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THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 91, NO. 89

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Tuesday Notebook

BREAKING NEWS

ABOUT 8,000 SURGE TROOPS WILL NOT BE RETURNING HOME THIS SUMMER, DESPITE PREVIOUS PLANS, ACCORDING TO CNN.COM

METRO

FIND OUT WHY SOME MARYLAND RESIDENTS OPPOSE A LAW MEANT TO GUARANTEE RIGHTS TO TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS.

NATION & WORLD

THOUSANDS OF MUSLIMS TRAVELED TO CHICAGO FOR THE NATION OF ISLAM'S SAVIOUR'S DAY CELEBRATION.

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Kevin Liles Breaks Down his Road to Success

BY DANIELLE KWATENG
Life & Style Editor

Don't call him supernatural. Don't call him amazing or even special. He doesn't need the honors and awards. He doesn't even need into music. Don't be intimidated by him; all one needs to do is listen and learn.

Oh, and just call him "Kev."

Executive Vice President of Warner Music Group, former president of Def Jam, former Morgan State student and father Kevin Liles is a blessed individual who doesn't mind sharing what's been given to him.

"When you get the opportunity to give and serve, it's always a blessing," said Liles, who is originally from Baltimore. "God puts things in your life because he wants you to do the work."

He met with students from Howard University, Morgan State University and Bowie State University at XM Radio on Monday to talk about his past, his future and his state of mind in between.

"In '86, I was in the first class of engineering [students] at

Morgan," Liles said. "[My professor told me] you go to school to help engineer your life."

Just shy of graduation by 11 credits, Liles decided to drop out and pursue his real interests.

"I was taught to go to school, get a job and get benefits," he said. "I got bit by this music bug. But it's not just what the answer is; it's how you get to the end."

Liles' story isn't really different from the average "rags-to-riches" tale.

"I went from one corner, to the corner office," he said.

Liles worked hard, eventually becoming successful just as others have done in the past, but the difference between Liles and others is his attitude toward the journey.

And although he is the cousin of Russell and Joseph "Rev. Run" Simmons, he had no special privileges.

"I'm not trying to fit in," he said. "I'm trying to do me. My spoon in my mouth was rusted. I made it out of Baltimore because I decided to not be a statistic."

Liles came on the scene

almost 20 years ago, originally working as an unpaid intern at Def Jam Music.

"When I was an intern, there wasn't nothing I wouldn't do," Liles said. "An intern is always an intern. When I was an intern I thought, 'Who am I? I'm just trying to get on.' The intern mentality is something you must keep forever."

It was back in the day, when Air Force Ones and large rope chains were fresh that Liles first got into the music business.

"When I came up, it was just about hip-hop," he said. "We didn't care about no gold. 'Because Russell still wanted to keep the Adidas and I kinda introduced Forces, it was all about the sneakers. If your sneakers were dirty, you were a bum to me.'"

Since then, he's become less concerned about clothing, but does advise students to be concerned about branding their images.

"It's not about what you did, but how you looked when you did it," Liles said.

Liles had supportive words for hip-hop newcomers, such as

Soulja Boy, who some believe sell out their images.

"Kids are a product of their experience," he said. "There's an audience for that. Never knock nobody's hustle. Bob Johnson told me, 'The paralysis of analysis — If you spend too much time analyzing things, you don't ever do anything.'"

Liles tries to instill in youth the need to be choosy about the company they keep.

"If you wanna be a millionaire, hang around millionaires," he said.

He said the Bison Roundup Web site is an innovative idea. The Web site, which links students with alumni, is something he thinks students should take advantage of.

After the smiles, the serious topics and a little crying, Liles left the audience with some wise words.

"They tell us to dream and to dream and to dream," he said. "So now, we're a bunch of dreamers. God is never going to give you that moment again. You got to sacrifice for what you want. But when success comes, it's all worth it."



Warner Music Executive Vice President Kevin Liles signs an autograph for freshman Howard student James Morgan after speaking at XM Radio.



Christie Charles - Contributing Photographer

CBC Members Explain 'What's at Stake in '08'

During the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Black History Month program, a town hall meeting titled "What's at Stake in '08," three student representatives posed questions to the general body of the black caucus in the Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel Monday evening.

