James, Jeff Kashiwa, Dave Mann, Chieli Minucci, Phil Perry, Jocelyn Brown, Kim Waters, Will Downing, Marion Meadows, Najee, Jocelyn Brown, the late Grover Washington, Jr. and Noel Pointer, Tito Puente alumni Ray Vega, Brazilian Percussion Cafe' Da Silva on previous recordings over the years.

## ALBUM NUGGETS

Bob's 2009 release, "Lookin' Back" is a reflection of his career dating back to his first recordings of

1988 and features Chuck Loeb, Marion Meadows, Will Downing, Grover Washington, Jr. and Tom Browne. "On 'Lookin' Back," I hope the career has a sense of consistency and longevity, but musically, I must note that my voice is not nearly complete," says Baldwin.

His 2008 release, "NewUrbanJazz.com" fuses jazz, funk with vocals. It also launched his new radio show on WJZZ in 2008, which allowed to program to grow from there. The 2008 offering features Jocelyn Brown, Phil Perry, Freddie Jackson, Marion Meadows, Najee, Frank McComb, and Atlanta stars Joey Sommerville and Toni Redd.

2007 brought the release of his live DVD from Croton on the Hudson, New York, home of the largest Contemporary Jazz Festival in Westchester County, New York, 20 miles north of the Hudson. His 2005 release "All In A Days Work" on 215 Records was certainly no departure from his winning formula as a composer, arranger keyboardist and producer.

Fortunately, this journeyman was blessed to be taught to play the piano by his father (Robert Baldwin Sr.). Meanwhile, we should seriously consider his musical influences as a youngster with the likes of Stevie Wonder, Patrice Rushen, Chick Corea, EWF, Joe Sample and Ramsey Lewis, Miles Davis and George Duke, as their voicings can distinctively be heard in his music. Yes, it's obvious this cast of prominent players had a profound impact on Baldwin's musical journey.

"Like everyone else, the events in September 2001 moved my soul and impacted me tremendously. From that point, it felt necessary to write music that says 'be proud of who you are, stand up for what you believe and do what you love, and that tomorrow is not granted to any of us. Art does imitate life and vice versa, so live your life to the fullest... Today," Bob urges.

In 2002, he produced two discs, "Standing Tall" and "The American Spirit". In 1999, I sat with Grover Washington, Jr. and chatted about the business of music and he urged me to take a stab at controlling my recording catalog and don't be so quick to give things up that may have value over time.

Bob's 2000 creation, Bob Baldwin.com his first big independent undertaking but proved to be inspiring. On 2/0/01, his position on the Billboard Contemporary Chart was #17, which was it's peak.

BobBaldwin.com features the awesome talents of Gerald Albright, Marion Meadows, Armsted Christian, Dean James, Eric Essix and Tom Browne, to name a few.

Baldwin's touch on "Funkin' For Jamaica" is world class as he dedicates that tune to the aforementioned Washington, Jr., who was supposed to perform on the tune before his untimely death. It is Bob's second CD on this new independent label, which he founded in 1996. This CD is his most popular in his catalog, moving over 60,000 units.

In 1997 "Cool Breeze," which was on the Shanachie Records label, garnered tremendous Radio success on the Gavin Smooth Jazz charts. It featured the hit single, "Summer Breeze," featuring Saxophonist Marion Meadows and Larry Coryell on guitar.

His 1996 Internet release, "City Sketches" (soon to be re-titled) is a musical portrait of the city of Atlanta, Georgia and is on his label, City Sketches, Inc. A commemorative celebration of Atlanta's unique history, some of the titles on this jazz composition includes, "Welcome to the Games," "Freedom Parkway," "Dreamin' the Dream" and "Downtown Underground."

Violinist Regina Carter liked "Downtown Underground" so much that she used it on her latest LP, "Something for Grace." Baldwin's highlight for the 1997 season was performing at the legendary Montreux Music festival in Atlanta (9/97) where he shared the stage with an Atlanta based ensemble (Blake Gaines on bass and Forrest Robinson on drums) as well as his friend and AWB member saxophonist Fred Vigdor. Baldwin also performed for the athletes at Atlanta's 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, and shared the stage with Roy Ayers and Chuck Loeb in front of hundreds at the Club Benson and Hedges Music Festival in 11/96 and 5/97.

Baldwin also went to South Africa with Marion Meadows in the Fall of 2000. He draws his musical strengths from his spiritual source. "God has been good to me and blessed me with a wonderful talent. I look to him daily for direction and strength and give him thanks daily," says Bob.

His Gospel influences are Tramaine Hawkins, Helen Baylor, Yolanda Adams and Vickie Winans. "When you sing from God's soul, you ultimately save souls," says Baldwin. Hence, the feeling you get from Bob's passionate playing comes from his spiritual source.

**KICKIN' IT** with Lifestyles & Society Editor Audrey J. Bernard

# National Action Network celebrates legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Rev. Al Sharpton addresses assembly

National Action Network (NAN) is one of the leading civil rights organizations in the nation, with numerous local chapters around the country. Founded in 1991 by Reverend Al Sharpton, NAN works within the spirit and tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for social justice and one standard of justice and decency for all people regardless of race, religion, national origin, and gender.

On Monday, January 17, 2011 NAN hosted its annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (King Day) activities to celebrate the legacy of civil rights on a national scale. The celebration took place in Washington, DC, New York City and Newark, New Jersey.

The theme of education and anti-violence was the focus of the commemorative King Day events highlighted by NAN's continued



WBL's Imhotep Gary Byrd, Rev. Soars, Senator Malcolm Smith, Rev. Dr. Ben Monroe

work around education including recent events around the country such as the gun buy back and the anti-violence summit NAN led in New York City with the NYPD and more.

The awesome activities kicked off in Washington, DC at The Madison A Loews Hotel, 1177 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, DC with a King Day breakfast at 8:00 a.m. that was at-

tended by leaders in civil rights, labor, education, public policy and clergy.

Attendees gathered in harmony to hear a theme of pursuing equality in education including a keynote address by US Education Secretary Arne Duncan, and remarks by AFT President Randi Weingarten, Assistant Secretary of Labor William Spriggs, and EPA Director Lisa Jackson.

King Day attendees reconvened at NAN's national headquarters, House of Justice, 106 West 145<sup>th</sup> Street at Lenox Avenue, Harlem, New York. The forenoon festivities were attended by high profile national figures including New York State elected officials, activists, community leaders and clergy.

