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The Digital Divide is Still Here

In 2015, Blacks Lag in Accessing High-Speed Internet



Free community-based computer classes are often underfunded small-scale operations, which contributes to the digital divide. (DC Central Kitchen/Flickr/CC BY 2.0)

By Jazelle Hunt
NNPA National Correspondent

As education, jobs, and the national and global economy go digital, people without broadband (high-speed Internet) access risk being left behind. This disparity in who's online and who isn't is often called the digital

divide – and Blacks and Latinos are more likely to be in the latter group.

But people access the Internet in different ways. Black people are more likely than their White counterparts to own a smartphone and use it for Internet access. At the same time, 12 percent of Black people are smartphone dependent – they have few or no other

options for accessing the Internet at any given time. This is compared to 4 percent of Whites and the 7 percent national rate.

“Even though low-income households are over-indexing on smartphone use, I don't think that's how you want to type a paper, do your research, do your homework, apply for jobs, or apply for scholarships,”

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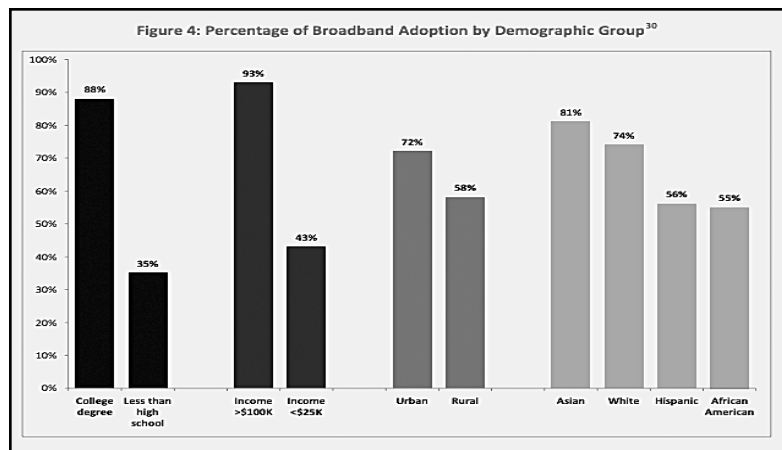
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The White House released a broadband report in 2013 about the state of American broadband. A key chart shown above, however, featured in the report shows the digital divide is still very, very real.

says Jessica Rosenworcel, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) commissioner, speaking at a Multicultural Media, Telecom, and Internet Council (MMTC) event.

The divide can also be traced to educational outcomes, from elementary school up to college. It's a problem known as the "homework gap." In an effort to prepare kids for a digital world and workforce, teachers and schools are increasingly assigning homework that requires Internet access to complete – 7 in 10 teachers do, according to Pew figures. But many students, particularly students of color from migrant/immigrant or low-income families, do not have broadband access or any device at home.

"We have 29 million households in the country with school-age children. Of that, 5 million do not have broadband at home," says John Horrigan, senior researcher on the Internet and technology at Pew Research Center. "And within that 5 million, African American households and Hispanic households are disproportionately represented."

Among Black households with less than \$50,000 annual income and school-age children, 38 percent do not have broadband access. Above that income, the figure is 13 percent; among households earning below \$25,000 per year, 46 percent do not have Internet access at home.

While students face the homework gap, job seekers who aren't as comfortable using computers can face difficulty in securing a career and building wealth. As more industries require some level of computer literacy, and as jobs without these requirements become scarcer, it will become harder to earn a living wage without these skills.

"Our economic future depends on [getting people online]," Rosenworcel says. "Already, 50 percent of the jobs that are in the economy today require some level of digital skills. By the end of the decade, that number is 77 percent."

Income inequality is both a cause and a byproduct of the digital divide. People with low income often cite cost as a barrier to getting or keeping Internet service at home. But there are other reasons people aren't online. For some, it is a lack of comfort or familiarity, and poor access to training programs that could help. For others, it's a simple lack of relevancy; what's the point of putting money and effort into getting a high-speed connection, especially with serious socioeconomic realities to overcome?

Relevancy tends to be a primary reason among older Americans. According to a survey report from Project GOAL (Get Older Americans Online), 70 percent of Americans who aren't online say they simply have no interest. Those who are interested primarily want to get news or information or use e-mail, and not much else.

"Trying to figure out what the value is in going online is still an issue for the older adult communities," says Debra Berlyn, executive director of Project GOAL. "Then within that community there's a huge difference between a 65-year-old and an 85-year-old in terms of how they may value going online. So those huge discrepancies mean that you have to show the value a bit differently."