Junior economics major Jessica Sinkfield (left) represented the economics department, junior political science major Jordan Ford represented the political science department and senior international business major Paris Walker represented the College Democrats.

Compiled by Christie Charles, Contributing Photographer

Bond Between Ethiopians, African Americans Examined

BY NATALIE CONE
Contributing Writer

On Monday night, a bus full of New York Abyssinian Baptist Church members drove to Washington, D.C. to join the Ethiopian community to honor the church and its pastor, the Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts III.

The event, which was hosted at the Ethiopian embassy, was also intended to celebrate Black History Month and to strengthen the historical and spiritual connections between the Ethiopian and African-American communities.

"During slavery, African Americans always looked at Ethiopia as a place that represented freedom, black culture, history and religion," said Princeton University professor Ephraim Isaac, who spoke at the event. "It inspired

the fight against discrimination and religion. When slaves were told they were inferior, they were animals or subhuman, they would think of Ethiopia."

Isaacs, who is also the founder of the African-American studies department at Harvard, quoted Langston Hughes' poem, "The Call of Ethiopia." The poem addressed the freedom of not only Ethiopia, but also the entire African continent.

Sociology professor Alem Habtu of CUNY Queens College described how, as an international student from Ethiopia, he learned from African Americans during the civil rights movement.

Habtu, along with some peers, took over the Ethiopian embassy in protest of issues concerning their country after hearing Stokely Carmichael and members of



Photo Courtesy of Marshall.edu
Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts III.

Black Leadership Forum, addressed the need to get back to the root of black culture.

"I am, because we are; and because we are, I am," Flowers said. "There is no individual advancement without group advancement."

The director of communications for Ambassador Al Rutherford said the program is the first of many that will recognize the connection between the two cultures.

The evening ended with the honoring of Butts, as he was presented with a piece of artwork by a famous Ethiopian painter.

His long-term goal is to use the church's developmental corporation to build housing and educational facilities in Ethiopia.

"We can not be chauvinistic about our connection to Ethiopia and cannot deny what needs to happen," said Butts.

Graduate Trustee Speakout Cancelled Due to Low Turnout

BY ALEESA MANN
Staff Writer

The graduate trustee and HUSA speakout scheduled for Monday night at the School of Divinity was cancelled due to poor student turnout.

Scheduling conflicts between the Elections Commission and the School of Divinity prevented students from attending the speakout, which was aimed specifically toward the graduate student population.

"We really wanted to have a new focus on graduate schools, so that's why we dedicated this week to graduate students," said Bukola Ekundayo, the General Elections Commissioner and senior accounting major. "Unfortunately, with the School of Divinity, we had been working with their student government since about a week before campaign-

ing season began and at the end of last week, it was brought to our attention that [the] speakout was scheduled at the same time as other classes and those classes have a large population of Divinity students."

According to Ekundayo, it has been hard coordinating the schedules of undergraduate and graduate schools and candidates, considering many graduate classes are held around 6 p.m. or 7 p.m., a time generally allotted for speakouts.

"I think there has always been a struggle to get graduate students to participate [in the election process], especially when you have events in the evening when a lot of them have scheduled classes," said graduate trustee candidate Imani Cheers, a first year Ph.D. candidate in mass communication and media studies. "I mean, we were in

the School of Divinity and there were no School of Divinity students there because they were in class. I think it puts graduate students at a disadvantage because [the election] becomes a popularity contest, with students voting for who they know rather than what the candidates [are promoting]."

The speakout marks the second time a debate for the graduate trustee candidates has been cancelled. Thus, the candidates have yet to participate in their first official speakout.

"I definitely think it diminishes the ability for us to connect with the students and I think students haven't really had the adequate opportunity to hear what candidates are talking about," said Howard Cheng, a graduate trustee candidate and second year law student.

"I think the campaign-

ing has been good overall," Cheng said. "It's a shame that we haven't been able to organize more events to get the graduate student body together, but of course it's difficult to do that because of the workload."