The powerful political menu consisted of remarks from Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Governor Andrew Cuomo, Mayor

Michael Bloomberg, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, and former NYC Mayor David N. Dinkins, followed by a panel on Anti-Violence.

The forum ended with a Town Hall Meeting live on the radio to discuss stemming the tide of gun violence in our community. King Day came to a memorable closed with a special service in Newark, New

Jersey, at the Metropolitan Baptist Church, 149 Springfield Avenue, Newark, New Jersey.

NAN pledged to further its education efforts in 2011 with a tour across the country to shed light upon the achievement gap. To that end, Rev. Sharpton has called education reform the civil rights issue of the 21st Century and a key component of NAN's agenda.

(Photos by Seitu Oronde)



Assemblyman Carl Hasting, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.



House Speaker Christine Quinn, Stuart Applebaum



Rev. Al Sharpton, Tamika Mallory



Congressman Charles B. Rangel



Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.



Rev. Al Sharpton



NAN audience

# Chew leaves Apollo crew for 'Idol' music

By Vinette K. Pryce

After 16 years as leader of the world-famous Apollo Theater band — Ray Chew & The Crew — musician Ray Chew has vacated his position at the Harlem landmark. The Harlem-born talent will now take up residency as the official music director for television's "American Idol" reality show when the new season begins will be the principal music orchestrator.

Chew offered his resignation to the board of directors of the Apollo Theater just before seven new members were appointed. Ray's reputation is unparalleled with collaborations and productions encompassing virtually every music genre.

Prior to his engagement with "Showtime At The Apollo," "Amateur Night" and the myriad of special events hosted at the landmark showplace, for 25 years, Chew served as musical director to R&B duo Nicholas Ashford and Valerie Simpson. Simultaneously, he also worked on three national, television shows including the popular NBC weekly, "Saturday Night Live," "The Singing Bee" and BET's "Sunday Best."

Chew is also reputed for the music at Donald Trump's Miss USA, Miss Universe and Miss Teen USA pageants. He is regarded as one of the world's leading session musician, and is ac-

claimed for establishing the musical careers of many talented singers and musicians.

Married to Vivian Scott who signed Shabba Ranks, Patra, Third World, George Clinton and others during her tenure at Polygram and SONY Music, Chew also collaborates with his wife producing special events. Last year the couple produced a spectacular gospel presentation at Carnegie Hall.

Some of the long list of talents he is associated includes: Diana Ross, Aretha Franklin, Donny Hathaway, Mary J. Blige, NeYo, Beyonce, Maroon 5, and Alicia Keys. It was Chew's musicianship which ushered in the inaugural dance of President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle at the Presidential Inaugural Ball in Washington D.C. in 2008.

Chew orchestrated the renditions of Beyonce to sing "At Last" as well as performances by a stellar list of artists who performed for the first Black leader of the United States. Ray was also integral to the musical production at the National Democratic Convention which was highlighted by Stevie Wonder's memorable appearance.

New board members at the Apollo Theater include singer Leslie Uggams and Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds. The 27-member board comprises key leaders in business, civic, philanthropy, arts and culture. Singer Chuck Jackson is also on the board chaired by Richard Parsons. Jonelle Procope is president and CEO.



(Photo by Ronnie Wright)

Vivian Scott Chew and husband Ray Chew strike a fashionable pose during post reception for their produced spectacular gospel presentation held at Carnegie Hall in 2010

# Black NYC film critic vilified

By Vinette K. Pryce

An African-American film critic is discovering that the technicolor tales he reviews in the New York Press are probably closer to reality than the Black versus white vilification he has endured since taking up chairmanship of the New York Film Critics Circle.

Armond White, a three-time chairman of the prestigious and reputed "oldest film organization in the world" claims "they are trying to keep a Black man own." Amidst a groundswell of toxic criticisms posted on the worldwide web since the successful, gala celebration of 2010 films, White responded to "twisted... sick... racists" saying "they are not going to crush me. Black people are making advances and are not going away."

Describing himself akin to a 'fly in the buttermilk' White explained his dilemma as a minority voice in a 31-member organization with only two Blacks. According to the critic, "there is dissention in the ranks."

Apparently some of his colleagues within the predominant white writers collective are determined to undermine his position and have been waging an internet campaign to expedite their aim. He attributed "vicious, racist reporting in tabloid media" to tarnishing his reputation. "I am not one to play the race card, but I have to go there when it is absolutely necessary," White said.

White was responding to one of his detractors who wrote at a newswire portal: "White did everything in the Armond White playbook to keep the attention squarely focused on himself—acting dismissive toward the films and actors being recognized and occasionally even openly insulting



Armond White

them, all while bathing in the negative attention like a preening professional wrestler," White is firing back defensively.

White did not mince words explaining the role of film critics recently when he delivered his annual statement at the 76th annual awards dinner. He made a case for objective reporting saying: "We are film critics. We are an ever expanding-yet-diminishing breed."

The first African-American journalist to chair the prestigious organization emphasized the role of critics staking a claim for independent thinking. "Gossip col-

umnists, bloggers and Oscar-touts continuously try to usurp our influence and confuse our mission but the New York Film Critics Circle has one important advantage over the season's many undistinguished award-giving organizations; "We do it outside the movie industry's box office preoccupation and without obsession with fads or other awards' groups' pathetic hunger for recognition."

White said the writer who described him as "contrarian" was not present at the gala but may have culled his perspective from third party reports he could have solicited from individuals who disprove of his position in the Circle. In response to the Critic's critic, Jerry Portwood, the editor of New York Press penned a scalding rebuke of the web attack.

"I think it's shameful that people are concocting stories to take Armond White down, that there seems to be a campaign to crush his reputation as a great film lover, supporter and thinker. Instead of reporting about what happened that evening, he's taking a pummeling for not playing the game by the industry's rules. Instead he should be celebrated as someone who speaks truth to power. What most journalists should respect and cheer—rather than jeer."

White's presentation to critics, adversaries, filmmakers and guests summed up his year's accomplishments, lauded his predecessors, re-stated the mission

and purpose of the organization while declaring hopes of continued dedication to its sense of purpose. "For nearly eight decades, the NYFCC has represented the dignity of cinema journalism while navigating unpredictable cultural and political change."