For seniors, the Internet can add a social dimension to life that can often decline in old age. One 2009 study from Washington policy think-tank, the Phoenix Center, found that seniors who use the Internet are 20 percent less likely to report being depressed. Another 2009 study from neuroscientists at the University of California, Los Angeles found that just one week of Internet use boosted brain function in middle-aged and older users.

Over the past few decades there have been many attempts to close these digital divides. The federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, for example, supports the establishment of better broad-

band infrastructure and public computer centers. The FCC's E-rate program seeks to connect the nation's classrooms and school libraries to the Internet. Another FCC program, Lifeline, which originally offered landlines for low-income families, is exploring a modernization to include broadband Internet.

But these programs are generally underfunded, not well-known,

deprioritized when funds are allocated, or unable to evolve fast enough. Experts believe that getting everyone online will require prioritizing the Lifeline modernization, as well as creating an effective, inclusive plan to reach the people who need it most. Experts also believe that public-private partnerships will be key.

"One big takeaway is that these

communities need to be heard," says Nicol Turner-Lee, vice president and chief research and policy officer for the MMTC. "Because what basically happens is once policy is created, in terms of cultural sensitivity, they're not matched up to reality. So we end up...back here five years from now, still saying that broadband has not touched or changed the lives of individuals."



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What's All the "Buzz" About Along North Rampart Street/St. Claude Corridor?

Even before the first streetcar rolls along the North Rampart Street/St. Claude Avenue Streetcar line, there will be a lot of "buzz" along the corridor. The Regional Transit Authority's project team has launched a Business Buzz promotion to draw attention to the many merchants and businesses along the corridor. A special "buzz" word will be selected each month and publicized on the RTA web site, www.norta.com and on social media. When customers mention the "buzz" word at the participating businesses, they will become eligible for discounts or other special merchant promotions.

"North Rampart Street and St. Claude Avenue have a variety of small businesses that serve both the local community and visitors,"



The Regional Transit Authority's project team has launched a Business Buzz promotion to draw attention to the many merchants and businesses along the N. Rampart / St Claude Corridor.

said Transdev Marketing Director Patrice Bell Mercadel. "We want to showcase the diversity of the offerings along this historic corridor so that by the time the streetcar construction project ends in 2016, there will be strong economic activity in the area." Currently, five businesses have agreed to offer promotions at their businesses: Best Western Hotel Grand Pres Black Penny Restoration Thrift Crescent City Bike Tours. RTA will publicize the promotion on its web site, in its monthly project update newsletter, through social media and in-store displays cards. The North Rampart Street Main Street organization and other community organizations will also promote the project. All businesses in the North Rampart Street/St. Claude Avenue

corridor, from Canal Street to Elysian Fields Avenue, are eligible to participate. They may contact Trene McCormick at trene@intheevent.us to register. There is no fee for participation.

"Transportation projects are economic generators. We have proven that with other projects, including the Canal streetcar Project and the Loyola Streetcar Project," said Bell. "We expect that the current project will enhance retail stability and spur economic opportunity over the next few years, so we are happy to be able to use our current marketing tools to help support businesses during the construction process." Visit www.norta.com or follow the project on Twitter @ #NewOrleansRTA for updated information.

Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

Editor/Reporters

About the Job

Journalists — tired of reading of layoffs, closings, the dire straights of the profession? Recent college graduates — think your job prospects are bleak? Not with us!

At Columbia-Greene Media, we are expanding! This includes starting a print newspaper/digital endeavor in one of the most dynamic and exciting cities, New Orleans.

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If interested, send your resume, cover letter and at least three clips of your work to Terry Jones Publisher, Data News Weekly, 3501 Napoleon Ave, New Orleans, LA 70125, or via email to terrybjones@bellsouth.net, or call (504) 821-7421.

Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under ladatanews.com is the most read Black website in the region.

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skills and experience:

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- Strong organizational, communication and presentation skills
- Team player and leader
- Understanding of Analytics and ad serving technology
- Strong motivational skills
- Recruit talent

Our company provides a competitive salary, and an environment that encourages personal and professional growth. We are an equal opportunity employer.

If you are interested in a rewarding career, email a cover letter and resume to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net or mail to: Data News Weekly, c/o Terry Jones, Publisher, 3501 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans LA 70125

Comedian Maya Rudolph, Author Walter Mosley to Salute Tulane Graduates



Actress Maya Rudolph will deliver the 2015 Commencement Address at Tulane University's ceremony on Saturday, May 16, at the Mercedes Benz Superdome.

