



Questions in the wake of a non-indictment



Image courtesy of <http://media3.s-nbcnews.com>

County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty recommended last month that the Grand Jury reviewing evidence in the killing of twelve-year old Tamir Rice return no indictment against either the officer who fired the fatal shot within two seconds of approaching the boy, or his partner, who recklessly and needlessly put themselves in harm's way. Or so they should have thought. Actually, they were never in jeopardy because Tamir was armed only with his innocence, a child using his imagination to entertain himself.

Of course, Tamir did have

a toy gun, a possibility the officers should have considered but apparently never did, because a dispatcher for some reason chose not to alert the officers to the 911 caller's caution that Tamir might have been a juvenile and the gun a fake.

While I believe that McGinty's decision was egregiously bad, it's the choice I expected him to make. What's more, I think he probably made the decision honestly.

But here's what I have been puzzling over for some time now: how did those officers come to a place where they had so few choices and so little

time to consider which were better and which were worse?

Regardless of whether McGinty should have secured an indictment — and I have no doubt he should have — I suspect that Tamir's name was on the bullet that killed him before he was ever in Officer Tim Loehmann's sight. And it wasn't because Tamir did anything improper, much less wrong. He was, fundamentally, just a kid playing in the park, using his imagination.

And while I believe that the officers demonstrated incompetence before Tamir was

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Citizen Police Relations panel members spar over language; public seeks action



Tamir Rice relative holds sign at Nov. 11 CCPC meeting at Cudell Recreation Center. Photo by Randy O. Norfus.

By Derek Dixon
RDP Correspondent

While the Cleveland Community Police Commission (CCPC) has emphasized that community openness and sensitivity are central to its mission, frustration over a perceived lack of straight answers has grown among meeting attendees. The consensus from attendees at the Dec. 17 meeting — the fifth such full commission session — is that the Commission seems more focused on the technicalities of an emerging document than steps toward closing chasms of citizen-police trust.

Marva Patterson, an active

member along with husband David of Cleveland's Carl Stokes Brigade, a social justice organization, answered with "an unequivocal 'no' for both of us" in response to whether or not the commission addressed her concerns two weeks earlier. Mrs. Patterson had alleged at that Dec. 3 session, held downtown at Trinity Cathedral, that arresting officers often write or rewrite inaccurate versions of arresting incidents on their reports that discredit citizens' versions.

"Having this commission at minimum gives the public a voice, something that's been sorely lacking," she said. "Only time will tell if the eventuality matches what appears to be the commission's intent **CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**



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The Real Black Friday wants community to “Link Up” with the Lynx card



While the urban myth that “the dollar only circulates in the black community for six hours” has recently been debunked recently by scholars who point out its unreliable origins and its total lack of verification, it’s nonetheless seems clear that African Americans do less business within their ethnic group than most other identifiable communities. And while there are many reasons that historians and social scientists could adduce to explain this reality, the local movement known as The Real Black Friday isn’t waiting around to do scholarly analysis. Instead their to increase the amount of business black people do with one another in the clear understanding that their success will increase community solvency, reduce black unemployment, and have a positive impact on a host of social ills.

To that end, LaRese Purnell, founder of The Real Black Friday, has introduced the “Lynx Card”, which aims to provide incentives for patronizing black businesses. Purnell and his associates have recruited an initial group of merchants to serve as the first ambassadors of the card. These businesses include dozens of restaurants, retailers, barber shops and hair salons throughout Northeast Ohio.

Purnell wants to supplement and expand the efforts of his Real Black Friday initiative, which was designed to heighten awareness of and broaden exposure to black-owned and operated businesses in northeast Ohio. He’s impatient to produce results, saying in a press release, “No more talking, it’s time to take action and move the needle in our community.

Purnell says cardholders can get special offers, deals and incentives on various products, goods and services at all participating locations.

The card costs only \$10, is good for one year and offers discounts to a number of well-known community businesses as popular restaurants Angie’s Soul Café, Zanzibar Soul Fusion, and Beckham’s B&M Bar-B-Que. Other businesses include hair salon, fitness camp, auto wash, limousine service, funeral home, spa service, and even a State Farm Insurance office.

Lynx Cards can be purchased from participating merchants or ordered online at www.therealblackfriday.com.

County starts Child Support Warrant Recall Fridays

By Richard Donald Jones
RDP Correspondent

Cuyahoga County currently has several thousand parents owing past-due child support with active bench warrants for failing to appear at a court hearing or for not appearing for genetic testing.

Beginning Friday January 8, and every subsequent Friday going forward those with warrants will have the opportunity to pay \$50 in certified funds and have their warrants recalled. The \$50 payment will be automatically applied to any outstanding arrears.

The program, operated by the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, will allow those with outstanding warrants to restart

the clock on their past due payments while making available a slew of social services including on-site genetic testing.

When a parent who believes he or she has a warrant appears at the court with the fee, a magistrate will immediately sign a new order which cancels the warrant and sets their case for a hearing in the near future. The party will then be free to go.

The Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center is located at 9300 Quincy Ave.

To verify if you have a warrant, you can call (216) 443-8400 and press #4.

Warrant recall Friday is available to noncustodial parents who have cases through Cuyahoga Children and Family Services, a division of the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

Among the social services available to parents during the Child Support Warrant Recall Fridays are:

- Training on how to access your child support account online
- Access a copy of your specific child support order
- Information on parenting time with your child
- Same day purge review hearing or a date to appear in court within 90 days
- Information on the Families on Track Program
- Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative and employment opportunities
- Information on license reinstatement.

For more information, go to www.cjfs.cuyahogacounty.us or www.juvenile.cuyahogacounty.us.