Graduate trustee candidates are aware of the difficulty of getting the graduate student body to gather and participate actively in the election process largely due to course work and busy schedules.

For graduate trustee candidates like Muteba Mukendi, a second year MBA student concentrating in finance, that simply means finding different ways to reach out to the student body.

"We [the candidates] know the nature of graduate students," Mukendi said. "I already knew the turnout was only going to be a few students, but that doesn't really change the way the elec-

tion goes. I'm doing the same thing I've been doing the whole time, which is actually going out to the schools and talking to the students."

Mukendi cited face-to-face interaction, word of mouth support and other tools, such as e-mail, as major implements in an election process in which attracting large congregations of students is not always possible.

"There is no point in them having a speakout if there is not going to be anyone in the audience for us, so I felt it was right for the Election Committee to cancel it," Mukendi said. "I understand it is hard for graduate students to come out, which makes it a little harder for us, but it tells us what we have to do."

Mukendi continued, "As graduate trustees, we have to really reach out to them. We can't expect them to come to our

events. We have to go out and reach out to them."

Despite the cancellation of the first two speakouts, many graduate students running for office have found this year's campaign season to be much more publicized and more productive, with more candidates than in past years.

"The Elections Commission was very adamant about making sure graduate and professional students were aware of deadlines," Cheers said. "They were much more vocal about when applications were due and when they were available to begin with, and I think it is considerably better than last year."

The next speakout scheduled for graduate trustee and Howard University Student Association (HUSA) candidates is scheduled for Wednesday.

Cheap Spring Break Trips Attract Students Despite Risks



Miami is one of the spring break destinations that students are able to go to for a discounted price this year.

BY MAKULA DUNBAR
Contributing Writer

After spending a long Christmas break with family and friends, some Howard students were looking forward to returning to school. But the majority of the student body got a little too comfortable and found it hard to keep their thoughts off of the next break.

Not a lame three-day weekend, but a full week of fun in the sun, better known as spring break.

Every year, Howard students debate over going home, participating in Alternative Spring Break or getting together with friends to make the most of their time off.

The HBCU Miami trip, which is coordinated by students at various schools, has been taking place for the past several years and consists of a group of

HBCUs and students coming together to travel to Miami and participate in different events of their choice.

"The purpose of this trip is to give students an affordable spring break option that allows them to interact with other HBCU students," Rosemary Amao, the Howard University HBCU Miami trip representative and sophomore biology major said. "Note, this trip is not associated with Howard University in any way, but an alternative to paying higher prices that we, as college students, could not otherwise afford."

For \$395, students can make the trip down to South Beach and engage in what is expected to be the time of their lives.

That's exactly what a group of seniors from Hampton University thought last year when their class decided to take

their senior trip to Jamaica. The coordinator of the trip assured students that everything was paid for, but when they arrived, it was a different story.

According to a story on BlackCollegeWire.org, the trip ended in a financial catastrophe. The majority of students were left with regrets and no refunds.

In reality, disasters like this can happen to any group of students who decide to jump on the bandwagon and skip over the small print.

College students sometimes readily take advantage of situations that seem too good to be true and put reality on the back burner.

Even though it hasn't happened in the past, some question whether the HBCU trip to Miami could take the same wrong turn.

"We have considered possible mishaps that may occur on

this trip and any other trip that students may go on," Amao said. "We have made the necessary precautions to prevent these mishaps. However, we realize that we cannot control the unforeseen. We can ensure that participants will receive all accommodations included in the package."

Because these trips are not organized through the university, there is not much that can be done if something were to go wrong. Sophomore television production major Zierri Kinchelow is considering taking part in the HBCU Miami trip and isn't discouraged by disastrous spring break vacation stories.

"I feel that with any trip that you go on, you should do background research," Kinchelow said. "Concerns about what your money pays for should be answered in advance and in any event, unexpected things can occur, so my decision to [attend] the Miami trip isn't going to be swayed because of other disasters."

Vicktor Lumpkin, a sophomore accounting major, disagreed with "going with the flow," and prefers to play the safe route.

"I wouldn't think about going anyway," Lumpkin said. "I'm kind of a simple person when it comes to events and vacations. I'd rather save my money and spend it on something else."

