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# THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 89, NO. 105

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2006

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM

## THURSDAY notebook

### WEATHER

THURS, 3/23:  
MOSTLY SUNNY  
HIGH 53, LOW: 38

FRI, 3/24:  
MOSTLY CLOUDY  
HIGH 52, LOW: 40

SAT, 3/25:  
PARTLY CLOUDY  
HIGH 53, LOW: 38

### BREAKING NEWS

#### LARGEST-EVER U.S. TRAFFICKING

ACCORDING TO CNN, SUSPECTS ARE ACCUSED OF FLOODING U.S. STREETS WITH COCAINE TO FUND THEIR GUERRILLA WARFARE IN COLOMBIA.

### METRO

#### ALL ABOUT CROPP

YOU'VE SEEN THE CAMPAIGN LAWN SIGNS AROUND THE CITY. READ ALL ABOUT LINDA CROPP'S PLANS FOR THE D.C. METRO AREA IF ELECTED AS MAYOR.  
PAGE 4



### LIFE & STYLE

LL COOL J'S NEW CLOTHING LINE  
TURN TO LIFE & STYLE TO LEARN ABOUT LL COOL J'S NEW FASHION VENTURE.  
PAGE 9



### SPORTS

#### BISON RUNNING DOWN I-95

THE BISON TRACK AND FIELD TEAM IS HEADING DOWN TO NORTH CAROLINA FOR THE RALEIGH RELAYS.  
PAGE 10



### HU CALENDAR

MARCH 30-31  
GENERAL REGISTRATION  
FOR FALL 2006

### APRIL 8

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW  
FROM A COURSE  
LAST DAY TO COMPLETE A  
TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM  
THE UNIVERSITY

### INDEX

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LIFE & STYLE 8  
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## Kimora Tells Students to Find their 'Fabulosity'

BY CHARREAH JACKSON  
Managing Editor

Standing over six feet in her stilettos and fur bomber, Kimora Lee Simmons encountered a flashback of her speech classes in college as she told students they could be fierce and have it all. The president and creative director of Baby Phat, wife of hip hop mogul Russell Simmons, former model and now author signed copies of her new book, *Fabulosity*, at the packed Howard Bookstore yesterday.

"This is not my first time at Howard," she said. "I always love the energy on this campus. I love to be around the thinkers and doers that are all over this place. I especially love being around people of color - all shades."

Students, many in their finest Baby Phat, came to the bookstore event not only to get their copy of the book signed, but to hear what the entrepreneur, who is known for her extravagance, had to say on living fabulosity.

"Her advice is good for both sexes," said Andre Jackson, a senior political science major. "She touched on key points that I took to heart - stay focused, be self-motivated and avoid distractions. I don't think the Simmons empire will decrease anytime soon. She's an icon."

Other students came to capitalize on the rare opportunity to network with someone of her stature. While some whipped out modeling portfolios, freshman George Lander showed Simmons his runway walk in stilettos and was offered an internship on the spot.

Lander, and all those in attendance, may get a glimpse of themselves on one of the many media outlets that were present including Howard's own WHUT, Fox 5, and VH1. Along with her new book, Simmons is also in her second week of taping for a reality T.V. show for VH1, which recorded the entire book signing.

"The response to the book has been insane," said Lesley Prescott, VH1 story editor. "She's great to work with. She has



Kimora Simmons signed every person's book during the signing of her new book "Fabulosity" in the Howard Bookstore yesterday afternoon.

inspired so many people. We have a lot of good footage."

After signing over 300 books and bearing everyone may not be able to get their book autographed, Simmons quickly responded she would sign the book of anyone who bought a copy.

"I feel like you guys know me already," she said. "You wear my clothes. You inspire me. It's a relationship. We're fortunate to be here, to get educated, to write books."

Howard students were not the only fans of Simmons to attend, as a few local teens came to campus for the special event.

Mariah Walton, a sophomore in high school from Simmons's hometown, St. Louis, was on campus to tour her top college choice, when she saw flyers that her

idol would be on campus.

"Just the other day I was saying how I look up to her a lot and now I actually get to meet her," said Walton, who uses Simmons designs as models in her high school fashion class. "Her inner confidence inspires me. The fact that she is from where I'm from just makes me feel I can do it all even more."

Before Simmons spoke to the crowd and signed books, she spoke to all of D.C. on radio station WEYS with Jeanie Jones with the show set up in the bookstore.

"The blue print [for the book] is my life," she said to Jones. "Whenever you make or create you must be genuine. It must be something you know."

Simmons' words of inspiration were

exactly what Monique Moore, organizer of the event and bookstore marketing manager wanted students to hear.

"I care about what I feed my people," she said. "Events like this are as much a part of the academic experience as the classes you take. Some people don't have people at home to look up to and see that success like this is possible."

Simmons' book has received positive reviews, as her "philosophy of fabulosity" is more than a 'how to' for bling and flash.

In the book she says, "It's about self-empowerment and self-reliance as much as it is about glitz, glamour, flamboyance, and fun."

Chara Fumble contributed to this story.

## Former Hilltop Comic Gets Strip in Post

BY FARREN HINTON  
Hilltop Staff Writer

Chances are that as a Howard University student, professor, administrator, faculty, staff or alumnus you have had the opportunity to view a comic in the Hilltop by Howard's very own Mr. Cory Thomas.