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shot, and gross indifference afterwards, I haven't stood in their shoes in a similar moment of truth. So I've tried to rewind the scenario to a time where I might have stood in their shoes, when I was on my way to a dangerous encounter. How would I have spent those few fleeting minutes as I sped with my partner to a scene of potential danger?

I think I would have discussed how to achieve a successful resolution of a situation that contained several unknowns: Real gun? Mentally unbalanced person? Intoxicated? A threat to himself? Others? How best to ascertain the true state of things quickly, safely, accurately so as to serve and protect the public, and get everybody home safe at the end of the day. How might we deescalate this situation if indeed it is truly threatening?

What might my more experienced partner have told me as we sped to the scene? What was our objective? Were we on the same page?

While there are lots of reasons to be critical of the

prosecutor's handling of this case, the fact is Tamir was dead before McGinty got involved. The worst thing he might have done is to shield these officers from having to account publicly for their decision-making.

When it comes down to having one moment to decide, the law will always favor the man with the badge. If we are to stop the open season on public citizens, especially citizens of color of virtually any age or gender, by some percentage of police officers unfit to carry badge, gun, or uniform, we must move upstream to where the mindset predisposes an officer in one direction or another.

Do we want officers who approach every encounter convinced they are about to confront a menacing incredible hulk? We certainly want our police officers to get home safely at the end of the day, but is such a mindset truly the best or the only way to achieve that result?

Richard T. Andrews
Editor



Little Italy - University Circle Rapid Line
Photo courtesy of City Architecture Inc.

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Akron Urban League now accepting scholarship applications

The Akron Urban League is currently accepting applications for its 2016 Annual Scholarship Program. All high school seniors residing and attending high school in Summit County are eligible to apply. To be considered for various scholarship opportunities, students must

have a GPA of 2.5 or higher and submit a 2016 Akron Urban League Scholarship application along with a letter of recommendation, a personal essay, the student's 2016 FAFSA student aid report, and official transcripts to Vernia Neal, Akron Urban League, 440 Vernon Odom

Blvd., Akron, Ohio 44307.

Deadline for completed applications is 5pm, Thursday, February 12. In its 30th year, the Akron Urban League Scholarship program offers third party scholarships to deserving seniors enrolled in Summit Coun-

ty high schools planning to attend college or trade school. In 2015, the League awarded scholarships to 42 students valued at over \$130,000.

Scholarships are presented each year at the Akron Urban League's Annual Meeting and Scholarship

Luncheon, which this year will be Wednesday, April 27. Scholarship applications are available at <http://www.akronurbanleague.org/education/scholarship-program> or at the Akron Urban League. For more information, contact Vernia Neal at 234.542.4134.

Cleveland Court Administrator Wins National Award



Russell Brown III

Cleveland Municipal Court Administrator Russell Brown III has won the 2015 Warren

E. Burger Award, presented annually by the Institute for Court Management (ICM). The award, named for the late U.S. Supreme Court chief justice, recognizes an individual who has significantly improved the administration of state courts.

Cleveland Municipal Court Administrative Judge Ronald B. Adrine said the award couldn't have gone to a better person.

"We are extremely pleased that the National Center for State Courts is recognizing and sharing with the world what we here in Cleveland already knew," Judge Adrine said. "Russell Brown is a visionary leader and an exceptional administrator. He excels in working with people of all stripes and in getting things done. His work ethic is unequaled, and

we feel particularly blessed that he chooses to share his skillset with us."

Brown is a certified court manager and a 2006 fellow with ICM. He also teaches a leadership course conducted by ICM and the Ohio Judicial College. Brown is a past president of the Ohio Association for Court Administration and a member of the Nation-

al Association for Court Management. He joined the Cleveland Municipal Court as a magistrate and mediation coordinator in 1997 after serving as an assistant city prosecutor in Cleveland and an assistant director of law. Brown is a graduate of Kent State University School of Business and Case Western Reserve University School of Law.

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Citizen Police Relations panel

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Pierre Nappier at Nov. 11 meeting. Photo by Randy O. Norfus.

to serve the public interest.”

“I have to go a bit further and say that this commission was in many ways handcuffed from the start,” added husband David. “The realization that they are merely a recommendation panel having no implementation power is problematic. That, coupled with the consent decree’s lack of measurable consequence for specific unjustifiable instances of police brutality, could render the commission window dressing despite their intent.”

The December 3 meeting unfolded in what has become a predictably scripted manner where updates to the city’s charter were presented, specifically where language appears about police-civilian interaction. But the business atmosphere in that and other CCPC sessions has been consistently overshadowed by the series of personal accounts from a core group of attendees who raise policing accountability issues. The Pattersons, along with Julia Shearson, executive director of the Cleveland chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, and Pierre Nappier, who describes himself as founder of the New Black Democratic Party of Cuyahoga County, have been a part of that core.

Shearson has cited instances of reckless police conduct where the allegations included irresponsible use of social me-

dia and abusive conduct toward a citizen by an officer who at the time was serving the interests of another off-duty officer. Nappier’s comments allege intentional, racially-motivated abuse by police in the deaths of motorists Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams in November of 2012, and 12-year-old Tamir Rice two years later. Cleveland police were cleared of homicide charges in the first case and were freed of obligation to even stand trial in the latter.

Despite the strenuous collective dissatisfaction expressed by many attendees — the audience averages about sixty per meeting — Matthew Barge, official monitor of the process by which commissioners are to merge concerned citizens’ input into the final reform recommendations, sought to reassure that accountability and the pursuit of practical solutions remained high priorities.