Despite some students' fears of losing money or being given anything less than a great time, Amao has a few words to assure students they will get what they bargained for.

"It would be unfortunate for students to pull out of this expensive trip that will give them opportunities to have fun while building a network with students of other Historically Black Colleges and Universities," Amao said. "This is a legitimate trip and if we had any skepticism about it, we would not [have] been a part of arranging it here at Howard."

FOLLOWING FOOTSTEPS

Kehbuma Langmia

Cameroonian Alumnus Goes From Student to Published Professor



In his dissertation, Howard graduate Kehbuma Langmia examined themes in the conversations of Cameroonian men and women.

BY TRAVER RIGGINS
Campus Editor

When Kehbuma Langmia commenced his graduate studies at Howard University in 2003, he knew he was going to do something new.

The Vice Provost for Research, Orlando Taylor, Ph.D., told Langmia and his colleagues that in order to be a graduate student at Howard, they would have to add something to the university.

Langmia, who had arrived in the United States from Cameroon three years earlier, took his charge seriously and now has a doctorate of mass communication and media studies.

Langmia spoke with a group of Howard doctoral students in the Howard University Bookstore last Monday about his published dissertation, "The Internet and the Construction of the Immigrant Public Sphere: The Case of the Cameroonian Diaspora."

Langmia spent his time at Howard studying conversations and exchanges between Cameroonians in both America and Africa via Internet chat rooms.

He said he was surprised to find that the types of conversations men were having differed from the themes that dominated women's conversations.

Men tended toward heavy political talk. Langmia said that in 2004 as the Cameroonian presidential election was in process, his country was going through its own "Obamania." Women, however, were more concerned with environmental and domestic issues — issues that would affect one's household and the health of a family.

Langmia said that while his research only applies to Cameroon, he hopes his findings will push people to conduct research in other places around the globe.

Bellarmino Ezuma, a first year doctoral student in mass communication and media studies from Nigeria, is doing just that.

She has chosen to study how the free laptops given to children in Nigeria through the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) program can most effectively be used.

"Technology is not the biggest problem," she said. Ezuma has worked with children before and she said it is important that they use their equipment and access to the Internet most efficiently.

She wants to tailor her findings to the Nigerian school systems so the teachers can use her information to help teach.

Ezuma pulls some of her inspiration from Langmia. "If he can do it, I can do it too," she said.

Langmia began his formal education in Cameroon and earned a bachelor's degree in English and fine arts from the University of Yaounde in Cameroon.

He also studied in Munich, Germany, where he received a postgraduate degree in Film and TV.

His wife convinced him to study in America when he was looking to further his education, and he chose Howard because some of his favorite professors in Cameroon were graduates of Howard.

Langmia finished his dissertation in three and a half years. The traditional doctoral student spends five years working before they graduate.

"I wanted to join the world of scholars and influence discourse," Langmia said.

He said he was excited to get out into the world and influence how people think.

Carolyn Byerly, an associate professor of journalism, had Langmia as her first doctoral advisee.

She said her student's willingness to accept constructive criticism left an impression on her.

"He took everything we threw at him," Byerly said of Langmia, who was looking at the role of a new technology that was independent of government and economic influences.

The Internet acts as one of the most contemporary public spheres, or gathering places for the passing of messages and brainstorming, which attracted Langmia's attention.

He is now a professor at Bowie State University in Maryland and teaches courses in broadcast journalism, media studies and mass communication.

Creativity Helpful in Internship Search

BY CHARI STAPLES
Contributing Writer

As the economy becomes more global and the competition for good jobs increases, Howard University students are in search of internships to gain necessary experience.

Many companies stress to students the importance of having internships while still in college in order to apply their knowledge to a real-world environment.