Although Thomas' comic strip no longer runs in the Hilltop, fans of his will soon be able to view an all new strip which he says is "loosely based on Howard students," starting March 27 in the Washington Post.

The strip is based on the lives of 6 collegiate students who play out their everyday adventures at Oliver Otis University. Thomas says that "the characters are comprised of a variety of personalities and backgrounds," and notes that comic strip is set to be published for a number of years to come. "The series will for at least seven years, so the only limit on the characters' adventures is the limit on my imagination," said

Thomas. According to PlanetCory.com, "The strip follows their development as they begin the process of growth and venture into their individual paths. They face their inexperience, insecurity and idiosyncrasies and gain enlightenment about their world. Along the way, they teach each other valuable lessons about life, love and lasting friendship."

"Watch Your Head" has been tapped to appear in a number of newspapers around the nation including the Chicago Tribune and the Dallas Morning News.

The author says that some of the inspiration for the new strip came from the comic strip he wrote in the Hilltop. "After I stopped running, I continued to develop it on my own time and I found that it resonated with more than just black college students. It resonated with everyone," he said. His comics dealt with everyday issues at Howard, along with the major happenings and events on campus.

"I remember reading his comics in the Hilltop last year. Not only were they well drawn but they also touched on the hot topics on campus," said Brandon Daniels a junior marketing major. "He let his comics say exactly what everyone was thinking."

Like all talents, Thomas has been cultivating his craft for almost his entire life. "I've been doodling and drawing ever since I was a toddler, barely able to read. So, when I first started reading, I was naturally attracted to comics because of the visual nature of them. I've been making my own since I was five or six years old."

Thomas says that he draws inspiration from a number of sources and says his knack for finding absurdities inspires him to create his comics. "I think I have a knack for finding the absurd side of any situation. To me there's even comedy in tragedy," he said.

In addition to drawing inspiration from his everyday experiences, the author names Charles

M. Schulz's classic comic strip "Peanuts" as his all time favorite. "That, to me, is the greatest comic strip ever created," but he says that he does not have a favorite comic book at present time. "I actually just started buying comic strips again after about a five year hiatus," he said.

"It's great to see yet another Howard student using his passion to get where he wants to

be in life," said Javier Ramon a sophomore film major. "We can all use his success as an inspiration to set on our goals," he said.

In addition to reading his comic strip every Monday, fans can visit his website PlanetCory.com to learn more about the author, his craft, and to get an additional dosage of his work.



Former Hilltop Cartoonist Cory Thomas will be taken the place of Aaron McGruder's Boondocks with his comic strip this month.

# HOWARD UNIVERSITY SPRING BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL

APRIL 2 - APRIL 7

# GIVE

GROW. INITIATE. VOICE. EXPRESSION.  
2006

**SUNDAY APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>**

**EXPRESSION**

"SIMPLE COMPLEXITIES"  
ART AUCTION  
BLACKBURN GALLERY LOUNGE  
4PM

**THURSDAY APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>**

**FLARE**

"RUMORS"  
FASHION SHOWCASE  
CRAMTON AUDITORIUM  
7PM

**MONDAY APRIL 3<sup>RD</sup>**

**WISDOM**

"THE ART OF KNOWLEDGE"  
MOVIE PREMIERE OF "AKEELAH AND THE BEE"  
CRAMTON AUDITORIUM  
7PM

**FRIDAY APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>**

**PRAISE**

"THE OZZIE'S"  
AWARDS SHOWCASE  
CRAMTON AUDITORIUM  
7PM

**TUESDAY APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>**

**PASSION**

"PASSIONATE RHYTHMS: RHYTHMIC STANZAS"  
POETRY SHOWCASE  
CRAMTON AUDITORIUM  
7PM



The Howard University Bookstore Presents:  
**WENDY COAKLEY - THOMPSON**

# *What You Won't Do For Love*

A Novel

**Booksigning Event**

**Friday, March 24, 2006**

**3:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**The Howard University Bookstore**  
2225 Georgia Ave, NW, Washington DC 20059

For more information call 202.238.2640 or visit [hubookstore.com](http://hubookstore.com)

## Cropp Speaks on Her Vision for D.C.

BY SHARELL FERGUSON  
Contributing Writer

**H**oward University alumna and D.C. City Council Chairwoman Linda Cropp is hard on the campaign trail for D.C. mayor. In her campaign, her platform centers on the fact that she has always been dedicated to public service. Cropp attributes much of her dedication to the teachings of her mother.

"My mother gave me a sense of encouragement and belief that I could achieve anything that I wanted," she said. Cropp expressed that her desire is to see all children in D.C. provided with an opportunity to receive a solid educational foundation and "to know that[the] work hard will lead to success," she said.

Cropp said that among other goals, she is determined to make sure the ongoing battle to provide health care for the uninsured is met, better learning environments throughout D.C. schools are created and the protection of working people is implemented.

Cropp said that her greatest reward thus far has been having opportunities to interact closely with the D.C. citizens. She said that many of them would approach her saying how much of an impact she has had on their lives.

"People of various ages, young adults to grandparents approach me and some would say, you were my counselor in school," she said. According to Cropp, making an impact is important to her because it is what really matters. She has two children and one grandchild to whom she wants to be a good role model.