"Our goal—the assembly of informed professionals — has become more important while simultaneously becoming more difficult" in part due to "media transition and slackened aesthetics."

A three-time chairman of the oldest and acclaimed 'most prestigious critics' organization in the world' stared past some of Hollywood's best filmmakers — many of whom he had on occasion criticized in his biting reviews.

Best actress winner Annette Bening listened intently as the critical thinker stated his position on the role journalists of the genre should engage in order to discern quality films. In accepting her honor she expressed gratitude and amplified the need for critics and artist to work together.

Afterwards, the two shared cordial sentiment, joked and reveled in a photo opportunity at the Crimson Restaurant in Manhattan. Contrary to that, reports on the internet claimed White made Bening cry.

"She teared-up on hearing the beautiful things Kerry Washington said about her," White explained. Apparently, Washington who had acted alongside the thespian was asked to present the best ac-

tress award to Bening. From all accounts, Washington showered plaudits on the winner — to the extent, Bening seemed overwhelmed with emotions.

White first chaired the organization in 1994 and was renamed to the position in 2009 and 2010. Reputed for his uniquely definitive and often unpopular perspective on films, during his address White diverted from his message to scribes to applaud the efforts of publicist Jeff Hill who won a special award from the organization. He also announced the establishment of an archive which will maintain the organization's historical documents, photos, recordings and correspondences. He said the records will be housed at the Museum of Modern Art. During his tenure he also launched an interactive website — unprecedented for the NYFCC.

**2010 winners include:**

**Best Film** — "The Social Network" **Best Actor** — Colin Firth ("The King's Speech") **Best Actress** — Annette Bening ("The Kids Are All Right") **Best Director** — David Fincher ("The Social Network") **Best Supporting Actor** — Mark Ruffalo ("The Kids Are All Right") **Best Supporting Actress** — Melissa Leo ("The Fighter") **Best Foreign-language Film** — "Carlos" **Best Screenplay** — Lisa Cholodenko, Stuart Blumberg ("The Kids Are All Right") **Bet Non-Fiction Film** — "Inside Job" **Best Cinematography** — Matthew Libatique "Black Swan" **Best First Film** — "Animal Kingdom" **Best Animated Film** — "The Illusionist."

# Entertainment Special

## Princess Tiana attends the majestic launch of *Disney Dream*



Captain Mickey Mouse and First Mate Minnie Mouse on the *Disney Dream*

By Audrey J. Bernard  
*Lifestyles & Society Editor*

The *Disney Dream* is the third ship in the Disney Cruise Line fleet offering sea goers an ultimate cruising experience. The floating 130,000 vessel stands 14 towering decks high and boasts a ship length of 1,115 feet and a maximum width of 125 feet. The ship includes 1,250 staterooms and has the capacity to comfortably accommodate 4,000 passengers — along with the over 1,458 crew members who tend to the needs of every cruise guest each and every day.

All of the Disney Princesses participated in the christening

ceremony and hobnobbed with over 4,000 guests on the inaugural voyage. Disney's newest Princess Tiana was an above board favorite with kids and adults alike and many of the young guests wore her look alike princess regalia. Very cute!

The ship's luxury Art Deco style, three-deck atrium — replete with a spectacular chandelier and sweeping staircases — reminded many of the guests of the plush interior of *The Titanic*. There are so many amazing attractions on the *Disney Dream*. One in particular is the *AquaDuck*, a first-ever shipboard water coaster. For more coverage of the christening gala ceremony go to Beacon on the Scene, page 20.



The magnificent three-deck atrium lobby is where guests sailing on the *Disney Dream* begin their magical experience, and it's also a location where they might be greeted by beloved Disney characters like Princess Tiana from the Disney film "The Princess and the Frog." With sweeping staircases, a bronze Admiral Donald Duck statue and elegant décor throughout, the atrium lobby is a perfect backdrop for memorable photo opportunities.

(Matt Stroshane, photographer)



A dazzling chandelier glistens overhead in the expansive, three-deck atrium lobby on the *Disney Dream*. Descending more than 13 feet from the ceiling, and spanning more than 22 feet in width, the illuminated masterpiece sparkles with thousands of hand-crafted crystal beads. Reminiscent of early 20th century transatlantic ocean liners, contemporary design and Art Deco style grace the grand lobby to exude splendor and sophistication throughout.

(Gene Duncan, photographer)



Disney Cruise Line introduces a cruise industry innovation on the *Disney Dream* with the debut of *AquaDuck*, the first-ever shipboard water coaster. Guests aboard the ship can get swept away on the exhilarating flume ride that features twists, turns, drops, acceleration and river rapids. Stretching 765 feet in length and spanning four decks in height, *AquaDuck* uses powerful water blasters to propel guests around the perimeter of the ship's top deck.

(Todd Anderson, photographer)



Kam Williams  
Movie Critic

By Kam Williams

The Oscar nominations were announced early Tuesday morning at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater in Beverly Hills by last year's Best Supporting Actress-winner Mo'Nique (for *Precious*) along with Academy President Tom Sherak. "The King's Speech," the inspirational bio-pic about King George VI's struggle to cure his stutter, has emerged as the early favorite in the annual awards sweepstakes, landing nominations in a dozen categories, including Best Picture, Actor (Colin Firth), Supporting Actor (Geoffrey Rush), Supporting Actress (Helena Bonham Carter), Director (Tom Hooper) and Original Screenplay (David Seidler).

This development should come as no surprise to anyone who recalls how fond the Anglophilic Academy has been of British costume dramas over the years, especially productions revolving around the Royal Family. For example, in 2007 Helen Mirren won for her portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II in "The Queen," while Dame Judi Dench won in 1999 for playing Queen Elizabeth I. Judging by such a persistent exhibition of deference, one might think that America had never declared its independence from England.

In any case, The Coen Brothers' "True Grit" (10) garnered the second most Oscar nominations, followed by "The Social Network" (8) and "Inception" (8),

## Flick-Chat

# Mo'Nique miffed by Halle Berry snub; 'The King's Speech' lands dozen noms



Mo'Nique, Academy Award winning Best Supporting Actress in 2010

and "The Fighter" (7). As for surprises, Javier Bardem (*Biutiful*) ostensibly bumped out Ryan Gosling and Robert Duvall in the Best Actor category, a pair who had benefited from buzz for their work in "Blue Valentine" and "Get Low," respectively. Also snubbed was Paul Giamatti who just won a Golden Globe for "Barney's Version."