“The first page of the consent decree — why we’re here — I think it’s helpful to keep coming back to that because those are the interests that we are mindful of balancing,” Barge stated in response to Commission member Rev. V. Yvonne Conner’s request that he articulate the decree’s core objective. “We want policing to be effective. We hear that everywhere we go; that the effects of violence are being experienced too often in too many of Cleveland’s communities. We need the police to protect the communities and keep them safe. In the same breath, policing needs to keep officers safe and keep Cleveland’s communities safe. That is incredibly important.”

The entire consent decree is available at www.cleconsentdecree.com.

Barge added that his own presence as monitor sought to insure the application of core constitutional protections during the type of policing episodes that made the com-

mission necessary. He concluded with a reassurance that the commission also sought to evaluate how much Cleveland’s overall method of policing reflected the community’s interests and included that voice to which Marva Patterson referred. “The interests (between police and citizens) sometimes seem like they clash and we will work through those issues. The primary work of the CPC at the front...is to take community values, experiences, hopes, aspirations, challenges, issues with past history, and the vision for the future, and to collect that into something that can be provided to the police division. So that as they put pen to paper, they’ll understand what are the community’s interests.”

Viewpoints of the proceedings ranged from moderate to extreme, as became evident from the meeting’s public comment period. Pierre Nappier predictably offered the most provocative views. “The Neo-Nazi movement in the ranks and leadership of the Cleveland Police Department has eroded trust over a number of years through racial profiling, verbal abuse, brutality, torture and murder,” he read from a prepared statement. “It must be eradicated, and those guilty parties must be prosecuted as (perpetrators of) federal hate crimes.”

One East Cleveland resident expressed encouragement at the spirit of communication and cohesiveness between the city, the CDP, the commission and the Department of Justice. Another unidentified attendee emphasized that Cleveland has a high percentage of functionally illiterate citizens unlikely to understand much of the legal jargon presented at the meetings despite the commissions repeated encouragement for community attendance.

A North Ridgeville resident proposed that voice recordings

be readily available when police encounter citizens to raise accountability of their work, citing their effectiveness in other parts of the country.

These were the newest in a series of concerns that commissioners insist will be addressed as their charge is fulfilled. Other issues were presented at the Dec. 3 meeting. “I think we need a public portal where this stuff can go up online, where people can see it and provide much more thorough comments, like the federal government does when it’s seeking public comment for the federal registry. I think the number (of eligible citizens) involved in police review should certainly go up, especially if you’re going to have additional duties like educating the community,” Shearson said.

In that same meeting, lawyer Noah Fowle relayed his ordeal as support for the need to expose gaps in protection experienced by citizens in certain city zones. The Little Italy resident lives in Cleveland’s zone seven, the jurisdiction of the third district police precinct but only two hundred yards from the even closer University Circle Police Department. He recounted receiving protection from neither department following an attempt on his life by two armed men in November.

“After two police from the third district were done taking my statement, they gave me a frank and honest appraisal of my position and told me that living in zone seven, I was essentially unprotected. I found out that two weeks before my attack, another young man was similarly robbed at gunpoint from the same block,” Fowle said. He said that, following a letter-writing campaign that drew the attention of the third district, the district’s only response was to launch an internal investigation into the role of the officers that informed him



Marvetta Patterson. Photo by Randy O. Norfus.

rather than seek to expand their patrol to include Fowle’s zone.

“This is garbage. The University Circle Police Department is advocating expanding their jurisdiction. However, that decision needs to come from the city, and the third district needs to be front and center advocating for that. Because as soon as the University Circle Police Department can expand their jurisdiction, the third district has a little bit less area to police, and maybe they can focus on other areas. When I called the third district to follow up about my crime, they said they were too busy handling homicides. I prevented my own homicide by fighting back against two men who had a gun. I understand that nobody here today is responsible for this, but this is a very simple problem with a simple solution.” Fowle concluded.

Barge and commission co-chairs Dr. Rhonda Williams and Mario Clopton continued to assure attendees that their concerns would be carried to the relevant players throughout the commission’s tenure. However, they implored citizens to attend as many remaining commission meetings as possible, all of which are listed under the “Full Meetings Schedule” section of the “Commission Meetings” link at www.clevelandcpc.org.

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Politics

United Way's Kevin McDaniel Succeeds John Hairston as new 11th Congressional District Director



Kevin L. McDaniel

WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, OH - **Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge** (OH-11) announced the appointment of Kevin L. McDaniel as 11th Congressional District Director. He will oversee the Summit County and Cuyahoga County offices starting January 4. Prior to joining the office, McDaniel served as Program Director at the United Way of Greater Cleveland, Program Officer at the Cleveland Foundation, and Director of Admissions at Cuyahoga County Community College.

Former District Director John Hairston retired after more than four years with the Congresswoman's office. Mr. Hairston began his notable career as an English teacher, later assuming leadership roles as Chief of Communications for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and Director of External Programs at NASA John H. Glenn Research Center.

McMonagle Appointed to Cuyahoga Court of Common Pleas

Gov. John Kasich appointed Matthew A. McMonagle of Fairview Park to serve as a judge on the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, General Division. McMonagle will assume office on January 4, and must run in the November 2016 general election to retain the seat for the full term commencing January 5, 2017. McMonagle is replacing Judge Lance T. Mason, who resigned last year after being convicted of domestic violence charges.



Matthew A. McMonagle

McMonagle's experience includes serving as magistrate for the Rocky River Municipal Court and a litigation associate and partner at Kelley & Ferraro, LLP.