Placing an emphasis on education and training in D.C. schools, Cropp explained that she was responsible for establishing a D.C. collaborative that brought funding for various vocational and special education schools. Additionally, because of legislation she helped to pass, \$150 million dollars was utilized for schools in need of funding for educational programs throughout the district.



Cropp has been influential in improving life for D.C.'s citizens while serving as chairwoman of the city council. Some of the things attributed to Cropp include revitalization along U Street and improvements with Metro service. Cropp hopes to continue her service as Mayor of the city.

According to representative and supporter of Cropp, Bill Aiken, "Cropp brings good leadership and years of valuable experience to the table. She came into office when there was a huge deficit in the district and she helped things to move from recession to profit," he said.

Aiken continued by saying that because Cropp already works closely with Mayor Anthony Williams, she would be equipped with first hand knowledge of how to take D.C. to the "next level." He described Cropp as a strong leader with positive qualities. "You can feel comfortable talking with her anytime," he said.

Furthermore, in an effort to produce better results for students in the district Cropp said, "We must ensure that all funds

are spent wisely because it is the money of taxpayers." She then explained that she plans on combining school programs, and forming additional educational collaborative efforts to hold individuals accountable for their responsibilities.

Cropp also spoke adamantly regarding the issue of safety for residents in D.C. She said that there continues to be a level of unrest, and we need to look at the deployment of our officers. "Many police officers feel like there is no voice or representative for them," she said.

Cropp believes that officers must be trained and held accountable to their positions.

"We need to be more proactive, and not reactive. We need to have police act accordingly and look specifically

at where the crime is so that those areas could be targeted more closely," she said.

Cropp is confident that her years of experience as a public server and politician will cause her to emerge as the next mayor of the District of Columbia. According to Aiken, "If elected, Cropp brings the leadership and focus necessary to take DC to the next level," he said.

Cropp said that she dedicated her life as a public servant, teacher, and member of the board of education. "I love this city and I want to move it forward," she said.

## Metro Briefs

## Suspicious Package Causes Security Alert At White House



After a man tossed a suspicious package onto the north lawn of the White House, the Secret Service took into custody Secret Service spokesman Jim Martin told ABC 5 news that he did not know what the package contained, but it was being inspected. The package was first noticed after President Bush left in his helicopter

on the South Lawn for a trip to Wheeling, West Virginia. Secret Service officials said that the same individual responsible for this incident has done something similar in the past. A remote-controlled device was used to open the package, and just after the Secret Service determined it was not dangerous, the all-clear was sounded.

## Metro Driver Honored for Accident Free Miles



Robert Miles, a Metrobus driver, was honored Wednesday as the best bus driver in the Washington region. At a ceremony in Maryland, Governor Ehrlich presented Miles with a plaque for driving more than 2.8 million miles without getting into an accident. Miles is one of only four Metro drivers to remain accident-free

after driving more than two million miles. Miles now continues to participate in Metro's annual bus operators' Roadshow event where bus drivers must maneuver their buses through tricky courses. Miles has won the competition 17 times already, qualifying him for the international competition in California next month.

## Blind Woman Named Favorite in National Marathon



Sweet Graham Gray isn't let her loss of sight discourage her from participating in this weekend's National Marathon here in D.C. Gray has slowly been losing her eyesight for years, but she has used that frustration to fuel her running success. Gray told NBC 4

that her goal for the marathon is to finish with a time under two hours and 15 minutes. Gray is also one of the favorites to win the race, according to officials from the National Marathon. The Marathon will be held this Saturday through D.C. and Prince George's County.

## Discarded Smoking Materials to Blame in Germantown Fire



Montgomery County Fire and Rescue officials told NBC 4 news that discarded smoking materials set on fire for a three-alarm blaze that heavily damaged three townhomes in Germantown. Residents of all seven townhomes are cur-

rently displaced, but no one was injured in Wednesday morning's blaze. Fire officials say that it appears the fire began next to an outside deck and spread because of the wind. Damage is currently estimated at 1.5 million dollars.

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## Check it Out....

What's going on this weekend in and around the District.

Saturday, March 25:

National Marathon

7a.m.

Race starts at R.E.K. Stadium and continues through Prince George's County and around other D.C. Monuments. The finish line will feature other activities surrounding the race.

Cherry Blossom Festival Begins

Though the peak blossom of D.C.'s famous cherry blossoms is not until March 27th, the festivities begin this weekend. This weekend includes the opening celebration, and the 40th annual Kite Festival hosted by the Smithsonian Institution.

For a complete listing of activities, visit the official website of the National Cherry Blossom Festival:

<http://www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org>

-Compiled by Amber English, Metro Editor

# COTTON CLUB

J.H.J. SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS STUDENT COUNCIL

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE TALENTED TENTH

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### "ROARING 20'S RUNWAY"

### FASHION SHOW

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MARCH 24TH  
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BALLROOM

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THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY STUDENT ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

## "it's black and white"

# Bison Ball

Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006

7 p.m.