As for Best Actress, Halle Berry had been rumored to be in line for a nod for "Frankie and Alice," and that conspicuous omission prompted Mo'Nique to remark right after coming offstage that she was, "truly disappointed" because she had "really wanted to say Halle Berry's name." She went on to say she had been blown away by Berry, before saluting her for,



Halle Berry, Academy Award winning Best Actress in 2009

"a great performance, sister."

Julianne Moore was ignored in the Supporting Actress category although her co-stars Annette Bening and Mark Ruffalo were recognized for "The Kids Are All Right." And Christopher Nolan (*Inception*) was overlooked for Best Director, despite the fact that the movie was nominated for Best Picture.

Finally, the much-ballyhooed "Waiting for Superman" was left out of the Best Documentary category, perhaps because of a backlash against the public school education expose's fervent anti-union stance. The 83<sup>rd</sup> Academy Awards will air live on ABC on Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 8pm ET/5 PM PT, and will be co-hosted by James Franco and Anne Hathaway.

## Biopic Response

# Ms. Franklin says: 'I would like Halle Berry to portray older Aretha'

Compiled By Don Thomas

Living Legend Aretha Franklin confirmed to Wendy Williams that a biopic based on her best-selling memoir *Aretha: From These Roots* had secured financing and is presently in script re-write. When asked who she would like to play her in the film Franklin responded that Halle Berry would be her first pick.

In an interview with E! Online during the Golden Globes, Berry said: "If I could carry a tune, I'd consider it. Someone should tell Aretha that I can't do her justice."

"I would have liked Halle Berry to portray the older



Living Legend Aretha Franklin  
(photo by Ronnie Wright)

Aretha in the upcoming biopic of my life based on my memoir *Aretha: From These Roots*, she was my first, but not my only choice. Everything is subject to negotiation and she shouldn't underestimate her own talent. There are a number of other leading ladies out there that can definitely handle the role," Franklin responded.

In response to Halle not being able to do the role justice because she can't carry a tune Franklin adds, "I never expected Halle Berry to sing, she's an actress, not a singer. Many actors have portrayed vocalists by lip-syncing to the artist's original recordings."

How true, Aretha! Let's not



Academy Award winner Halle Berry

forget that Angela Bassett lip-synched her way to an Academy Award nomination for her portrayal of Tina Turner in "What's Love Got To Do With It" as did Jessica Lange who portrayed Patsy Cline in "Sweet Dreams." Who could forget Lou Diamond Phillips spot-on lip-synching to the Los Lobos version's of Richie Valens' hits in the Golden Globe-nominated "La Bamba," and of course Jenifer "La" Lopez received a Golden Globe nod for her lip-smacking lip-syncing in "Selena" prior to her finding her own voice and launching a recording career that has since landed her a judgeship on "American Idol!"

(from page 4)

Columbine High School shooters used guns that were purchased without a background check at a gun show. The Virginia Tech shooter passed a background check when he should have failed it due to his record of mental health problems.

In April 2007, after the Virginia Tech massacre which claimed the lives of 32 people, Congress passed the NICS Improvement Act to submit all the required records into the background check system. Congress has failed to provide enough funding to support these efforts. In FY 2010, Congress allocated \$20 million to support state initiatives to submit records to the background check system, only 5% of the \$375 million authorized by the NICS Improvement Act.

Millions of records of indi-

viduals who are prohibited by law from buying guns are still missing from the database. Ten states have not submitted any mental health records to NICS and 18 states have submitted fewer than 100 mental health records.

### Two Simple Ideas

Mayors Against Illegal Guns, a bipartisan coalition of more than 550 mayors, proposes that the U.S. fulfill the intent of the 1968 law by fixing the broken background check system.

First, the system should contain all the records of felony convictions, domestic violence incidents, drug history, and determinations of mental illness that would prevent those categories of troubled people from buying guns. The new Congress should set a goal of getting this job finished within three years.

Second, Congress should subject every gun sale to a background check by closing the loopholes that permit guns to be sold without them. Licensed gun dealers are covered by the Brady Bill. But "occasional sellers," for example those that sell firearms at gun shows, through classified ads or even on the internet, do not have to conduct background checks. The only way to prevent guns from falling into the hands of violent criminals, the mentally unstable, and other already prohibited dangerous persons is through a comprehensive national background check system with no loopholes. Reasonable exceptions would include, for example, transfers of guns within families, or by wills, or to people who have a valid state-issued gun permit issued within the last five years that meets or exceeds the Federal background check standard.

The Mayor and Martin Luther King III were joined by a number of survivors and family members of gun violence victims to call attention to the fact that 34 people in the United States lose their lives to gun violence every day. Among them were: Tom Mauser, father of Daniel Mauser, a victim of the 1999 Columbine High School tragedy; Omar and Randa Samaha, whose sister was shot and killed at Virginia Tech in 2007; Lynnette Alameddine, whose son was killed at Virginia Tech in 2007; Lori Haas, whose daughter survived 2 gun shots in the back of the head at Virginia Tech; and Jeannette Richardson, whose son was killed in the front yard of her home in Virginia in 2003; Toby Hoover, whose husband, Dale Stone, was shot in 1973 in Ohio; Sally Sheasby, whose son was shot and killed in Ohio in 2005; Deborah Sohovich, whose son was shot and killed in Columbus, Ohio; Rebecca Pryor, whose friend was shot and killed in Pennsylvania; Rev. Donald and Kim Odom, parents of Steven Odom who was shot and killed in 2007; and Bryan Miller, brother of Mike Miller, an FBI agent who was shot and killed in 1994 and director of public advocacy for Heeding God's Call.