Kasich will soon be appointing two new judges to Cleveland Municipal Court. The first vacancy occurred when Judge Ed Wade resigned after winning another seat on the court, defeating incumbent Pauline Tarver in the process.

The second vacancy occurred when Angela Stokes resigned as part of a negotiated end to charges brought against her by Ohio Disciplinary Counsel.



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Earle B. Turner
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Marilyn A. Eisele of Shaker Heights has been appointed to the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees for a term ending May 17, 2023.

◀ Marilyn A. Eisele

Broadway, Heights, Boys & Girls Clubs get new directors

Myesha Crowe named director of Broadway, Rodney Collins goes to Cleveland Heights



Myesha Crowe,
Broadway Boys & Girls
Club Director

Myesha Crowe is the new director of the Broadway Boys & Girls Club, one of 14 sites operated by Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland. She replaces Rodney Collins, who served as director for the past 18 months, and has been named director of the Heights Youth Club (HYC), located at 2065 Lee Rd. in Cleveland Heights.

Crowe, who holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in social work from CSU, lives in Middleburg Heights. She formerly worked for BGCC as assistant director at the Michael R. White and Heights Youth Club in Cleveland Heights. The Broadway Club, located at 6114 Broadway Ave. in Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood, is one of BGCC's busiest, serving approximately 110 kids per day.

"I am really looking forward to working at Broadway Boys & Girls Club – the staff and I will do great things and make a difference in the lives of the members we serve," said Crowe, who grew up in Cleveland's inner city and was raised by a single mother of three. "My background has pro-

vided me with the compassion and love to relate to the children we serve – and to inspire them."

She added, "Although I was not a Club kid growing up, I am the biggest Club kid now. FUN is my last name."

Collins, an experienced youth leader and boxing fitness instructor, believes "The Boys & Girls Club is a place where kids come first and they matter."

Collins grew up in Toledo, where he played football, basketball and track. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Bowling Green State University (BGSU) and master's degrees in religion and divinity from Liberty University. He moved to Cleveland in 1995. Collins has more than 20 years of experience in the cor-



Rodney Collins,
Former Broadway Boys
& Girls Club Director

porate and nonprofit worlds.

"Rodney Collins is a great representative to the community," BGCC President Ron Soeder said. "He is very effective in communicating to our community partners and building those relationships."

Collins and his wife, Falandra, have been married for

20 years and live in South Euclid. They have two children, daughter Anointyd, a freshman at BGSU, and son Josiah, a senior at Andrews Osborne Academy.

HYC offers Heights students in grades one through 12 a variety of after-school activities, five days a week, 3–7 p.m. The club currently serves more than 300 young people.

Founded in 1954, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland serves nearly 8,000 youths in Cleveland's inner-city neighborhoods, Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland. The Clubs are designed to provide a safe place for children to learn and grow, and to develop positive relationships with caring adult professionals.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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The public is invited to apply for poll worker and temporary positions online in the Employment section of the Board's website: www.443VOTE.com.

EMERGING ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAM RETURNS

The Presidents' Council Emerging Entrepreneurs Program will return this February 2016. Equipped with new curriculum and facilitators, this course is specifically designed to help address the problems African American entrepreneurs face, as well as provide tangible solutions that can be implemented immediately. Registration opened January 4. Contact the Emerging Entrepreneur Coordinator, Travis Howard at

216-771-8702 ext.226 for more information.

• The Ohio Third Frontier Internship Program (OTF) will offer competitive pay for entrepreneurial-minded undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degrees in business, communications, liberal arts, engineering or other STEM related fields. Minority and women students are strongly encouraged to apply, since one of the major goals of this program is to increase the number of diverse student interns working for early stage tech startups.

Historically African American and Hispanic college graduates have faced lower pay, higher unemployment rates and lower levels of wealth than their white and Asian counterparts. By connecting diverse college students to employment opportunities through paid internships with the most promising companies of the future, The OTF is leading the way toward pay and employment equity for women and minority graduates, which will lead to a more vibrant and prosperous economy for Ohio.

Interested candidates should apply immediately.

For more information, contact Nic Turner, Program Manager, 614.644.9160 or Nicolas.Turner@development.ohio.gov.

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EDITORIAL

Comes a Moment to Decide



Month after next, Cuyahoga County voters will go to the polls. Those who pull a Democratic primary vote will have an opportunity, among other things, to vote to oust or retain the county prosecutor. For some voters, it will be an easy choice. McGinty screwed up this Tamir Rice case so badly in so many ways, not to mention his handling of the police chase that ended in a hail of 137 bullets, all fired by police at two trapped, defenseless, people.

This man has got to go, they will say.

Will they realize that ousting McGinty will bring someone else in his wake? Is McGinty the worst prosecutor they could ever imagine?

Some people will say the answer to that question is a no-brainer. Of course, he's the worst ever!

Some older heads may say not so fast. They will recall Maximum Indictment John T. Corrigan, who terrorized the black community for decades. And only four years ago, the super-political Bill Mason was this county's prosecutor.

Blasting McGinty out of office may feel good, and a strong case can be made that he deserves it, but perhaps some consideration should be given to who his successor would be.

I think the next couple of months leading up to the election is the perfect time for us to ask some tough questions of the prosecutor

and of his intraparty rival as well. It's also past time for us to consider how we got ourselves in a position so often where are only choices are a rock and a hard place. And it is the perfect time to figure out what we can do so that going forward, we have an abundance of choices.

In that vein, we want to give a shout out to the two young men whose op-ed appears opposite this one. They understand both the opportunity and the responsibility each of us bears for educating ourselves up and down the ballot and getting involved.