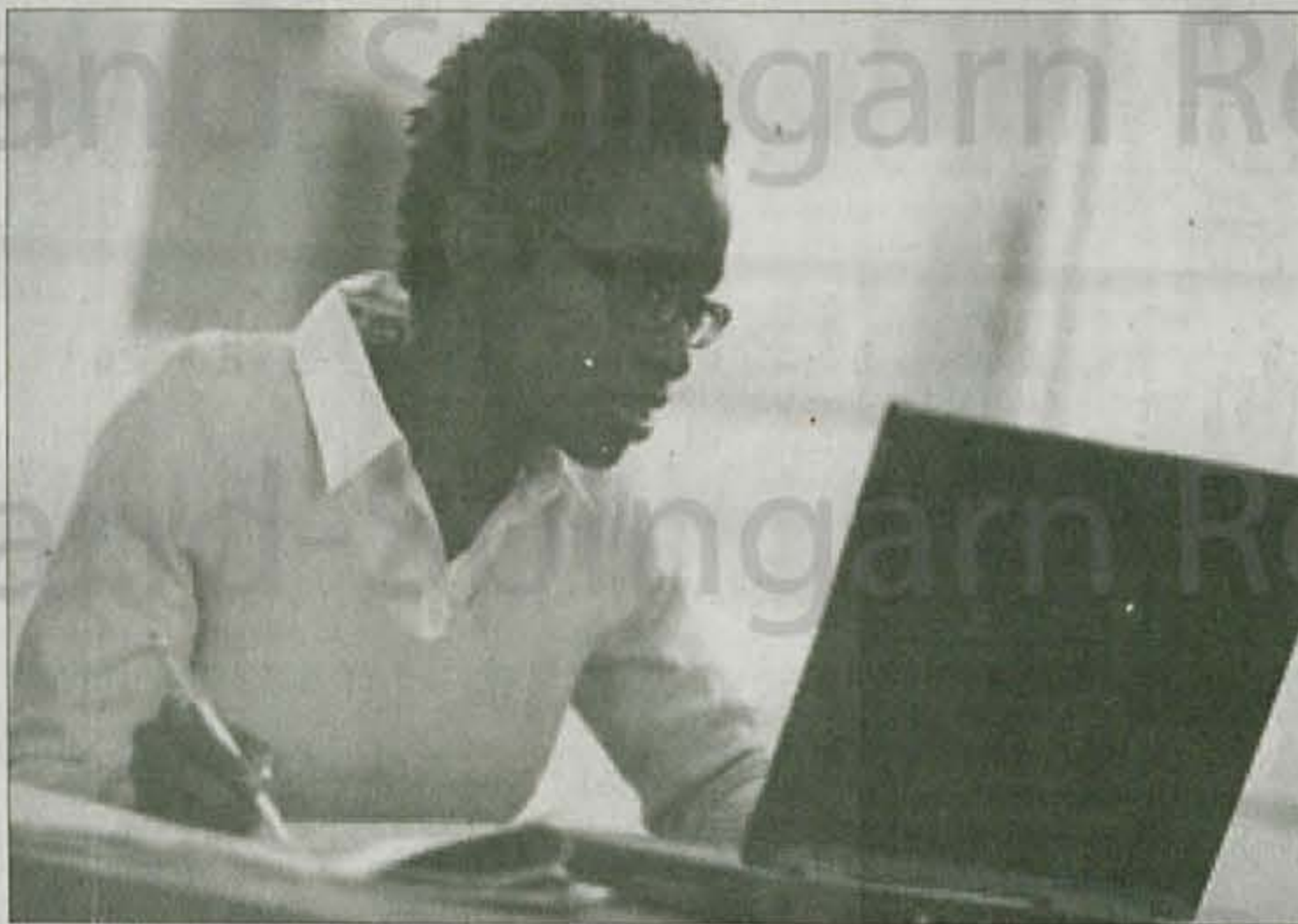
"Internships will give some an edge over other applicants when applying for a full-time job," said Shannon Miller, a recruiter representing IBM. "They are also significant because they allow you to enhance your resume or portfolio and make valuable industry contacts that can be essential to landing the ideal job upon graduation."

Some collegestudents have internship interviews planned for February and March. Other students have yet to secure any interviews and are beginning to worry.

Robin Woodson, a sophomore accounting major, is in search of an internship and is worried that time is rapidly running out.