New York City area family members and survivors include: Steven and Patty McDonald, Steven is a NYPD police officer who was shot in the line of duty, his wife, Patty McDonald, is the Mayor of Malverne, NY; Vada Vasquez, a student at Bronx Latin High School who was shot as she walked home from school in 2009; Tatyana Timoshenko, mother of Russel Timoshenko, an NYPD officer who was shot and killed in 2007; Kenny McLaughlin, a teacher at Grand Street Campus High School in Brooklyn, who was shot during a 1996 mugging in Brooklyn; Arlene and Jack Locicero, parents of Amy Locicero Federici, who was shot and killed in the 1993 Long Island Rail Road massacre; Gloria Cruz, whose 10-year niece was shot and killed, and established the Bronx chapter of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence; Devorah Halberstam, whose son was murdered in 1994 in a terrorist attack on the Brooklyn Bridge; and Shaina Harrison, whose cousin was shot and killed in 2009 and is working with New Yorkers Against Gun Violence;

Also, joining the group was Rev. James Coen, Pastor of the Oak

Ridge Presbyterian Church, where Phyllis Schneck, one of the Tucson victims was an active member. [www.fixgunchecks.org](http://www.fixgunchecks.org)

Mayors Against Illegal Guns today launched a new online advocacy campaign, [www.fixgunchecks.org](http://www.fixgunchecks.org) to call attention to the glaring problems in our nation's gun background check system, and allow citizens to join a movement to fix it.

### Poll Finds Strong Support for Common Sense Improvements

The week after the Tucson shooting Mayors Against Illegal Guns released the results of a poll conducted jointly by Momentum Analysis, a polling firm with Democratic clients, and American Viewpoint, a polling firm with Republican clients. The poll reveals that Americans and gun owners strongly support a sensible approach to gun laws that protects the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans while also keeping criminals and other dangerous people from accessing firearms.

The poll of over 1,000 registered voters was conducted the week after the Tucson shooting. According to the poll, 90 percent of Americans and 90 percent of gun owners support fixing gaps in government databases that are meant to prevent the mentally ill, drug abusers and others from buying guns. Also according to the poll, 86 percent of Americans and 81 percent of gun owners support requiring all gun buyers to pass a background check, no matter where they buy the gun and no matter who they buy it from.

### About Mayors Against Illegal Guns

Since its inception in April 2006, Mayors Against Illegal Guns has grown from 15 mayors to over 550. Mayors Against Illegal Guns has united the nation's mayors around these common goals: protecting their communities by holding gun offenders and irresponsible gun dealers accountable, demanding access to trace data that is critical to law enforcement efforts to combat illegal gun trafficking, and working with legislators to fix gaps, weaknesses and loopholes in the law that make it far too easy for criminals and other prohibited purchasers to get guns.

## President of Côte d'Ivoire deplures election double-standard

(from page 19)

Stephens dismissed Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, and the Sudan as basket cases.

"What, if anything, does it all mean? It means that we have come full circle," said Stephens, deputy editorial page editor of the newspaper. "It means that colonialism, for which the West has spent the past five decades in nonstop atonement, was far from the worst thing to befall much of the colonized world. It means, also, that some new version of colonialism may be the best thing that could happen to at least some of the countries in the post-colonial world."

Ouattara called for a "special operations" raid to seize Gbagbo and "take him somewhere else." With France cheering them on, African leaders in ECOWAS have discussed the possibility of using military troops to remove Gbagbo from office.

Ghana President John Mills, a member of ECOWAS, said he will have no part of such a move. And one of Mills' predecessors, Jerry Rawlings, supports his decision.

"More outrageous election results have taken place without intervention," Rawlings stated. "How can we justify an intervention in this instance, when the results are so close and divided along ethnic lines? Let us investigate all the peaceful options available rather than a military intervention that cannot establish a peaceful political transition in Côte d'Ivoire."

President Obama is part of the international effort to isolate Gbagbo.

Like the European Union, he has announced a travel ban on Gbagbo, his wife, and three of his top

aides. In addition, an executive order issued by Obama forbids U.S. citizens from conducting financial or commercial transactions with Gbagbo and his inner circle and freezes all of their U.S. assets.

"They said they are closing all of the accounts of President Gbagbo and his staff in the foreign banks, but I laughed at it," Gbagbo said, flashing a broad smile. "I have no accounts outside [Côte d'Ivoire]. In the United States, they found a small account that's for my daughter when she was a student there. There's \$400 in the account. She forgot that there was \$400 left in it. That's the only account that is called Gbagbo and they don't even belong to me. They are not for me, they belong to my daughter."

According to the White House, Obama has tried to reach Gbagbo by telephone on at least three occasions, but the African leader would not accept his calls.

When asked about refusing to speak with U.S. president, Gbagbo said, "I didn't even know if Barack Obama called me because his ambassador, he has discredited himself. So, when he tells me something, I don't believe him."

That notwithstanding, Obama sent a letter to Gbagbo urging him to step aside. According to Gbagbo, Obama said "he'd give me a professor's job in Boston."

Despite his ability to see humor in some U.S. actions, it is clear that Gbagbo is pained about the actions of America's first Black president, a president whose father was born in Kenya.

When this interviewer asked Gbagbo what he would say if Barack Obama were sitting across from him, Gbagbo replied: "If I was in front of him, I would say his adminis-

tration is being misled, that his administration is being totally misled on this issue," Gbagbo said. "He has to help Africans build strong states and to build those strong states, you have to re-enforce the power of the institutions on which the nations stand. He must respect those institutions."

Gbagbo said Obama is more than simply a Black man in the White House.

"I'm very proud that when the Blacks now walk down the streets in America, they are not looked down upon like a sub-human," Gbagbo explained. "This is my pride. But politics remain politics... He is an American president. And, he defends the interests of the United States."

Meanwhile, as talk continues about a possible military invasion to forcibly dislodge Gbagbo from power and a parade of African leaders continue visiting him in Abidjan almost on a weekly basis in an attempt to get him to step down, Gbagbo is trying to defend his interests.

At present, two men claim to be president of one country. Gbagbo's proposal to share leadership was quickly rejected by his opponent. He has since proposed that all of the ballots be recounted - even the dismissed ones that he says were tainted - and have the person with the most votes declared the winner. That offer has also been rejected.

"When I say come so that we can recount the votes, we can examine and go over the minutes of the polling stations, the U.N., France, European Union, U.S.A., they refuse," Gbagbo stated. "But, the truth is there in those documents. Why don't they want this to happen? Because for a long time, they've wanted this man to become president. They think I'm the one blocking them."

# Reagan was no friend of Blacks

(from page 8)

paigned, he publicly branded the voting rights act "humiliating to the South." The implication was that he would not back an extension of the Voting Rights Act when it came up for renewal in 1982. He backed away from that only in the face of strong support from Congressional democrats (and many Republicans).