J.W. Marriott

1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Tickets on Sale March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006

at the Cramton Box Office

General Admission \$37.50

Table (10) \$350

# EDITORIALS & Perspectives

VOLUME 89, NO. 105

MARCH 23, 2006

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM



## The Greatness of Giving Back

While many Bison were exchanging stories about fun in the sun and great vacations, other students were talking about their wonderful and moving experiences helping Katrina victims in the Gulf Coast. Many students opted to swap an exotic vacation or a trip home for MTV's *Alternative Spring Break*, which sent herds of students down to help during their time off. We have all talked to people, or at least people who knew people that assisted in the outreach. Their lives were changed and they touched others while working with cleanup and recovery efforts.

We all deserve some time for ourselves to do things we want and be a bit selfish. That's okay and we are all entitled to making some self-serving choices. However, there is a world

around us that needs us more than we need that extra pair of shoes or expensive watch.

We are in a unique position as students because we have responsibilities but we still have a lot of free time. This is the transitional time between

ment that those things no longer bother us. We drive far away to our comfortable apartments off campus or shut out the poverty on our way to the Towers. Not every student will be able to travel abroad to make a difference or even travel to

New Orleans. Such endeavors cost time and money that many of us do not have. However, helping right here in our Washington, D.C. backyard should be of importance to all of us.

Even if you are not a part of a community service organization, you can still help out at their functions or donate in other ways. We are all fortunate to be at Howard University and advancing our lives, but one day we could get a Katrina curveball too. Could we demand any help if we've never given any? Give it some thought.

### Our View:

*As busy as we all are we should make community service one of our priorities.*

being too young to understand the impact we have and being too old and too busy to really get involved. Let's seize the moment and get involved in community service.

When we walk to class and pass the trash on Georgia Avenue or ignore the homeless person asking for some change, we get so used to the environ-

## Rebuttal to "Howard Alum Questions Musical Nature of Rap"

Iman Kennerly  
Class of '01

As the founder of Howard University's Verbal Armageddon (1998 to 2003) rap tournament, I was fascinated by the recent Hilltop article about Jazz musician and fellow alumnus Gregory Royal's views on rap music.

His categorization of rap vocals as a type of spoken word, rather than music, seems to be a polite but uninformed view that inadvertently denigrates rappers standing as artists and musicians; it also glazes over the distinct, though sometimes related, power of the spoken word movement. I find it hard to believe that he loves rap, but remains oblivious to the musicality in it. Perhaps he is listening to all the wrong rappers.

Rappers and rap music combine instrumentation and vocal integration in a manner that can stand up to any form of pop, folk, or classical music. The instrumentals in rap music are crafted from beat boxing, turntablism (DJing), and hip-hop production. Each are means of synthesizing medleys comprised of base, percussion, and other musical elements. In fact, beat boxing, which creates music

from our bodies and turntablism, including the scratching of records to create music—both form the basis of many instrumental rap melodies and are both without precedent. They are inherently original.

According to Mr. Royal's own definition of music, we can find musical merit in most rappers' compositions. I venture to say that Snoop Dogg, LL Cool J, and Bone Thugs 'N Harmony have offered the world numerous examples of how rappers can master melody and rhythm in a manner that should be envied by scores of traditional musicians.

Even rappers like Nelly and 50 Cent, who are attacked by rap purists as too simplistic, have composed melodious and infectious forms of gangster/materialistic rap that can't be considered any less musical than songs like "Don't Worry Be Happy" by Bobby McFerrin.

Rappers such as Black Thought of the Roots have demonstrated an ability to apply their vocals as melodious instrumentation by deftly freestyling in and out of a beat or scatting, thereby having a similar musical effect as when Layla Hathaway or Jill Scott improvise with their band on stage.

Black Thought could easily scat and freestyle the great Cal Galloway to a draw. Furthermore, the mastery of tone variation and movement evident in verses of rap songs such as "Manifest" by the Pigeons and "One Mic" by Nas, seems to exceed the highest standards of Mr. Royal's criteria for music. And Outkast's Andre 3000 is able to bob and weave about a track, or into a mood, in a musical way that only the most gifted musicians of any genre have achieved.

His rap style is an example of rap that is probably more musical than a lot of what Mr. Royal would consider music. Perhaps Mr. Royal has fallen into the trap of painting rap with the broad brush of its least talented, but disproportionately popular, participants.

He should reconsider and recognize that rap music fans were more forgiving of conventional singers when American Idol-reject William Hung became wildly popular and earned a recording contract.

I hope Mr. Royal and others of the same mind will recognize rap's true place of greatness among other esteemed forms of music.

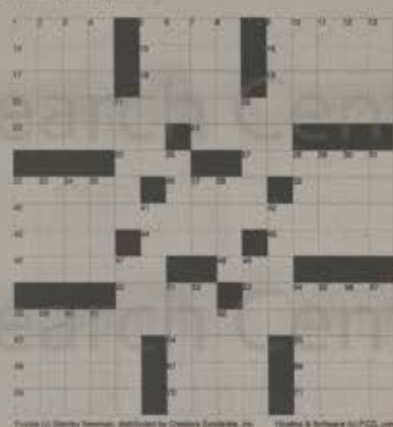
52206 WORKING IT OUT by Shirley Soloway, edited by Stanley Newman