It is reassuring to know that they are not alone. Another young man, Alonzo Mitchell III, has been scheduling workshops and seminars

with the avowed goal of developing quality young men and women to run for office in our community. We know from our work that all over Ohio there are talented young men and women of all stripes who are not waiting for a blessing from their elders.

They are determined not only to ensure that their lives matter, but that their votes do as well.

Our community has a true opportunity to engage the prosecutorial candidates in this election season. Seize it and we can affect the way justice is dispensed in this county. Muff it and the road may get even bumpier.

Richard T. Andrews
Editor

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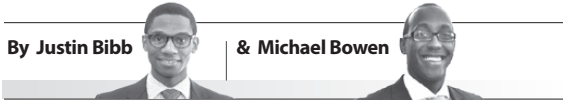
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OP-ED

Cleveland's Joshua Generation Must Stand Up



By Justin Bibb & Michael Bowen

On March 4, 2007, then-Senator Barack Obama found himself at the center of American racial politics weeks after he announced his campaign president. Obama was called to give remarks commemorating the 42nd anniversary of the 1965 civil rights march in Selma, Alabama. During his remarks, Obama honored the leaders of the "Moses Generation" - from Martin Luther King Jr. and Jimmy Lee Jackson, to Reverends Joseph Lowery and C.T. Vivian — leaders of the Civil Rights Movement marched, suffered, and lost their lives. These icons,

however, didn't get a chance to see the Promise Land.

While these leaders set the tone, Obama challenged the "Joshua Generation" summoning a call to action for the next generation of African-Americans to continue to build on the movement that led to historic political and economic progress.

Given the state of our city, the need for Cleveland's "Joshua Generation" to take the mantle from our own "Moses Generation" could not be greater. Leaders such as Carl and Louis Stokes,

Arnold Pinkney, and George Forbes paved the way for Cleveland's African American community to achieve significant prosperity. Yet, as this new American century begins to take shape the question remains: What's called for the next generation? As Obama eloquently proclaimed in his speech, "We shouldn't forget that better is not good enough."

The need for Cleveland's Joshua Generation to take a bold stand could not be greater.

Currently, our city is at a critical crossroads. Under-served minority communities, predominantly on the city's East Side, have been left out of the surge of econom-

ic development taking place downtown and in many West Side neighborhoods. Cleveland's poorer neighborhoods have among the highest infant mortality rates in the nation. Even more alarming is the fact that recent data from the U.S. Census shows that 34% of Cleveland residents live in poverty.

So what can the Joshua Generation do to help realize a true economic renaissance to fulfill the promise of the social and economic mobility for every Cleveland resident?

It starts by putting people before politics. It starts by meeting citizens where they are and being authentic about the problems we face as a city.

It starts by building a grassroots movement for change that works across racial and political divides to ensure we hold every elected official accountable for their actions.

As members of the Joshua Generation, we are ready to take the mantle to continue the work of making our city great. Are you?

Justin Bibb is a former civil servant currently enrolled in a J.D.-MBA program at Case Western Reserve University. Michael Bowen just earned his J.D. from Cleveland-Marshall and is an incoming associate at Taft, Stettinius, & Hollister LLP. He was Field Director for the just-passed Issue 8 Arts & Culture Tax Levy.

A MILLENNIAL PERSPECTIVE

Stand Aloof or Get Engaged? Sometimes it's hard to know



By Lara Adrienne
Press Correspondent

I sometimes find it difficult to distinguish between being helpful and being presumptuous. The other day, as I waited for the metro on my way to teach a yoga class downtown, a blind man arrived on the platform, using his cane to guide him to the bench. I wondered if he could tell which train he needed to board by sound and feel alone, but I hesitated to ask him. I hovered near him, waiting at the ready to be helpful if necessary. Is this obnoxious, I wondered? I wasn't sure.

When the train arrived, he

made his way toward it, tentatively sticking out his cane, and the tip of it dipped down into the gap between the train car and the platform. Clearly startled, he gasped and stepped back quickly. Someone closer to him than I stepped forward and led him gently by the elbow onto the car.

I sat across from him on the train. I felt compelled to speak to him, but didn't want to offend him. Funny, I speak to strangers whenever I get the notion. Not sure why I was so hesitant. After moments of agonizing, I said, "Are you getting off at Metro Center? I can help you off!" As it turns out, he was getting off one stop after me, and I

shouldn't have been nervous to speak to him at all. He was a friendly, polite, engaging conversationalist. I tried to relate to his cane getting stuck in the gap between the platform by telling him how once I was pushed by an impatient crowd while boarding the metro in Istanbul and my leg gotten stuck between the platform and the train, and how terrified I was.

He then told me that about 8pm just the day before, a car hit him while he was crossing the street at Takoma Metro. He wasn't terribly hurt, he said, but he fell backward, nearly lost his footing, and became disoriented.

What he said next shocked

me. No one, not the driver who hit him, nor any other drivers or pedestrians helped him. He was stuck in the middle of the crosswalk, disoriented, and unsure which way to go and whether he'd be hit again. I was appalled. I think I was even more disappointed and angry than he was. He was more worried about hiding the fact that he was upset from his sister later that evening, so she wouldn't worry.

As we continued our ride, I learned that he runs a non-profit sports organization for blind children in Maryland. They play a game called goalball. (Find them on youtube.com at MD Goalball.) I eventually looked him up and

learned that he gradually lost his sight during childhood, becoming completely blind at the age of 13. That did not stop him from making his high school wrestling team.

I'm still not sure whether offering help without being asked is rude or not, but I think it's probably a good idea. I do know I'm glad I got to meet Michael Spriggs.