"I sent out my resume to a variety of companies, and I have not gotten much feedback," Woodson said. "I really want to get an internship this summer doing something relevant to my career. Last summer, I worked at the mall, and it was essentially a waste of time."

Mikayla Williams, a junior print journalism major, shared the same sentiments as Woodson. She is well aware of the importance of internships for her field of study. Because she is a journalism major, hands-on experience is necessary to perfect her craft.



The internship race rushes on as summer approaches, students are urged to apply as soon as possible.

"I know that my field of study is very competitive, and in order for me to become great, I need as much experience as possible," Williams said.

The Howard University Career Services Office and student advisors encourage students to continue their quest to find internships if they haven't already found them.

According to the Office of Career Management at the University of Maryland, some companies hire interns on the spur of the moment.

"A lot of companies wake up in the spring and say, 'Oh, we have a project, maybe we could get someone,'" said Janet Richert, the director of career management at the University of Maryland.

Some professionals say college students interested in business internships may not have to look far to find an internship opportunity in the Washington,

D.C. area.

The Washington area is home to many opportunities because of the war in Iraq and the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which has caused a lot of companies to seek business interns, said Phillip Brown, a representative of Morgan Stanley.

Brown added that even in fields where jobs aren't as abundant, one's possibilities are limitless. "Great opportunities come to those who show initiative and optimism," he said.

Greg Morton, a public relations major, echoed the ideas of Brown. He urged fellow Howard students to be persistent in terms of securing internships.

"Last year, in May, I had not gotten an internship," Morton said. "I was passed over by MTV. One day I was sitting at home watching television and decided to call MTV. It just so happens that the intern that they'd recently hired didn't work out."

Such last-minute opportunities involve jobs at places where prospective interns have fallen through or the need for interns has grown.

Morton said would-be interns should not wait for announcements to come to them.

"There are a couple things students should do to be proactive," Morton said. "Look at Web sites, request informational interviews from alumni or people in the industry."

When a student is left without an internship for the summer, volunteering at a company would be a good idea, said Mark Oldman, co-president of Vault Inc., a company that publishes a guide to top internships.

"Write the company a letter stating that you are free to volunteer and help them whenever needed," Oldman said. "At some point, every company needs an extra set of hands in something. Get any experience possible."