### Across

- 1 Shoe part
- 5 Restaurant chain: Abbr.
- 9 Tasty
- 14 Related by blood
- 15 Lion's hair
- 16 Run off together
- 17 Sloop pole
- 18 Legal claim
- 19 Get extra mileage out of
- 20 Somewhere
- 23 Agreement
- 24 Ill-timed
- 25 Vietnamese holiday
- 27 "... Rider Again" (James Stewart film)
- 32 On a tailor's job
- 36 Paula attachment
- 39 "Fidèle" feature
- 40 Scrubtree
- 43 Mosaic of "Happy Days"
- 44 Proof word
- 45 Talk wildly
- 46 Strutting muscle
- 48 Female sheep
- 50 Seafood selection
- 53 Texas city
- 58 Somewhere
- 63 Orient Express train
- 64 Major debut
- 65 Catering establishment
- 66 English-class topic
- 67 Bell sound
- 68 Women's magazine
- 69 Imperfect
- 70 Chorus member
- 71 Subtraction word

### Down

- 1 Latin dance
- 2 Green approval for
- 3 Shopper's completion
- 4 ... was (confidentially)
- 5 White Rabbit's cry
- 6 Signal, as a text
- 7 Night owl's time
- 8 Type of pasta
- 9 Unsettled
- 10 Orville or Angel
- 11 Rain, cats and dogs
- 12 ... facts
- 13 Annapole's playmate
- 14 Emma's last
- 22 ... Warbucks
- 26 Noise thunder god
- 28 Post-Tensile
- 29 Disney sci-fi film
- 30 Mob name
- 31 Talks and talks and talks
- 32 Help informally
- 33 Hang relative
- 34 Tinseltown
- 35 Major time periods
- 37 Nonprofit's URL suffix
- 38 Orchestral need
- 41 County in Ireland
- 42 Statement of belief



Picture © Shirley Newman, distributed by Crossword Compiler, Inc. Working & Software © PGL.com

- 47 Irish playwright
- 49 Refuses to leave
- 51 Main artery
- 52 One way to cook
- 54 Lucy's landlady
- 55 Of source
- 56 Does business in
- 57 French cry
- 58 Literary work
- 59 Shetland
- 60 Major time periods
- 61 "La Cage aux Folles" jumps
- 62 Reunion attendee

## THE HILLTOP

The Nation's Only Black Daily Collegiate Newspaper

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## LL Cool J Shows High Class with New Line

BY YASMINE PARRISH  
Photos: Scott Miller

Sean "Diddy" Combs, Sean "Jay-Z" Carter, and now James "LL Cool J" Todd Smith all have something in common besides being entertainers: they all have clothing lines. Just last month in New York's Fashion Week, hip hop superstar, LL Cool J, introduced his long anticipated men's clothing line, Todd Smith.

It's clear that Smith doesn't stand alone in a line full of rappers turned fashion entrepreneurs. However unlike most he didn't start in the street.

Smith began by telling *Men's*, "I would like a person to look rich, to look successful but not be overly ornate. I want to leave room for the everyday guy to upgrade."

While Cool J's name is on the label, he made sure to use some of the big dogs in fashion to give him 'street cred' in the fashion industry.

Jeremy Brandrick of Dolce and Gabbana was the overseer of the men's collection which featured a chocolate velvet dinner jacket, a fur-lined gray cashmere coat, and other sophisticated designs.

Gwen Stefani described it best as, "luxurious." With well made garments, innovative fabric usage, and modern yet sophisticated color combinations, Todd Smith could be very well on its way to being a brand to be reckoned with in men's fashion. Though Cool James tried to refrain from being compared to Sean Combs' Sean John line, the comparison seems inevitable.

When asked, "Will Todd Smith be the next Sean John," by Bruno J. Navaroz of *Men's*, Smith replied, "No, the brand is what it is."

Though Combs won the 2004 Men's Designer of the Year Award from the Council of Fashion Designers of America, LL seems to have a much better start than Combs ever did. What took Combs eight years to mold, LL has established within his first few weeks of its release. With tailored suits and luxury fabrics, Todd Smith is a far cry from the velvet track suits and jeans outfits most rappers debut as their clothing line.



With a great start under his belt, Smith hopes his brand evolves into a household luxury brand like Zegna, the Italian men's couture line, and the Chloe brand for women, which was once headed by fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld.

Leaving the ball caps, t-shirts, and baggy jeans behind, Todd Smith, the brand and the man are both well on their way to becoming staples in the fashion industry. Already setting himself apart from other rappers turned fashion moguls, LL can possibly rise above the mediocre standards of most clothing lines started by hip hop artists and musicians.

With an album due in stores April 25, 2006 and with his clothing line slowly gaining world wide recognition, James Todd Smith is sure to draw a distinction between his hip-hop and fashion personas.

"LL's a rapper," he said to *Men's*. "Todd Smith is a brand."

"I would like a person to look rich, to look successful but not be overly ornate. I want to leave room for the everyday guy to upgrade."

- LL Cool J

## Ne-Yo Album Review

The Former Song-Writer turns R&amp;B Super-Star with his brand new debut album

BY STEPHEN REDHEAD  
Contributing Writer

He wanted to tell you what was really on his mind. He wanted you to hear what he could do on his own. Can you hear the soul? That's what newcomer R&B singer Ne-Yo wants to know with his debut album "In My Own Words", which was released on the legendary Def Jam label.