Lara Adrienne grew up in Shaker Heights and graduated from Howard University. After several years living and traveling abroad, she now lives in suburban Washington DC, where she works as a belly dancer, medical interpreter and yoga instructor [not simultaneously].

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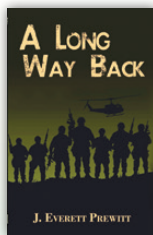
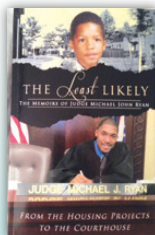


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Aim to help more Cleveland-area residents become primary care physicians



Giesele Robinson Greene, M.D.,

Giesele Robinson Greene, M.D., and Stephen Rowan, J.D., D.Min., are the new co-chairs of the Community Advisory Board of the NEOMED-CSU Partnership for Urban Health, effective January 4.

The board is a community



Stephen Rowan, J.D., D.Min.

conduit for the NEOMED-CSU partnership, a collaboration between Northeast Ohio Medical University and Cleveland State University for recruiting and training a more diverse health care workforce to provide primary care in medically under-

served urban communities. The partnership seeks to connect pre-medical students and medical students directly to the types of Cleveland communities they will serve after completing their residency training.

Dr. Greene is senior vice president and chief medical officer of the Cleveland-based Sisters of Charity Health System, where she provides medical leadership to advance best practices in clinical care, quality and safety. She works with St. Vincent Charity Medical Center in bringing urban medicine, medical education and services to its community. She is a graduate of the Howard University College

of Medicine, a board-certified internist and a fellow in the American College of Physicians.

Rev. Dr. Rowan is pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood. Previously, he worked at the Cleveland Foundation, where he oversaw faith-based and digital divide programs. He also worked for Cuyahoga County, where he was chief deputy administrator, and at the law firm of Ulmer & Berne, where he specialized in public law and minority and female businesses. A graduate of Glenville High School, he holds a Master of Public Administration from

Northern Illinois University, a law degree from CSU's Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, a Master of Divinity from Trinity Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from Ashland Theological Seminary.

Greene and Rowan succeed Dr. Edgar Jackson Jr., (who has been appointed co-director of the NEOMED-CSU Partnership for Urban Health) and the late Honorable Louis Stokes, who had served as co-chairs of the Community Advisory Board since the NEOMED-CSU Partnership was launched in 2012. In 2015, the partnership received a \$5.5 million grant from the Cleveland Foundation.



HEALTH CHARTS



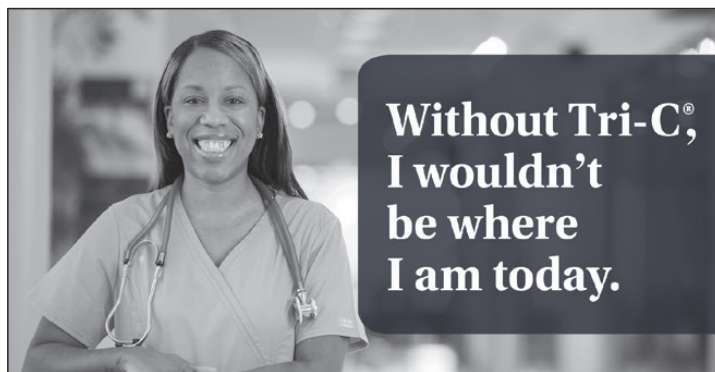
African American Male Wellness Walk Planning Underway

Tina Rice of TRice Communications is recruiting a small regiment to plan the inaugural Cleveland African American Male Wellness Walk, which is scheduled for August 27, 2016. Willie Austin, CEO of Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services [NEON] is serving as honorary chair. Organizers hope to best Columbus's record of 12,000 men participating, with 113 vendors and 27 sponsors. For more information, call NEON at 216.231.7700 or email butlerk@neonhealth.org

A **Lupus Support Group** will host a monthly call-in session on January 13 from 7-8PM. To register or for more info, visit www.LupusGreaterOhio.org or call 888.NO-LUPUS.

April is MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

Does your organization have an event scheduled for Minority Health Month? If so, send us the details [at a minimum: Who/What/When/Where]. Make sure you provide us a contact name and a way to get back to you. Email your info to rtathealdealpress.com or fax it to us at 216.672.4304.



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Community Calendar

Martin Luther King Jr. Events

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IS FOCUS OF JAN. 17 MLK WEEKEND EVENT

Panel Discussion, "Black Friday" film spotlight financial decision-making

Dr. King was not only about civil rights. He understood the relevance of challenging economic injustice as well. In fact some have suggested that it was King's growing focus on economic injustice that finally made him intolerable to the dark forces that brought about his assassination.

A number of community organizations have joined this year to examine issues related to economic empowerment in a program scheduled for Sunday, January 17 at 5pm at The WORD Church, 18909 S. Miles Rd., Warrensville Hts.

The program will begin with a showing of the film "Black

Friday: What Legacy Will You Leave". The documentary examines African American attitudes and practices towards money and spending.

The film will be followed by a panel discussion moderated by Channel 5 news anchor Danita Harris. Panelists include Maggie Anderson who wrote a book a few years back chronicling her family's yearlong effort to "buy black".

Organizers expect more than 75 local businesses will have booths at the event. There is no charge to attend.

New Maple Heights mayor to keynote MLK celebration Jan. 18

Maple Hts. Mayor Annette Blackwell will speak at a celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the New Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church, 18900 Libby Rd. The program will begin at noon. Rev. Gregory Walker of Warrensville Road Community Baptist Church will also speak.

County Government Decisions: WHAT'S COMING IN 2016?