Nearly 3,000 Tulane graduates, their families, friends and keynote speaker Maya Rudolph. Honorary degree recipients include bestselling author Walter Mosley, Philosopher and Parliament member Onora O'Neill and

internationally renowned Jurist Hein Kötz.

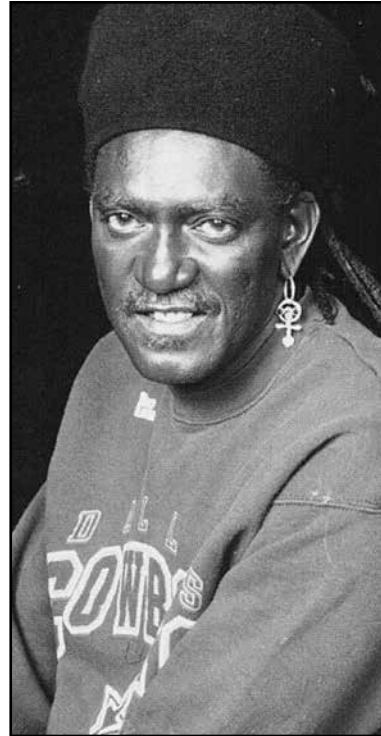
The Tulane University 2015 Commencement will take place at The Mercedes-Benz Superdome at 9 a.m., on May 16, 2015. The Event is free and open to the public.

New Orleans Artists Organize 7th Annual Douglas Redd Cultural Summit

Taking Action: Working Together for the New Orleans Tri-Centennial and Beyond

Inspired by the legacy of iconic visual artist, Douglas Redd (now deceased), local cultural workers are sending out a call to artists in all disciplines to gather for the 7th Annual Douglas Redd Cultural Summit. The Summit will be held on Saturday June 6, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Ashé Cultural Arts Center, 1724 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., and admission is free.

The event promises networking and organizing designed to stimulate workforce development, capacity building, and professional development among artists and organizations, relative to their cultural events leading up to New Orleans' Tri-centennial in 2018. Further, it will focus on a collaborative effort to organize Afro-Orleanians in the Art & Cultural community in ways that will make a powerful impact on New Orleans in 2018 and beyond!



Pictured above is the legendary and iconic visual artist, Douglas Redd.

This one-day gathering of the New Orleans cultural community will include a keynote address by award-winning artist Brandan "BMike" Odums, founder and director of 2-Cent Entertainment. Odums was the power behind "Project Be," called a public art masterpiece by Doug Maccash, and organizer of the art collaborative #ExhibitBe, dubbed the largest graffiti gathering in the South. Panel discussions will be led by Carol Bebel, co-founder and executive director of Ashé Cultural Arts Center; Kim Cook, president and CEO of the Arts Council of New Orleans; Flozell Daniels, president and CEO of Foundation for Louisiana; and Ashleigh Gardere, senior advisor for economic opportunity and director of the Network for Economic Opportunity. Bill Rouselle, president and CEO of Bright Moments, LLC, will moderate.

Twenty Civil Rights Groups Launch Complaint Against Fannie Mae Over Neglected Foreclosures

On Wednesday, May 13, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), in conjunction with 19 local fair housing organizations, held a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., to announce evidence of illegal discrimination by Fannie Mae in neighborhoods of color throughout the United States. The groups will also announce the filing of a federal complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development on the basis of this evidence.

The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center and other civil rights groups allege that Fannie Mae fails to perform basic maintenance and marketing tasks for foreclosed homes it owns in African American and Latino

neighborhoods, while consistently maintaining its foreclosed properties in White neighborhoods, a practice that violates the federal Fair Housing Act. The nationwide investigation focuses on Fannie Mae's foreclosures located in middle- and working-class neighborhoods. Evidence gathered between 2010 and April 2015 in 62 cities located in 34 metro regions, including Baton Rouge and New Orleans, documents an ongoing pattern and practice of discrimination by Fannie Mae. The National Fair Housing Alliance put Fannie Mae on notice of these troubling disparities in June 2009 but has seen no improvement in how it manages its foreclosure inventory in communities of color.

St. Katharine Drexel's Fifth Annual Gospel Extravaganza

St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Parish announces it's Fifth Annual Gospel Extravaganza on Friday Evening June 5, 2015 @ 6:30 PM at the Church, located at 2015 Louisiana Ave.