The 13-track album is a willing testament to Ne-Yo's fascination with the opposite sex with heavy hip-hop oriented production and smooth melodies. From start to finish, one would listen and become impressed by the changing har-

monies and catchy vocals of each track by an artist that could pass as a veteran to the game. He certainly has the credentials for this perception since he's wrote music for a variety of artists, including "Let Me Love You" by Mario. The Las Vegas native starts off the album with its leading single "Stay" featuring a cameo appearance by Rocafella's own Peedi Peedi. The pulsating production and infectious chorus carries the song well despite Peedi's incomprehensible rap verse. As the album continues, one would suspect that Ne-Yo's vocals are not too far from the likes of Usher and Michael Jackson. This may be a stretch, but the vocal styling is reminiscent in tracks such as "Let Me Get This

Right", "Get Down Like That", and the borderline freaky "Mirror".

"Mirror" tells of how the young singer is infatuated with looking at a mirror as he makes love with a young woman. The track, produced by in-house production team Compound, is the best representation of Michael Jackson's vocal ability circa 1980s. The lyrics escalate the sexual innuendo with lines such as "I understand that you're not ready for me and my directorial debut (featuring me) and starring you...that's okay with me but I believe this is the next best thing".

There are many highlights to the album but despite how cohesive and catchy, there are a few flaws. One of which is the overproduction of tracks such as "It Just Ain't Right", which leaves Ne-Yo some difficulty to work with an ever-changing drum pattern and his limited range.

Another is the redundancy of topics covered, such as the lazy "I Ain't Gotta Tell You", which is uninspired sweet talking of how good looking a certain female is. However, the highlights refer to tracks that show his song-writing versatility. From the soul-stirring "Get Down Like That", the club-friendly "Sign Me Up" and "Let Go", it shows that Ne-Yo has a great vision on how to artistically convey his feelings.

However, the most powerful track of the disc has to be the heartrending "Time", in which he expresses the concept of time used in the process of a broken relationship. Ne-Yo's heart pours as he laments, "The time it takes you to learn from your mistakes/ the time it would take you to dial the phone/ and the time it would take you to realize the break/ she's moved on...to someone who takes the time". The piano and acoustic drums perfectly fit Ne-Yo's smooth vocals as he croons of his misfortune of a lost loved one. Complete with the bonus track, "Get Down Like That (Remix)" featuring an impressive verse by Ghostface Killah, Ne-Yo shows that he has created a solid debut album that will leave listeners wanting more. From behind the scenes to the spotlight, Ne-Yo has the potential to become a household name in due time.



Vic Photo

The new R&B sensation, Ne-Yo is climbing up the entertainment ladder as he receives positive reviews on his debut album.

## Health Briefs

## Safe Vitamin D Use to Fight Colon Cancer May Have Been Found

Using the properties of vitamin D to fight colon cancer has long been a paradox wrapped in an enigma. Large doses of the vitamin, which is absorbed by humans primarily through exposure to sunlight, are needed to prevent colorectal cancer in its earliest stages.

But high doses of vitamin D also produce high amounts of calcium, which can cause toxicity in the blood. Now, scientists at Georgetown University's Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center offer research that indicates it might be possible to separate vitamin D's cancer-fighting properties from its other functions.

The study, reported in the latest issue of the journal *Molecular Cell*, found that mutant forms of the protein that binds to vitamin D in the cell will allow vitamin D to regulate a cancer-causing protein called beta catenin without promoting the calcium for bone development. [www.healthday.com](http://www.healthday.com)

## Egypt Reports Human Cases of Bird Flu

Two human cases of bird flu have been reported in Egypt, including a woman who died on Friday. A man infected with the H5N1 virus is in the hospital and is reported to be recovering.

Egypt's 25 provinces have reported bird-flu outbreaks, first detected in Egyptian poultry last month. Officials said that 121 people who were in contact with bird-flu outbreaks had tested negative for the infection, Agence France Presse reported.

The outbreaks in Egypt and other African nations prompted a three-day meeting of experts from 46 African nations and U.N. agencies. They met to develop an emergency strategy to deal with a potential pandemic on the continent.

In Romania, officials said they want to manufacture a new bird-flu vaccine for humans that was developed in Hungary. Romania's poultry flocks have been hard hit by bird flu and the country wants to use the vaccine to protect people working in close proximity to infected birds, AFP reported. [www.healthday.com](http://www.healthday.com)

Compiled by Erica Williams  
Information [www.healthday.com](http://www.healthday.com)

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## Talk is Costley



Green is Shining Through My Bison Blue

BY DREW COSTLEY  
Sports Editor

During my senior year in high school, I lived about equal distance from George Mason University and Howard University (thanks to gridlock like only D.C. can do it). Both schools intrigued me with their diverse student bodies and I had grown up believing there would be a strong chance that I would add to the strong legacy of one of these schools. I think the only difference, beyond the demographics of the student body, between George Mason University and Howard University when I was a senior in high school was that I took the metro to visit one school (Howard, naturally); the other, I drove.

That was until, of course, Sunday afternoon when George Mason reached their first Sweet 16 ever.