Sunday, January 17th • 9:30-10:45 am

Join the discussion on strategic priorities in county government for job growth and opportunity, fairness and equity in government services, and other core initiatives for 2016 and beyond.

ALL ARE INVITED



Armond Budish,
Cuyahoga County Executive

First Unitarian Church
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Olivet pastor to keynote Cleveland Public Library King program, Jan. 18

The Rev. Dr. Jawanza Colvin will keynote the Library's 31st annual King Commemorative Program at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch, 1962 Stokes Blvd. A community reception will follow the program, which starts at 1pm.

Akron Urban League hosts MLK celebration breakfast Jan. 18

The Akron Urban League's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration will be held on Monday, January 18, in President's Hall at the Akron Urban League, 440 Vernon Odom Blvd., Akron.

This year's celebration will begin with a 7:30 am breakfast buffet followed by keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. R.A. Vernon, Founder and Senior Pastor of the Word Church. Tickets for the event are \$15 per person and can be purchased online at www.akronurbanleague.org or in person at the Akron UL office. Call 330.434.3101 for more information.

Social justice visionary Bryan Stevenson to present keynote at CWRU's MLK convocation Jan. 22



Bryan Stevenson will present the keynote address at Case Western Reserve University's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. convocation.

A MacArthur fellow and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), Stevenson is considered a leader in the movement against mass incarceration in the U.S. He recently served on President Barack Obama's task force on 21st-century policing.

Stevenson's speech, on Friday, Jan. 22, at 12:30 p.m., in the Tinkham Veale University Center, 11038 Bellflower Rd., is free and open to the public, although registration is recommended. To register, visit <http://www.case.edu/events/featured-events/mlk/>.

Each year, Case honors Martin Luther King, Jr.—the holiday, the man and the legacy—with a weeklong celebration featuring a range of activities, from workshops and films to panel discussions and celebrated speakers. The theme of the 2016... CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ▶



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"That's a Biggun!" Better Call Dave!"

Cleveland Rise nonprofit working to root out obstacles to its clients' success

By Derek Dixon
RDP Correspondent

When she heard her leader's directive, young Tiranay stepped forward, positioned like someone expecting to be the opening musician. After all, Tiranay and her "Voices in the Valley" peers have been internalizing Sister Yvetta's preparation mantra for nearly two years.

On December 11, Tiranay, one of eleven teens and pre-teens that represented the fifteen-member youth developmental organization, provided a soul-stirring violin rendition of the classic spiritual "Motherless Child". The occasion was an open house of Cleveland Rise at Chandler Park, as the old world headquarters of industrial giant Parker Hannifin is now known.

Sister Yvetta, who goes by first name only, is the Director of Cultural Arts at the Garden Valley Neighborhood House, the birthplace of "Voices" and Cleveland Rise. She has partnered with long-time youth mentor, com-

munity activist and former librarian Jan Ridgeway in the latter's tenacious drive to revitalize as much of the heart and heritage within the county housing project as possible.

"Jan wanted a choir that would develop the whole child and have a two-fold purpose: to entertain but also to educate," explained Yvetta about Voices, which was organized in the fall of 2013. "We have youth from ages five to fourteen years. What is unique to this group is that it is so varied. These children are given lessons not only in music, but in sewing, spoken word, modern dance and ballroom dancing."

Following "Motherless Child", the entire ensemble combined drums and strings to officially greet the 30-plus open house attendees with "Funga", a universally recognized welcome song from West Africa. The group's members were as coordinated visually as audibly: every member wore a jet-black head-to-toe outfit, complete with kente hats for the boys

and kente scarves for the girls.

According to its website, Cleveland Rise began its non-profit status as a resource center and small business incubator under the original name Mt. Pleasant Business Association. Between 2006 and 2011, resident volunteers positioned the association to have enough autonomy to change its name to "Cleveland Rise" in 2012. From there, an increased priority was placed on providing a path to continual productivity for previously incarcerated people looking to reenter society in a more wholesome fashion. The mission "is to assist in the revitalization of individual sustainability efforts for at-risk youth and their families through mentorship, education and entrepreneurship," the website states.

On many occasions, Cleveland Rise has been a destination for youth emerging from the county juvenile court system, Rise Executive Director Diane Coates said via email. "We accept referrals to complete their commu-

nity service work with us; and most of them become involved with our programs. We've worked with youth that were detained in the Cuyahoga Hills Boys Detention Center (Warrensville Heights) and Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility (Massillon). We have a fatherhood initiative where we host a yearly conference with young fathers, and we hold a parenting conference."

"Our work focuses on eradicating the challenges that our participants face," Coates continued. "At the heart of our affiliates is the desire to share how positive relationships can and will produce long-term transformation in the lives of those that we serve. We offer a 'hand up', not a handout, through long-term support to those who are truly ready for a life-changing transformation. I might add that everyone that works with us is a volunteer. There is no paid staff, including myself."

For more information about Cleveland Rise, call 216.256.2132, or visit www.cleveland-rise.org.