New Orleans LA. The theme for this year's concert is "Sing A New Song to the Lord, Who has Done Marvelous Deeds" Psalm 98:1, and features the St. Katharine Drexel Parish Gospel Choir with guest choirs and soloists, along with liturgical dancers. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call 504-891-3171 or visit their website, www.stkatharine@arch-no.org

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The Tree of Forty Fruit



By LMG Calla Victoria

Would you love to have a wonderful orchard bearing an abundance of fruit? Is this just a pipe dream because you do not have the space or the finances to take on such a project? Well your dream can become a reality in spite of having a postage-stamp sized backyard. Enter the Tree of Forty Fruit! Yes that's right, a single tree that blooms in an array of amazing hues and sets forty different fruits has arrived. This hybridized tree is the creation of award-winning contemporary artist and Syracuse University Professor Sam Van Aken.

Although a noted artist today, he grew up on a family farm in Reading, Pennsylvania. And it was that merge of art and horticulture that lead to his amazing creation. As an artist he wanted to create a tree that bloomed in as many colors as the palette that he paints with, so Van Aken proceeded to graft segments of different trees together to that end. In the meantime

an orchard with a plethora of heirloom fruit trees came available and he took up the lease basically to save the orchard from being destroyed. So now he has the orchard with all of these wonderful fruit varieties, while at the same time he is grafting trees to complete his Technicolor tree concept. Then he decided to start grafting these different fruit trees for their bloom hues to complete the color palette for the trees he started. So not only are these tree making rainbows envious, but they are setting all of these different kinds of delicious fruit. As forty is the number of perfection, as Christ completing forty days in the wilderness, Van Aken decided that forty would be the perfect number of fruit for his trees.

Van Aken's first attempt at "articulture" was in 2008 when he grafted veggies together to create strange plants for his Eden Exhibition, and shortly after that he started to work on the hybridized fruit trees that

are now the Tree of Forty Fruit. Intrigued by the process known as transubstantiation (how the appearance of a thing remains the same while the reality changes), Van Aken transubstantiated fruit trees.

Each tree begins as a slightly odd-looking specimen resembling some kind of science project for most of the year. However in the Spring, the trees bloom to reveal an incredibly striking and though-provoking example of what happens when nature inspires art. These trees bloom in different hues of pink, white, and crimson; then in late summer the trees set fruit and they bear more fruit over the course of several months. Van Aken's trees produce an incredible harvest of plums, peaches, apricots, nectarines, and almonds; including many you've never seen before.

Graciously wanting to share a good thing, Van Aken has created and placed 16 of these awesome trees in museums, community centers,

and private art collections around the country, including Newton, Massachusetts; Pound Ridge, New York; Short Hills, New Jersey; Bentonville, Arkansas; and San Jose, California. Using a unique process he calls "sculpting through grafting," Van Aken creates trees that grow and support more than forty varieties of stone fruit including many heirloom, antique, and native varieties. When Van Aken decides to donate one of these amazing trees, he first visits the geographic area and researches what grows best in that zone and creates for that perspective.

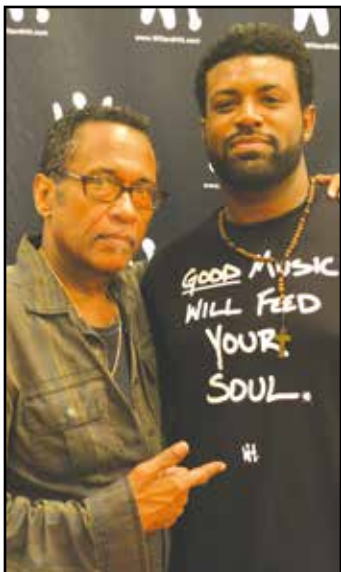
I think that what I like most about the concept of one tree bearing forty different fruit is that one has more of his/her harvest to keep. With all fruit trees, they will always bear more than you need so as you have so much of the same fruit you end up selling or giving most of it away. But with these trees you are harvesting many different kinds of fruit, so there is more variety to eat and less to discard. What a great idea!

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Will Hill "Sketches of Spain Street" Release Party

Photos by Terry Jones

New Orleans Hip Hop/Soul Artist Will Hill's release party was an overwhelming success. Will has traveled throughout the country presenting a unique New Orleans style performance. For more info on Will go to <http://willardhill.com/>



Pavillion of the Two Sisters Fundraiser

Photos by Terry Jones

Annual Fundraiser for Pavillion of Two Sisters at City Park, featured Sharon Martin and Michael Batiste, and Data was there.



Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

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Hip Hop Corner

Planning for our Own Success



By Jineea Butler
NNPA Columnist

Are we living in the last days? If so, what are we doing about it? It seems the world is coming apart at the seams. The Muslims are attacking the Christians, the Christians are attacking the Muslims; Africa is under siege, the Earth is shaking, the United States is waging war on its African American citizens, but

why are you surprised? Yes, we live in the land of the free and home of the brave and are still not equal. Now what? Do you think we can make people care about us before we can care about ourselves? I am proud to see our people finally coming together and standing as one unit. Now what?

Now that we all agree that we are not going to let anyone come into our communities and kill our people without a fight, we need to use the moment to improve who we are and how we are perceived. Our action plan has to include more than threatening a march, pointing a finger and waiting to see if the Department of Justice is going to convict officers for their crimes. That is a distraction. It's more than tearing up buildings, throwing rocks

and dancing in the street for minor victories. It's not about being interviewed for your perspective on the problem of police brutality. It's succeeding out loud. It's about making our money speak for us.

It's about going back to the drawing board to see what part we play in making America a better place for ourselves. The generation before us changed their status by getting educated, by changing their style of dress and their manner of communication. They outsmarted their opponent.

We have to change how we are living. Point blank. Stop fronting like these killings are not exposing a bigger problem. We can't expect to be treated fairly when we don't even treat each other fairly. We turn up our noses and look down on our

own people the same way these cops and the rest of America does. We just don't kill people in the exchange. We have become complacent with a part of the community that is underperforming.

Everybody is toting signs saying "Black Lives Matter," but who are we trying to convince? The world around us or ourselves? My beef is while we are rallying for justice we are leaving out a few key factors that are necessary for growth and development. How are we jumping out in the streets fighting the establishment, but not changing how we spend our money? Why is that not #1 on the agenda?

Furthermore, if we are asking them to grow then we have to grow. We can't spit in the face of our oppressor and then ask them to help

us in the same breath. We have to have a plan for our own success.

We have to be real about the problem, because the same reason you are not marching through the hood and telling every drug dealer, murderer and criminal that they can't occupy the hood and kill the babies, is the same reason these cops are on edge and quick to pull the trigger. Because there is a problem. I call it the Hip Hop Dilemma. You know that intense feeling you get when someone of the urban persuasion walks into your circumference. The feeling you get when you wait to see if they are a troublemaker, a fool or a Hip Hop musician. The feeling you get when you don't want to confront this per-

Commentary,
Continued on page 11.

The Missing Link in Baltimore: Education



Kevin Chavous
Guest Columnist

On a recent episode of "The View," Whoopi Goldberg asked 16-year-old Michael Singleton why he was throwing rocks and rioting in the streets of Baltimore over the death of Freddie Gray before being famously slapped and pulled from the rioters by his mother, Toya Graham. Within hours of the incident, Toya became an instant celebrity, and both she and young Michael appeared on the popular talk show to discuss Toya's tough love approach seen by millions. In a soft spoken, shy voice, Michael replied, "I went because in the past a lot of my friends have been beaten and killed. I went down there just

to fight for what I stand for ... my black people." Singleton added that he was initially embarrassed by the public smack down at his mother's hand, but eventually realized that she was looking out for him.

Anyone watching the broadcast could tell that Michael Singleton was basically a good kid. Unfortunately, like many young African-American men and boys living in our cities, he is confused, lost and uninformed. And his mother, despite the best of intentions, also doesn't know what she doesn't know. So everyone in that environment lashes out viscerally with little direction, focus or context. A recipe for disaster. Such is the state of our cities.

Hearing Michael Singleton speak reminded me of the young high schooler who pulled me aside while I was visiting his school in far northeast D.C. one day and asked me, "Mr. Chavous, can I ask you a question? Can you tell me exactly what Martin Luther King did?"

How can we change the destructive dynamic borne out of igno-

rance and oppression? What is the missing link? The answer, without question, is education and learning.