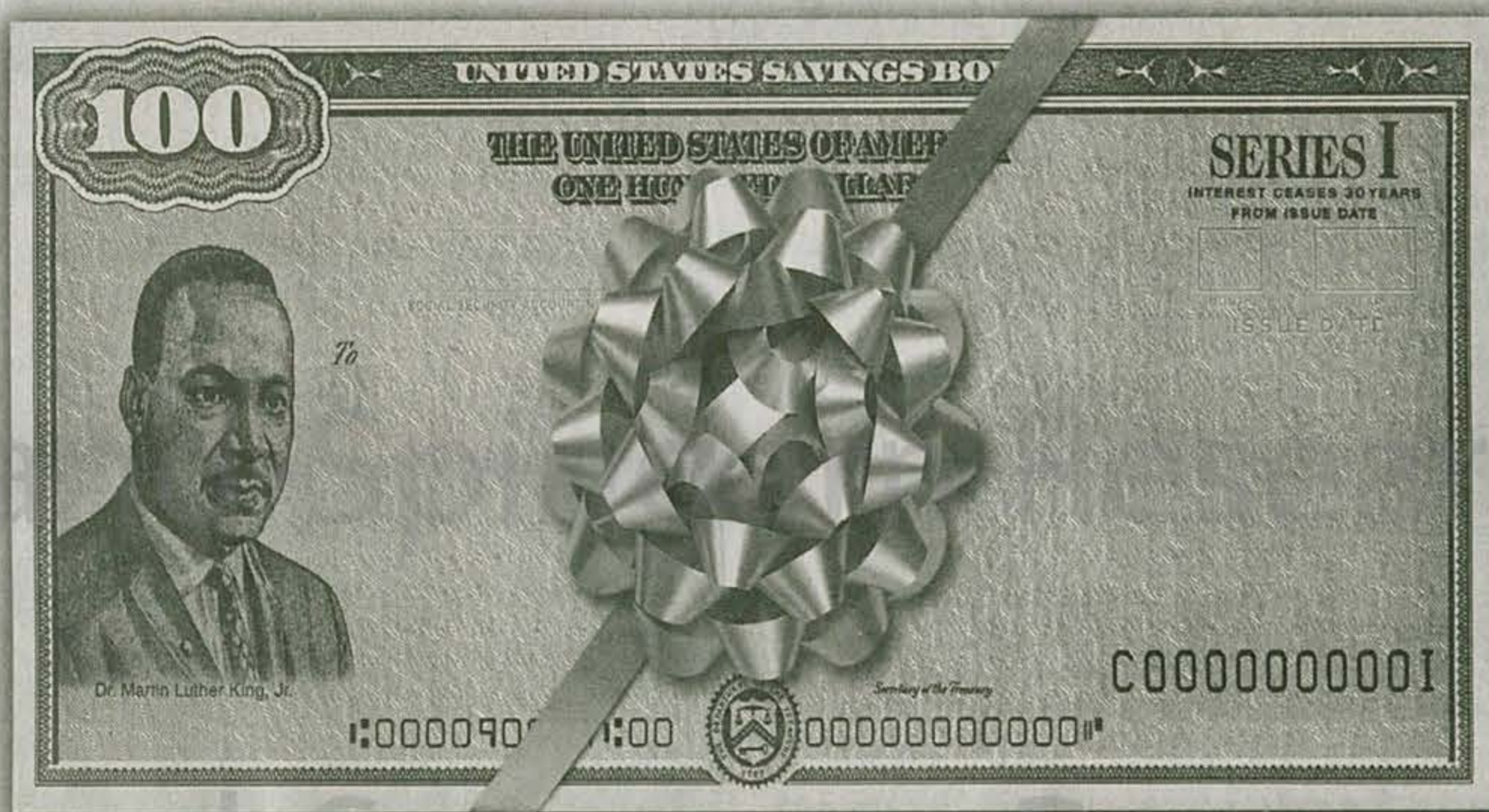
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Artists 'Spit Dat' at Weekly Mocha Hut Open Mic

BY LAURA PEREZ
Contributing Writer

The sounds of conversation and chairs scraping the floor are hushed as Mocha Hut's hosts approach the stage. "Lions, tigers, and bears," they yell. The crowd responds in unison "Oh my!"

The traditional call to order begins. "Spit Dat," a weekly open mic at the Mocha Hut Café on U Street N.W. Hosted by Drew "Droopy" Anderson and Dwayne "Dwayne B" Lawson-Brown, is held every Thursday from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. free of charge.

Founded in the summer of 2002, "Spit Dat" was originally hosted at the Java Head Café in the Brookland section of the District. Co-host Lawson-Brown remembers the event's humble beginnings.

"Java Head was a nice spot, but it was small," Lawson-Brown said. "It could maybe seat 50 people comfortably."

But when Java Head closed in December 2004, "Spit Dat" was forced to relocate. The search for a steady venue was long and difficult.

"We bounced around from venue to venue," Lawson-Brown recalled. "We wanted to find a place that cared about poetry, a place that felt like home."

"Spit Dat" debuted at Mocha Hut on July 7, 2005. Despite the relocation, the show's popularity has been



A variety of poets, emcees, musicians and comedians come to the Mocha Hut on Thursday night to relax, meet with friends and "spit dat."

Photo Courtesy of princeofpethworth.com

growing ever since.

"When we first moved to Mocha Hut, there were about 30 people coming every week," Lawson-Brown said. Now, the open mic attracts a standing room only crowd.

The list of performers each week has grown with attendance. All artists are welcome to sign the open mic list and share their craft.

"Mocha Hut is not just for poets; we have singers, musicians, emcees

and even stand-up comedians who come to perform," Lawson-Brown said. "We also have weekly featured artists come in from all over the country."

The crowd that comes to watch the show is equally diverse. The open

mic's typical audience is a combination of college students, local musicians and Washington, D.C. natives.

"It's a very well-rounded crowd," Lawson-Brown said. "We get a mixture of Howard students, a few high school students and a lot of people who are from or living in D.C."