Top: Tiranay of "Voices in the Valley" playing "Motherless Child." Bottom: "Voices in the Valley" members perform welcome message in dance



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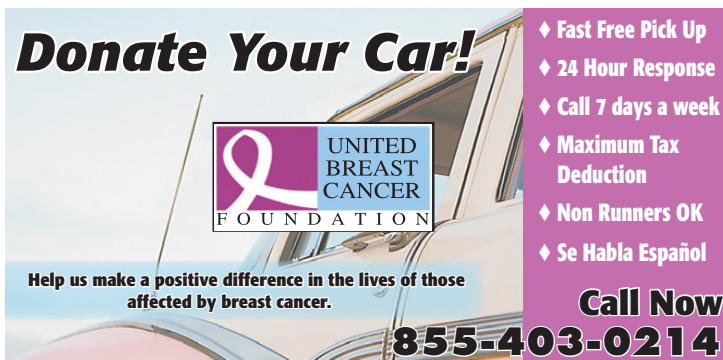
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Freedom Dreamers Take Flight



Left: Let me introduce you to the Blue Mountains in Sydney, Australia. Right: When God puts her paintbrushes together to paint navy blue purple skies, it's L I T! Pictures and captions courtesy of Jasmyn Shumate

By **Jasmyn Shumate**
Press Correspondent

For the past 21 years Cleveland, Ohio, was my comfort zone, a place I thought I knew all too well and to think of stepping anywhere outside of these lines of familiarity frighten me.

My Africana Studies professor at Howard University, Dr. Greg Carr, often reminded our class during his lectures that, "The world is your classroom."

I too wanted a peek inside the world's classroom so one day I pulled out a map, closed my eyes and determined that wherever my finger landed that's where I would choose to study abroad. I hit a funny shaped oval, and Australia became my destination.

So, this past July 18, I packed my life away in three oversized suitcases filled to the brim and took a 28-hour journey across the Pa-

cific Ocean to embark on a life-changing journey of exploration, self-discovery, recovery and growth.

"How you going mate?," said my driver who greeted me at the airport baggage

claim in Brisbane, Australia. "Ah, I'm going to The University of Queensland." I later discovered that "How you going?" means "How are you doing?" The language barrier was not as thick as I expected, it sounded like Old King's English with a twist of Ireland's tongue but it amused me when people joked about my American accent. I found

it weird when people told me I had an accent, but soon enough it hit me: I was a foreigner in "their" country, I was different, new and maybe even a bit weird to them, I felt lost but content with feeling

Australia as I could.

My biggest cultural shock came when I found out how differently people truly think. Historically, being "Black" in Australia has never been welcomed, as I later learned

still fighting for statehood and human rights.

In the U.S. racism is packaged within systems, policies, propaganda and social structures. In Australia, racism is direct, confrontational, uncut, and in your face. Whether I was walking down the street or in a crowded club, I felt it caged around me. But I found my safe haven through the deep connections I made with friends in the African Student Association (ASA). Although people saw me as a Black American, I identify as African and we all found it refreshing to see familiar faces from places we'd only dreamed of. I was intrigued to learn about my friends' native cultural customs, traditions and language. They embraced my curiosity with open arms. ASA was like my home away from home, my extended family from all different parts of the motherland. I will cherish them forever.

"In the U.S. racism is packaged within systems, policies, propaganda and social structures. In Australia, racism is direct, confrontational, uncut, and in your face."

about the colonization of Ab-origines in Australia and the constant oppression, dehumanization and violence they face on a daily basis. I quickly noticed how the Aboriginal community was displaced throughout Australia and the stereotypes and stigmas attached to their existence. I felt like a relative to their pain; we were natural born citizens yet

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Freedom Dreamers

Continued from Page 15



I found my paradise at Whitehaven beach in the Whitsundays. (Australia) Pictures and captions courtesy of Jasmyn Shumate

Getting a passport was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Who knew the places a little navy blue book could take you and the doors of opportunities it could open. My passport is an

ence. They helped me reaffirm that we are the only gatekeepers of our intellectual aspirations.

As students, especially as students of African descent, it is important to un-

“We are the only gatekeepers of our intellectual aspirations.”

emblem of the cultural connectivity of my experiences abroad that can be supported through my exploration of self and the personal growth I experienced. Travel has helped transform me into a more culturally competent and literate student and individual.

My time at The University of Queensland has been the most consciously elevating moment of my life. In the spirit of social responsibility and in my quest to become a more active participant of my global community, I owe this experience to the wise counsel who supported me along the way. I also am forever grateful to my peers who, while never seeing traveling abroad as a realistic opportunity for themselves, nonetheless who pushed me to take on this experi-

derstand that our education extends past the lecture halls of our respective universities. Studying abroad is an enriching experience that should be included in every student's collegiate plans. My time at the University of Queensland provided me the opportunity to gain a globalized worldview of different places and faces outside of how I imagined the world to look, feel and sound. For this reason, I am committed to bridging cultural connections and fostering transparency in our global community.

Jasmyn grew up in Shaker Heights and is in her junior year at American University in Washington DC. She is presently working on dual degrees in public relations and marketing and in black cultural narrative studies.

Community Calendar

Continued from Page 12

MLK Week Celebration is “Reflections on the Movement: The Urgency of Then and Now.”

Stevenson, who Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu has called “America’s young Nelson Mandela,” has received numerous awards and was named one of TIME magazine’s “100 Most Influential People” for 2015.

Under Stevenson’s leadership, EJI has won major legal challenges eliminating excessive and unfair sentencing, exonerating innocent death-row prisoners, confronting abuse of the incarcerated and the mentally ill and aiding children prosecuted as adults.

Stevenson, a New York University School of Law professor, has successfully argued several cases in the U.S. Supreme Court

and won an historic ruling that mandatory life-without-parole sentences for children 17 or younger are unconstitutional.

He has initiated major anti-poverty and anti-discrimination efforts that challenge the legacy of racial inequality in America, including major projects to educate communities about slavery, lynching and racial segregation.

His memoir, *Just Mercy*, is the story of a young lawyer fighting on the frontlines of a country in thrall to extreme punishments and careless justice. It has been described as “an inspiring story of unbreakable humanity in the most desperate circumstances, and a powerful indictment of our broken justice system and the twisted values that allow it to continue.”

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