Like Michael Singleton, as a young 16-year-old growing up in Indianapolis during the 1970's, I had a negative view of the police. At the time, the city also had a curfew, which was used by some police officers to hassle African-American teenage boys. I played basketball at a suburban school, but lived in the city. For a two-year period, I was stopped at least ten times - mostly by the same white officers - while driving from my high school to my home following our basketball games. At various times, the officers taunted me, called me the N-word, threatened to plant drugs in my car and pushed me around. But I was lucky. Never did I talk back, try to run away or respond in a sarcastic way. Every answer to their taunting questions was delivered in a calm voice and laced with a respectful 'sir' at the end of each sentence. My father had more than prepped me as to how to handle being stopped by the police. He even

went through a little role-playing for me. My younger brother, Edwin, used to watch us with his eyes open really wide. Dad made sure I understood how to pull the car immediately to the shoulder as soon as I saw the police lights. As he instructed, I didn't want to give any indication of possible flight. Once the car was stopped, I was told to stay in the car, with both hands holding the top of the steering wheel. Very important. Both hands had to be visible at all times. Finally, I was told to never, ever show attitude or anger, no matter how much I was pushed. Beyond the instructions, my father took the time to educate me and my brother about the history of racism in America and the ignorance resulting there from. I was so well-armed with the history and knowledge of our people's struggle that I came to view the officers hassling me with pity. My father helped me understand that their ignorance stunted their growth. With each police stop, I felt more empowered and in an

odd way, intellectually superior to those officers. Knowing who I was and being educated about my history transcended the petty racism associated with those misdirected traffic stops. My identity was secure within me and it served as the ultimate weapon against ignorance.

Today, most of the television commentators and even activists offering opinions on the state of our cities are missing the real solution. In providing these kids immediate access to a high-quality education, we give them the tools to navigate around the ignorance of others because of the confidence and knowledge gained through education. Instead of talking incessantly about how and why are cities exploding, let's develop a sense of urgency around getting as many kids as possible in better schools - now. We can't wait for the traditional school system to fix itself to save our kids. It needs to happen today. Once done, we will have provided the critical missing link to curing what ails our cities.

Maturity Matters



James Washington
Guest Columnist

As someone who has come to Christ as a hopefully mature adult, I'm challenged from time to time as ministers and bible study leaders and others of faith talk about the process of becoming a mature Christian. The challenge is in

knowing what it means to mature as a person and applying some of those same principles to the maturation process as they relate to faith and knowledge. Faith as a concept is pretty easy to understand. The knowledge I'm speaking about accompanies the experience of knowing God's word. As such, just like a mature adult, your behavior is most assuredly dictated by your experience, your knowledge. In other words your decisions are affected and guided by what you know. For the mature Christian, your faith is easily expressed in words. However, your deeds, your actions now have parameters set in stone due to

the experience of faith.

So the more you know about God's word and God's will, the more responsive you become in what you do, don't do, say, don't say etc. Forgiveness for instance is an example of what I'm talking about. The more you accept the truth of Christ in your life, the more mandatory it becomes to forgive those who have in some way 'trespassed' against you. You see a mature Christian knows if you don't forgive your enemies, God will not forgive you. How dare you not at least undertake the notion of forgiveness when Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice so we all could be forgiven!

Some people refer to this as knowing that you know that you know. It is a process however. It does take time. Maturity requires action and it is this action that I'm saying challenges me more often than not. It is not always easy to do the right thing. But for the mature Christian, it is purely a matter of knowledge that easily lets you know what the right thing is. It's what you're supposed to do in all situations and circumstances. The more mature you become in your faith, the more evident it becomes in your behavior. However, I think you pass the real test when your maturity readily surfaces in what

you think. The thought process of the mature Christian is where I find myself these days. I guess you can say I am now a proponent of 'you are what you think.' I believe faith does move mountains. And as I start to move mine, I'll be living proof of what they say about mustard seeds. Believe me. I'm working on it every day.

**May God bless and
keep you always.**

James A. Washington is the Publisher of the Dallas Weekly, and General Manager of the Atlanta Voice Newspaper. For letters or comments he can be reached at jaws@dallasweekly.com

Book Review

"Child Please"!



How Mama's Old-School
Lessons Helped Me Check Myself
Before I Wrecked Myself

YLONDA GAULT CAVINESS

"Child, Please"
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320 pages

By The Bookworm Sez

It was enough to make any kid fearful for his life.

It was That Look your Mama gave you – the one you got when you were acting up, the one that made you want to join the Witness Protection Program. That Look could freeze a kid on the spot forever like a statue and, though it was deadly, it rarely came with sound – except, says Ylonda Gault Caviness, a heavy sigh and "Child, Please."

Growing up, there were many things you learned by observation – one of them being a sharp knowledge of when you were approaching your mother's last nerve. Like most kids, Ylonda Gault Caviness tried to avoid that mess; instead, she craved her Mama's approval, though it wasn't earned easily. And that was the way things just were.