The checklist of Reagan anti-civil rights initiatives however soon grew to be telephone book thick. They included his gut of the Civil Rights Commission, his attempt to eliminate and slash and burn of an array of federally funded job and training programs, his borderline racist depiction of welfare recipients as "queens," his stack of the federal judiciary with strict constructionist, states' rights leaning

judges, the wave of Reagan approved Justice Department indictments, prosecutions and harassment of black elected officials, his foot drag on imposing congressional mandated sanctions on then apartheid South Africa, and his repeated mock of civil rights leaders.

The Reagan assault on civil rights was so intense that the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights in 1982 issued a lengthy report that meticulously documented the measures the Reagan Administration Justice Department and especially its Civil Rights Division did to stymie and obstruct enforcement of civil rights laws. Then there was his dogged fight to prod the IRS to reverse its decision to deny a tax exemption to all white Bob Jones University in South Carolina in 1982. Reagan backed away from this only af-

ter a firestorm of congressional and public outrage at his naked effort to prop up a blatantly segregated institution.

The one civil rights act that Reagan is praised for as an example of his racial enlightenment, the signing of the King Holiday Bill, was anything but that. Reagan staunchly opposed the King Holiday bill. And he did not oppose it as later historical revisionists claim solely for cost reasons, that is that the federal government couldn't afford to give federal employees another day off. This is the politically palatable cover.

At a press conference October 19 two weeks before he grudgingly signed the bill he quipped that he'd sign it only "since Congress seemed bent on making it a national holiday." It took every ounce of the congressional bent that Reagan ridiculed to get him to put his

signature on the bill. Congress passed the bill with an overwhelming veto-proof majority (338 to 90 in the House of Representatives and 78 to 22 in the Senate).

Reagan didn't stop at simply voicing reservations about Congress's action in passing the bill. At the same press conference he also added with a wink and a nod that the jury was still out on whether King was a communist sympathizer or not. Reagan revealed even more of his true thinking about King in a letter to ultra-conservative former New Hampshire governor Meldrim Thompson. He unapologetically told Thompson that the public's view of King was "based on image, not reality." Reagan was roundly criticized for besmirching King, and he subsequently publicly apologized to King's

widow, Coretta Scott King. In assailing King, Reagan simply followed the well-worn ultra-conservative and racist script that King was a radical, racial agitator, and a closet communist.

Michael Reagan can absurdly twist history decades later to make his father a paragon of civil rights. But the Reagan record of hostility, obstructionism, and outright opposition to civil rights gains and civil rights leaders stands. This is hardly the action of a "best friend" of blacks.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He hosts national Capitol Hill broadcast radio talk show on KTYM Radio Los Angeles and WFAX Radio Washington D.C. streamed on [ktym.com](http://ktym.com) and [wfax.com](http://wfax.com) and internet TV broadcast on [thehutchinsonreportnews.com](http://thehutchinsonreportnews.com)

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## NYC Pension Funds are urged to report political contributions

(from page 2)

trade associations to which it belongs. The company's commitment to transparency stands in stark contrast to those corporations that make anonymous donations to trade associations to hide management's support for issues and political campaigns that may be publicly distasteful or even contrary to their company's publicly stated positions or best interests.

"Norfolk Southern's increased transparency is an encouraging example of the kind of best practices we hope to see from many more publicly held corporations," Comptroller Liu said.

The NYC Pension Funds asked the companies to provide detailed accounts of their direct and indirect contributions to candidates, political parties, ballot referendums and other political activities twice a year. The NYC Pension Funds also requested the six companies provide the names and titles of employees who participated in the decisions to make the contributions.

Publicly reported contributions offer little more than a snapshot of corporations' political activities. Full disclosure of political involvement is in the best interest of these corporations, their shareholders, and ethical business practices.

When approached with the Pension Funds' request last year, during the 2010 proxy season, the six firms were non-responsive, despite significant support from fellow shareholders in Coventry Health Care (46%), Regions Financial (42%),

and Sprint Nextel (38.4%). Other firms contacted by the Funds at that time, including AES Corp., Altria Group, Inc., Humana, Inc., and Norfolk Southern agreed to increase the transparency of their political contributions.

The New York City Comptroller serves as the investment advisor to, custodian and trustee of the New York City Pension Funds. The New York City Pension Funds are comprised of the New York City Employees' Retirement System, Teachers' Retirement System, New York City Police Pension Fund, New York City Fire Department Pension Fund and the Board of Education Retirement System. The New York City Pension Funds hold a combined 17,166,436 total shares in Charles Schwab Corp. (NYSE: SCHW), Coventry Health Care (NYSE: CVH), DTE Energy Co. (NYSE: DTE), Regions Financial (NYSE: RF), Sprint Nextel Corp. (NYSE: S), and WellCare Health Plan, Inc. (NYSE: WCG) for a combined asset value of \$169,639,472 as of 1/19/2011.

### TEXT IN-FULL OF SHAREHOLDER PROPOSAL:

**Resolved**, that the shareholders of COMPANY ("Company") hereby request that the Company provide a report, updated semi-annually, disclosing the Company's:

1. Policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect) made with corporate funds.

2. Monetary and non-monetary contributions and

expenditures (direct and indirect) used to participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office, and used in any attempt to influence the general public, or segments thereof, with respect to elections or referendums. The report shall include the following:

a. An accounting through an itemized report that includes the identity of the recipient as well as the amount paid to each recipient of the Company's funds that are used for political contributions or expenditures as described above; and

b. The title of the person or persons in the Company who participated in making the decisions to make the political contribution or expenditure.

The report shall be presented to the board of directors' audit committee or other relevant oversight committee and posted on the company's website to reduce costs to shareholders.

### Stockholder Supporting Statement

As long-term shareholders of COMPANY, we support transparency and accountability in corporate spending on political activities. These activities include direct and indirect political contributions to candidates, political parties, political organizations or ballot referendums; independent expenditures; or electioneering communications on behalf of a federal, state or local candidate.

Disclosure is consistent with

public policy, in the best interest of the company and its shareholders, and critical for compliance with federal ethics laws. Moreover, the majority in the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision recognized the importance of political spending disclosure for shareholders when it said "[D]isclosure permits citizens and shareholders to react to the speech of corporate entities in a proper way." This transparency enables the electorate to make informed decisions and give proper weight to different speakers and messages." Gaps in transparency and accountability may expose the company to reputational and business risks that could threaten long-term shareholder value.