For the first time in my distinct memory I was more excited over George Mason sports than I have ever been for Howard sports. Now don't get me wrong, "I am so glad I go to Howard U," but Howard sports haven't done anything this major since I've been here or remember of Howard sports.

And I give Ronald Bartell, Jr. his props and Coach Petty and the Bison defensive coaching staff their respect as well. They have already turned out the highest draft pick in Howard's history but are about to turn out at least two more in safety Antoine Bethea and defensive tackle Jesse Hayes. They have also boosted Howard's defense among the best in all of the Div. I-AA.

But Mason's success comes at a time when the great debate of mid-major conference NCAA tournament bids vs. power conference tournament bids, with all of the discussion that has arisen over that matter the past few years. Note: Mason had come close to beating Maryland the year the Terps lost to Duke in the national semifinal in a first round elimination that ended 83-80.

Not only are they part of one of the debated mid-major conferences, but they were singled out by basketball analyst Billy Packer before they went on to prove their worth in weight. And now that they are matched up against Wichita State, with the home court advantage of having the Verizon Center in their backyard, they have to finally be favored to win an NCAA tournament game.

The point that a lot of people are missing in this debate about mid-major conferences in the tournament is that a lot of these teams haven't played each other in a while, if ever. So when power conference teams like UNC are fresh off of an opening round win they have the same amount of time to study, maybe, film of the next opponent. This leaves a lot to just who has the players that can step up and best carry out the game plan of the head coach.

And George Mason's seniors guard Tony Skinn and forward/center Jai Lewis, came into this tournament with not only a season or so experience like UNC's boys (literally). As for Michigan State, who has three future professionals on their starting lineup, that was just pathetic. And as for this upcoming game between Wichita St. and Mason I only have one surefire prediction: The winner will go down in history as the first big chance the mid-majors have had to come back into the NCAA tournament picture.

## Literal Relay Race: Bison Track Team Tags Home Before Heading Back Down I-95 to Compete in Raleigh Relays

BY MATTHEW COOPER  
Contributing Writer

The Bison Track and Field squad is hoping the outdoor season accompanied with the warm weather will help advance the team to more success.

"Coach has told us that this is the most talented we have had in a few years, so good things will happen," said junior sprinter Daniel Shannon.

The Bison will trek down south this weekend to compete in the Raleigh Relays, held at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. This will be the team's second outdoor competition of the season, after competing at the North Carolina A & T Invitational last Saturday. Head Coach Michael Merritt was not pleased with the overall effort of the team this past weekend, as both the men and women finished last out of 8 teams in the meet.

"We were not competitive enough," said Coach Merritt. "We had a few bright spots, but overall we were not in tune to competing."

Those bright spots were the performances of the men's hurdlers, as Senior Jacoby Dubose, freshman Daniel Kinney, and Senior Nicholas Wright all finished 1, 2, and 3 respectively

in the 110 meter hurdles. They timed in at 14.37, 14.50, and 14.71 seconds respectively.

The competition at this meet will be much stiffer, as the Raleigh Relays is known as one of the top invitational track meets on the East Coast. Teams such as Tennessee, Cincinnati, North Carolina, and Penn State will face off against the Bison, as well as inter-conference rivals such as Norfolk state and Hampton University. "It's a high quality meet, and a good opportunity to get times in," said senior sprinter/jumper LaCaire Carter.

At last year's meet, Howard's most notable performance was the 2nd place finish of the men's 4 x 800 relay team. However, the men's 4 x 800 will not run at this meet.

Dubose is one of the outstanding performers on the men's side, and recently competed in the USA track and field championships in Boston. He will run the 100 meter dash and the 110 meter hurdles. Hurdlers Daniel Kinney and Nicholas Wright will also run in the 110 meter hurdles as well as the 400 meter dash.

Carter, the MEAC indoor champion in the long jump, will continue her pace as she seeks to win the outdoor title as well,



The Bison Track and Field team is headed down to showcase their talents in North Carolina for the second week in a row. Last weekend they participated in the North Carolina A&T Invitational.

avoiding all distractions in the process. She will compete in the long jump and the 100 meter dash, and come in with a mark of 6.16 meters and 11.84 seconds.

Sophomore sprinter Lauren McNary, the MEAC 400 meter indoor champion, is motivated by not qualifying for the USA

Indoor championships. "It's one of my driving forces for the outdoor season," She will run the 400 meter dash, and come in with a high mark of 52.48 seconds.

The relay teams have high hopes for this meet. The women will be running the 4 x 100, 4 x 200, 4 x 400, 4 x 800, and 4 x

1500. The men will run the 4 x 100, 4 x 200, and 4 x 400.

The Bison have been pushing themselves to the limit to avoid a repeat of last week's performance. "We had a rocky start, but we are taking practice a little more seriously" said sophomore hurdler Latavia Lewis.

## Hang 125 Million:

Howard Redskins Fans and Fans in the Howard Community Ponder the Ripple Effect of Owner Daniel Snyder's Big Free Agent Splash, Trade Acquisitions

BY DANYELE HADAWAY  
Hilltop Staff Writer

The Redskins went on an almost \$125 million shopping spree last week to secure all five of its top targets—defensive end and tackle Carter, safety Adam Archuleta, wide receiver Antwaan Randle El and Brandon Lloyd, and tight end Christian Fauria.