Until Caviness had her first child.

Chloe was born on a hot August day, and Mama was enormously pleased, though she'd never admit it. In the first days, she was helpful and indulgent with the new baby but, never one to filter what she said, she was constantly critical and eagerly pounced on that which she perceived was wrong. That grated on Caviness. Still, mere weeks into new-Mommyhood, Caviness was shocked when Mama announced that she was going



home. Caviness felt abandoned.

There were grounds for that, Caviness reasoned. Mama had never had much of a mother herself: when she was just four years old, her mother died and her father quickly gave her a stepmother who was almost straight out of a bad fairy tale. Consequently, Mama didn't put her own children in the center of her life. She gave them the love they needed, but not that which they wanted.

Some months later, Caviness had her second daughter, Trinity, an easy baby who made motherhood particularly good for Caviness and made Mama quite amused at the way children are raised today. Bemusement, however, didn't change her forwardness: to Caviness' chagrin, Mama remained frustrating. By the time baby

Cole came along five years after Trinity, everything – the help-no-help, the unwanted advice, and Caviness' exhaustion – had all come to a crash.

So you say there are times when you consider asking your mother for a DNA test? And though you love your kids, you might include them, too? Before you grab the

swabs, read "Child, Please."

The first thing you need to know is that author Ylonda Gault Caviness is funny. I mean, LOL funny, in a way that will make you feel like she's been your friend since junior high. You can practically picture the conversations you'd have with her. But this book isn't all comedy: Caviness dispenses advice and sass, yes, but she also displays a sweet amount of gratitude, understanding, and the kind of love only shared between mothers and the daughters they drive crazy.

I think this is a perfect book for everyone who's ever had a Mom or been one. It's also great for any Mother-to-Be. If you love laugh-out-loud, cry-a-little memoirs, then "Child, Please" is worth a Look.

Wells Fargo Partners with USBC to Provide Micro-Grants to Black Chambers of Commerce

The U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC) is proud to partner with Wells Fargo to announce a special funding program for its chamber members. The partnership will provide \$50,000 in a series of micro-grants to USBC chambers nationwide. Today, May 12, 2015, USBC will begin accepting applications from chamber members seeking additional funding for existing successful Entrepreneur Training Programs. To apply click here.

There will be 13 micro-grants available - seven at \$5,000 and six at \$2,500. Eligible chambers must demonstrate ongoing Entrepreneur Training Programs, be dues-paying members of USBC, and show strong long-term sustainability. The winners will be publicly acknowledged at the 2015 USBC School of Chamber & Business Management



US Black Chambers of Commerce is partnering with Wells Fargo launch its new micro-lending program, empowering African American business owners.

on July 28 - 31 at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, DC. Along with additional plenary sessions and workshops, the USBC's 5th annual conference will be the highlight of

the summer for Black entrepreneurs and stakeholders.

According to the recent 2014 USBC Policy Priorities Survey, the top two concerns for Black busi-

nesses in America are Access to Capital, and Entrepreneur Training. The Micro-Grant Program is a direct solution and much needed boost for USBC members across the country. USBC President, Ron Busby, Sr., explains, "To be a Chamber President, you are responsible for leading the businesses in your community towards success, whether you are a successful entrepreneur, or not. They are relying on you to show them how to grow their businesses, and typically with limited resources. These micro-grants will allow our chamber members to continue to grow and expand their existing Entrepreneur Training Programs."

Wells Fargo strives to provide the best tools and resources for diverse entrepreneur success. "Wells Fargo has a rich history of support-

ing our diverse chambers of commerce, and we share their commitment to helping the small business owners they serve to succeed financially," said Lisa Stevens, Regional Marketing, Small Business and Pacific Midwest Bank Executive. "Through this partnership with the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc., Wells Fargo is proud to provide funding that will support chamber-led Entrepreneur Training Programs. This partnership allows Wells Fargo to provide dedicated resources for education, growth and advancement of diverse business owners in communities across America." To learn more about the requirements and to apply for a micro-grant, visit the US Black Chamber website or go to <https://usblackchambers.wufoo.com/forms/z4gc45b1nuc0rn/>.

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My Brother's Keeper Enters a New Phase

By Freddie Allen
NNPA Newswire

Bronx, NY (NNPA) – While political pundits rush ahead to the 2016 presidential election, President Barack Obama is rallying private-sector, philanthropic and community leaders to launch an independent non-profit to ensure that the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Initiative lives past his second term in office.