COMPANY contributed at least \$AMOUNT in corporate funds since the 2002 election cycle.

However, relying on publicly available data does not provide a complete picture of the Company's political expenditures. For example, the Company's payments to trade associations used for political activities are undisclosed and unknown. In many cases, even management does not know how trade associations use their company's money politically. The proposal asks the Company to disclose all of its political contributions, including payments to trade associations and other tax exempt organizations. This would bring our Company in line with a growing number of leading companies, including Hewlett-Packard, Aetna and American Electric Power that support political disclosure and accountability and present this information on their websites.

The Company's Board and its shareholders need complete disclosure to be able to fully evaluate the political use of corporate assets. Thus, we urge your support for this critical governance reform.

In addition to Comptroller Liu, the New York City Pension Funds trustees are:

New York City Employees' Retirement System: Ranji Nagaswami, Mayor's Representative (Chair); New York City Public Advocate Bill de Blasio; Borough Presidents: Scott Stringer (Manhattan), Helen Marshall (Queens), Marty Markowitz (Brooklyn), James Molinaro (Staten Island), and Ruben Diaz, Jr. (Bronx); Lillian Roberts, Executive Director, District Council 37, AFSCME; John Samuelsen, President Transport Workers Union Local 100; Gregory Floyd, President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 237.

Teachers' Retirement System: Ranji Nagaswami, Mayor's Representative; Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm, New York City Department of Education; Mayoral appointee Tino Hernandez; and Sandra March, Melvyn Aaronson and Mona Romain, all of the United Federation of Teachers.

New York City Police Pension Fund: Mayor Michael Bloomberg; New York City Finance Commissioner David Frankel; New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly (Chair); Patrick Lynch, Patrolmen's Benevolent Association; Michael Palladino, Detectives Endowment Association; Edward D. Mullins, Sergeants Benevolent Association; Thomas Sullivan, Lieutenants Benevolent Association; and, Roy T. Richter, Captain's Endowment Association.



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## Ok, how many of you have jumped off the bandwagon?

By Marc Rasbury

Three weeks ago, Knicks fans were talking playoffs, even as much landing the fifth seed. We all were raving about Amar'e Stoudemire and his sidekick Raymond Felton as the next Stockton-Malone combination. And yours truly even suggested that we call Denver's bluff and wait until the summer to sign Carmelo Anthony as an unrestricted free agent. That was less than a month ago. How perception of the Knicks has changed in such a short period of time.

Has the perception or reality changed since the Knicks gone as cold as the city's recent temperatures? The Knicks have lost six out of the last seven and some fans are walking around Two Penn Plaza with signs stating the End is Near. All of that optimism seems to be a thing of the past. It was bad enough that they lost two home games against two beatable opponents including a Phoenix Suns team they beat handily two weeks ago on the road. Then they went on that dreaded Texas swing where they proceeded to lose to Houston, San Antonio and Oklahoma City. That last game was particularly tough blowing a six point lead in the final minutes only to see Kevin Durant drill a three pointer at the buzzer.

They stopped the bleeding by beating the Wizards on Monday, 115-106. However, the celebration will be short lived as they will face the LeBron and Company later this week.

Folks, the sky is not falling. The Knicks are what their record says they are. If at the beginning of the season, someone would have told you that the Knicks would end up with a .500 record this season, most Knicks fans would have signed up for that in a New York minute.

These Knicks are going to win five in a row then they are going to lose six in a row. Then they might lose three out five and then win four out of six. Over the course of a 82 game season, that type of play will yield a .500 record, plain and simple. That is what you are going to get at the end of the day or, in this case, the season.

Consistency is this team's main problem. They do not play defense for four quarters and their outside shooting is streaky at best. One minute they can't miss from the outside, then, the next minute, they can't make a shot if their collective lives depended on it.

It is hard to fathom a team scoring over 120 points in a game and ending up losing but these Knicks have accomplished that twice during this current losing streak. That just goes to show you that this



Amare Stoudemire



Raymond Felton

team does not understand that you cannot play defense every once in a while or when the spirit moves you.

The bottom line is that until they add another consistent 15-point scorer and an interior defensive presence, they will continue to be a .500 team. Anthony would be nice but

even if they can get someone like Shane Battier or Mike Miller, it will eliminate some of those offensive droughts. And how many times can we remember this season where a stop or two down the stretch could have been the difference between a win or loss, too many. That is where a big defensive stopper could have

helped to block a shot or come up with a key rebound.

Team President Donnie Walsh did a good job overhauling the roster he inherited. I know many out there feel disappointed that Walsh did not land James this past summer, but at least, he has fielded a competitive unit. That is some-

thing we could not say for almost a decade.

Remember that Rome was not built in a day and that this rebuilding process is a work in progress. Better days are ahead. Those days just will not be next week unless Walsh lands Anthony before the trading deadline.



Marc Rasbury

# BEACON SPORTS



## A dream deferred

By Marc Rasbury

As the clock wound down on Sunday night, yes I was disappointed. But, at the same time, I was kind of proud of my beloved Gang Green. I know folks have the right to be upset that the Jets lost to Pittsburgh, 24-19, in the AFC Championship game but I hope that the fans look at what this team has accomplished in a short period of time. I know that most Jets fans don't want to hear this now but this franchise is on the cusp of great things.

Let's get one thing straight. The Steelers came out and slapped the Jets around in the opening minutes of the game. Rashard Mendenhall ran through the Jets defense as if they were the *Path of Least Resistance*. On many occasions, the Jets were in a position to make a tackle on the bruising back but he just powered his way through Gang Green's tackles. He turned two and three yard losses into seven and eight yard gains. The Steelers just pounced on the Jets from jump street. One would have thought Rex's squad did not get the memo that it was a 6:30 pm start because they did not really start playing until 8:00. That is why Gang Green found themselves, 24-3, going into half-time. When you gain one total yard on the ground and only have four series in the first half, would you expect anything else?

Now do not put too much solace in the comeback solely because when a team has 21 point lead in the second half, they tend to go Tea Party Conservative and that is what the Steelers did after intermission. Gang Green stormed back but there is not a man in their locker room who will not confess that they blew plenty of opportunities to win that game. Just imagine if CB Kyle Wilson came up with Ben Roethlisberger's third quarter pass or, on the next play, Jamaal Westermann blocked the ensuing punt and did not make illegal contact with the punter. We might be looking at a different outcome.