At the start of three news conferences last Tuesday, Redskins Coach Joe Gibbs said, "It's an exciting day for us. For the coaches, all Redskins fans, and for everybody from [owner Daniel Snyder] on down in the front office, it's an exciting day."

The Redskin's first choice for defense, Carter, 26, was convinced by the team's promise that he would play defensive end since he played out of

position as a linebacker with the 49ers.

Gibbs told the Washington Post of Carter's speed and pressure ability. "The one thing we saw about this guy is that he has a motor. We felt he could be a real impact player."

Carter was exploring both the Broncos and the Redskins, but told the Washington Post, "It was a definitely a risk. I know that the free agent market moves fast. You have to see what's on the other side, but you might lose out."

"I told [Broncos Coach] Mike Shanahan and their owner [Pat Bowlen] that they could go to the Super Bowl, that they were close, but I belonged in Washington," Carter said.

Owner Daniel Snyder's wealth and Gibbs's Hall of Fame status proved a winning combination in acquiring two big

name receivers.

However, Ajit Aryal, sophomore biology major, said that the owner has not been pushing his own favorites like he has in other years. "Daniel Snyder has been relatively quiet compared to his exploits in the past," said Aryal. "He is finally allowing his deserving coaching staff to make the big decisions, he just signs the checks."

Obviously allowing Gibbs to make some of the big decisions proved to be a very good approach to securing Randle El. "Free agency started at 12:01. I got a call at 12:05, and they kept putting phrases on the chart," Randle El told the Washington Post. "Coach Gibbs asked to speak with my wife. My wife? It was all about the approach. The Redskins made that first step into the door."

David Patten worried about his position in the Redskins next season with the signing of Randle El and Lloyd, since one year ago he was in their position receiving the high-priced contract with a Super Bowl ring from the Patriots.

"I have to use this as motivation for me," Patten said. "I'm a fighter. When training camp comes, I'm fighting for the starting job."

Especially with Santana Moss also being a receiver, the "three proven receivers [have a] vague resemblance of the fun bunch and posse from the glory days of Coach Joe," said Micah Thomas, a senior speech communication major.

The club signed Archuleta, Randle El and Carter to \$30 million maximum contracts for six years and Fauria to a smaller deal for a shorter term. Lloyd, who came in as a trade, was still in negotiation as of Tuesday, however is expected to have a contract similar or greater than Randle El, according to the Washington Post.

The Redskins used their usual contract style in giving huge signing bonuses, minimum base salaries in the first two years, and maximum base salaries in the later years when players are either released or have their contracts

restructured. Jarell Myers, a sophomore psychology major,

said the contracts were a good approach for the team. "By having such a young base of players and locking each of them down with hefty contracts, we have the making of what could possibly be another Redskins Dynasty," Myers said.

For critics concerned about the Redskins going over the extended \$105 million spending cap, Gibbs told the Washington Post that the club is following protocol.

"We haven't done one thing that anybody else can't do," said Gibbs. "We have certain rules in the league. Here's the [salary] cap, here's the numbers, here's what you can spend, so everybody in the league can do what we're doing, it's just that they choose not to many of them."

One of the tactics includes switching 2006 roster bonuses into signing bonuses to free up \$10 million in total cap space. According to sources with knowledge of the situation, the Redskins save \$2.5 million in cap when linebacker Marcus Washington agreed to transfer his \$3.4 million in roster bonuses and base salary into a signing bonus.

"What people fail to real-

ize is the Washington Redskins are a multimillion dollar franchise first," said sophomore biology major Ajit Aryal. "They are managed by meticulous businessmen, and profes-

sionals all who know far more about running a football team than each and every one of the anonymous sources



reporting on their actions."

Sophomore biology major, Nicole Mahdi said the Redskins future is not dependent on how much money is spent on the players but rather the team's chemistry. "It's all about the team chemistry when it comes to the Redskins," said Mahdi. "We have had incredible players in the past and our lack of success is not due to the wealth of the players but whether they fit with the current Redskins teammates and with the old system that Joe Gibbs is trying to introduce into the Redskins offensive and defensive scheme."

Lloyd possibly had the same sentiment and it is one of the reasons why he left the San Francisco 49ers. Of his 49er teammates, Lloyd said, "I don't think they didn't like me. They just weren't feeling my style."

LaVar Arrington has yet to be replaced as weak-side linebacker and Gibbs admitted that the Redskins has holes in that area, according to the Washington Post. Safety Ryan Clark signed on the Pittsburgh Steelers and tight end Robert Royal signed with the Buffalo Bills.

The Redskins also re-signed defensive tackle Cedric Killings, running back Rock Cartwright and linebacker Khary Campbell.



Photo: (center) © Jeff Saxe/Photo.com

Antwaan Randle-El, only seven weeks after helping the Pittsburgh Steelers in their championship season, was one of many solid players signed by Washington last week.

### Overhaul Inventory:

These new faces have many Redskins fans anxious for the 2006 Season:

Wide receiver Antwaan Randle-El from the Pittsburgh Steelers  
Tight End Christian Fauria from New England

Wide receiver Brandon Lloyd in a trade from San Francisco  
Safety Adam Archuleta from St. Louis

Quarterback Todd Collins from Kansas City  
Defensive end Andre Carter from San Francisco