That initiative and its mission to expand opportunities and improve life outcomes for young men and boys of color will live on as the My Brother's Keeper Alliance.

During the launch ceremony of the Alliance at Lehman College in West Bronx, N.Y., President Obama said that the group aims to double the percentage of boys and young men of color who read



President Barack Obama speaks about the My Brother's Keeper Initiative in the East Room of the White House in 2014. In May 2015, President Obama helped business leaders and community stakeholders launch My Brother's Keeper Alliance. (Freddie Allen/NNPA)

at grade level by the third grade, increase their high school graduation rates by 20 percent and get

50,000 young men into college or post-high school training.

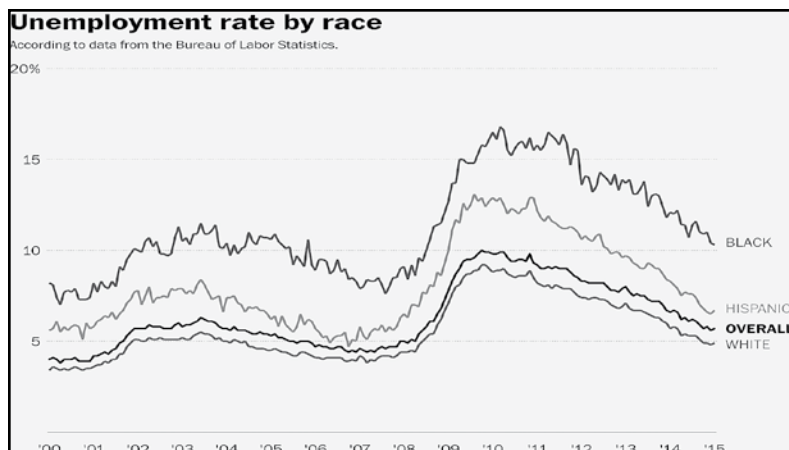
"I notice we don't always get a

lot of reporting on this issue when there's not a crisis in some neighborhood. But we're just going to keep on plugging away," said President Obama. "And this will remain a mission for me and for Michelle not just for the rest of my presidency, but for the rest of my life."

The MBK Alliance will also develop a guide to help mobilize private sector leaders to address the myriad challenges facing young men of color and provide \$7 million in grants to evidence-based programs and another \$15-\$25 million to support communities in building capacity for those programs and local infrastructure.

Companies, including American Express, Ariel Investments, BET Networks, PepsiCo and Sam's Club, committed more than \$80 million in cash donations to the MBK Alliance.

Black Unemployment Dips Below 10 Percent



According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for Hispanics appears to have dropped more quickly than for blacks.

By Freddie Allen

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The Black unemployment rate fell to single digits (9.6 percent) in April, for the first time since President Barack Obama was elected in 2008.

Despite the improvement, the Black jobless rate is still double the unemployment rate of White workers, which has remained flat since February at 4.7 percent.

As the economic recovery in the United States continued its slow, uneven climb in April there were still clear disparities, even

among adult Black workers.

The unemployment rate for Black men over 20 years old was 11 percent in December 2014 and 9.2 percent in April 2015, while the unemployment rate for Black women increased 0.6 percent over the same period.

Since last April, the labor force participation rate, which is the share of the population that is either employed or looking for work, increased from 66.5 percent to 68.7 percent in April 2015 among Black men. The labor force rate for Black women only increased 0.7 percent since April 2014.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

son because you don't know if the response is going to be negative or lead to an altercation. This is the symptom of those suffering from the Hip Hop Dilemma. The cops are on the front lines dealing directly with this traumatizing experience and it is affecting their work performance.

If we work to change the narrative of who we are, what we stand for and how we live. The cops will have to change how they are policing our communities, because they won't know who to profile, they won't know who to arrest, because we all look like success. Sometimes we give the underperforming members of our community an excuse not to be the best they can be by leaning on white supremacy. It's deeper than officers abusing the law, the war been going on and we have known it.

Our response looks like a horse and pony show because as soon as the cameras arrive everybody throws their capes on and swoops in for the rescue, but the community has been burning for years. Why does everything become more important when the TV camera arrives? I'm fighting for our everyone in our community to step up and be better. We have to eliminate the reasons they are stopping us in the first place. Change the game.

Jineea Butler, founder of the Social Services of Hip Hop and the Hip Hop Union, can be reached at jineea@gmail.com or Tweet her at @flygirl-ladyjay.



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