Up until that sequence, Mark Sanchez led the Jets on two impressive drives. The first one led to a 45-yard Antonio Holmes TD strike and the second brought Gang Green to the Steelers one yard line where they were stopped. But, on the ensuing Steelers' procession, the Jets came up with a safety to bring them within 12 with a little over a quarter and half to go.

The Jets would get within five with less than five min-

utes to go but that would be as close as they would get. Gang Green failed twice on the Steelers last drive to stop Pittsburgh on third down. Rex's crew's valiant effort fell short. They just dug themselves in too deep of a hole to climb out, especially, against a quality team like the Steelers. They were not coming back against Cleveland, Houston or Detroit. We are talking about the Steelers here.

The Steelers have won two of the last four Super Bowls. They have one of the best coaches and QBs in Mike Tomlin and Big Ben. This combination will most likely win a couple of more titles before they are done. They have one of the best defenses loaded with playmakers and led by one of the top defensive minds in Dick LeBeau. There is no shame in losing to this squad.

Roethlisberger statistically had a pedestrian game but stats did not tell the tale of Sunday night. He made the plays when it counted. He prolonged drives with his legs, scoring on one of the scrambles and, more importantly, rolling out to hit receivers making third down conversions look easy.

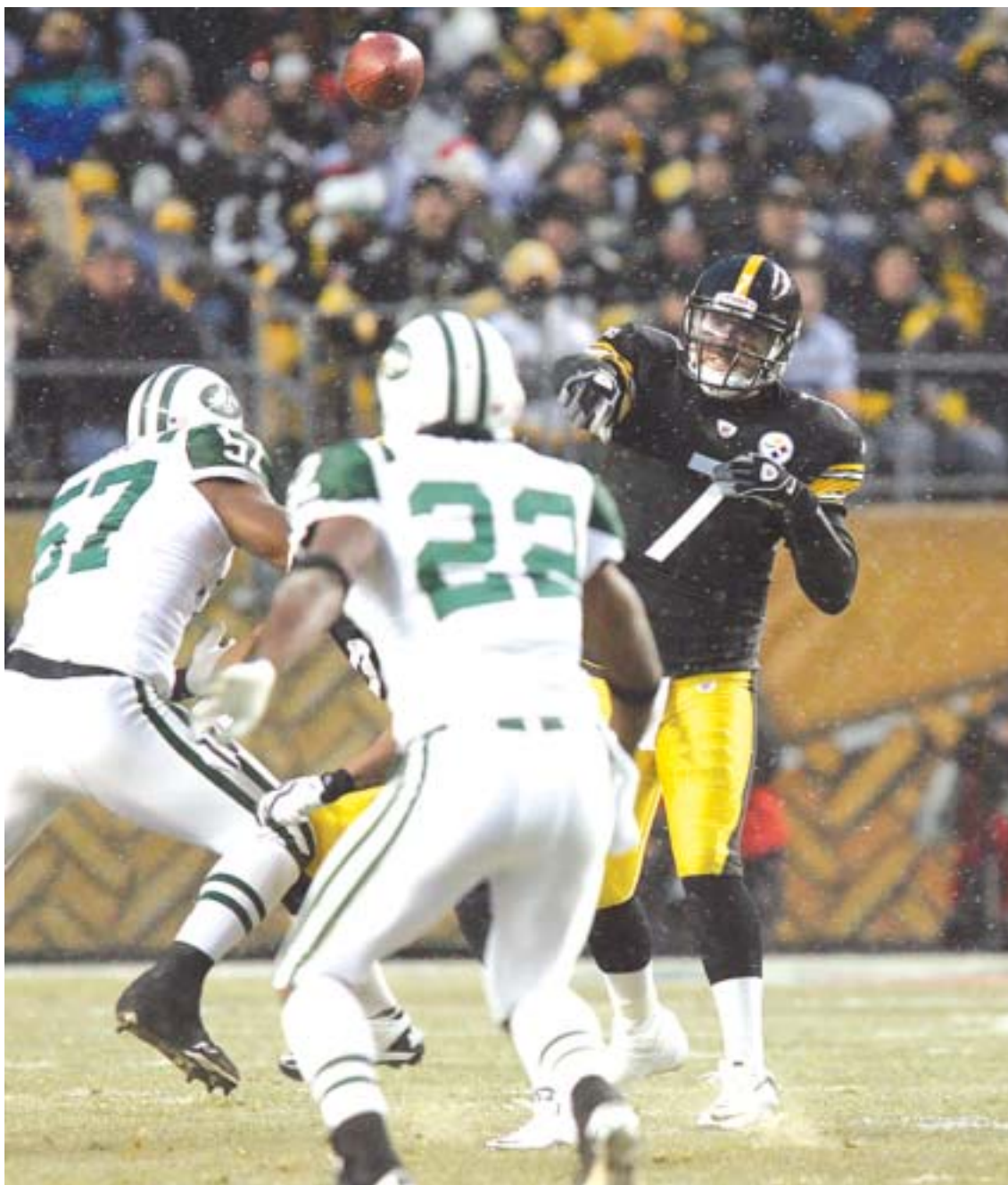
I would be remiss if I did not mention Heath Miller who played as well of an all around game as a tight end could play.

Jets have to look to next year to fulfill their Super Bowl dreams. They have some questions regarding some of their veterans but they have a solid foundation on which build upon. Mark Sanchez grew up right in front of eyes. Yes he needs to be a little more consistent. But he was more than solid in these playoffs and he is only going to get better. And he has plenty of young teammates, including Nick Mangold, D'Brickashaw Ferguson, Derrell Revis, David Harris, and Calvin Pace, that are part of a great nucleus of players that General Manager has assembled. If they can add a legit pass rusher, safety and Kris Jenkins and Jim Leonhard can come back from their injuries, they will be a force to be reckoned with next season.

Some may look at this finish as a disappointment after the expectations. I heard someone even to refer to Gang Green as the old Brooklyn Dodgers and next years champs. Yes, there were some missed opportunities. But there are more reasons for optimism. Next year's champ may be a good tag to put on them now. We just have to defer the dream one more year.



Rashard Mendenhall pounded through the Jets defense as if they were *The Path of Least Resistance*



Big Ben delivered when he had to (Photos by Mike Hendguez)