Audience members and performers alike come to "spit dat" because of the open mic's welcoming and accepting environment. Mocha Hut attendee and junior print journalism major Ed Carter appreciates the family atmosphere.

"It's a good place to meet people and network, but it's comfortable," Carter said. "It feels like family."

Christon "Christylez" Bacon, who has been performing at "Spit Dat" since its Mocha Hut inception, agreed.

"People are open here, and they're not uptight," Bacon said. "I never miss a Thursday. I look forward to it."

Deborjha Blackwell, a third-year "Spit Dat" performer, views the open mic as the highlight of the workweek.

"I come here stressed from work," she said. "This is where I can be me. Thursday night at Mocha Hut is my release."

Lawson-Brown concurred saying, "This is my rehab. All the things I go through at work, all the stress; those are the drugs of my week. 'Spit Dat' is my rehabilitation. I go here, and I find peace."

Chocolate City Guide

Bukom Café
African Sub-Continental Dinner, drink specials
2442 18th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Sun. 8 p.m. – midnight
Mon. – Sat. 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Georgetown Billiards
Half-priced pool, drink specials
3251 Prospect Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
Mon. – Fri. @ 6 p.m.

'80s Dance Party
Club Heaven and Hell
2327 18th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Every Thursday 7:30 p.m. – 2 a.m.

Soul Food Dining Specials
Madam's Organ
2461 18th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Sun. 5 p.m. – 2 a.m.
Mon. – Fri. 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

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Sundays 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Maryland Transgender Rights Law In Jeopardy, Petition Puts New Rules on Hold

BY JOSHUA LYNSEN
The Washington Blade

A new law barring discrimination against transgender people in Montgomery County, Md., is in jeopardy after a group opposed to a submitted petition that could force a referendum on the issue.

Citizens for a Responsible Government submitted thousands of signatures Feb. 21 to county officials seeking a referendum on the law that prohibits "discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations, cable television service and taxicab service on the basis of gender identity."

But county officials — required to suspend the law at least until the 32,087 signatures can be verified — said the organization advanced its cause under false pretenses.

Montgomery County Council President Mike Knapp said opponents of the law wrongly represented it as allowing men into women's bathrooms and locker rooms.

"The misinformation being put out about this law really troubles me," he said. "We guaranteed that certain people in our county will have the same rights as other residents — and that is all we did. Those who intentionally mislead people about what this bill means will have to explain what is behind their actions, but we want everyone to know exactly what this law is about."

Knapp said the law allows the operators of public bathrooms and locker rooms to continue to separate their facilities based on gender identity or biological gender.



Photo Courtesy of www.galateyinc.org

Documentary photographer Jana Marcus works to eradicate the negative stereotypes of the transgender community that are causing some Montgomery County, Md., citizens to petition a pending civil rights law.

This allows a restaurant owner, for example, to require a biological male presenting himself as a female to use the men's bathrooms.

Theresa Rickman of Citizens for a Responsible Government said a strict reading of the law, however, indicates that a biological male presenting himself as a female could insist on using the women's bathroom.

She said the organization misrepresented nothing when it collected signatures and welcomes an open discussion with

county officials.

"Name the time and the place, and we'll be happy to debate the law," Rickman said. "We are happy to meet them anywhere and discuss it."

Tuesday's petition filing indefinitely suspended the law, which passed the Council unanimously in November.

It did not become effective Feb. 20, as was expected, and could remain suspended until a public referendum is held.

Council member Duchy Trachtenberg said the law would

have a significant impact on transgender people living and working in Montgomery County.

"As the last few months have shown, transgender citizens can be the target of unpleasant, invective and misguided fears," she said. "What this bill does is simply preserve the basic rights transgender people should enjoy along with everyone else — to live and work day to day with dignity, respect and equal protection under the law."

Guess what?

The Metro section is looking for a helping hand...if you are interested in becoming an editorial assistant. e-mail Mercia Williams-Murray at merciawi@aol.com



A Letter to the President

BY VANESSA ROZIER
Nation & World Editor

Dear President Bush,
First of all, hand claps to you for the millions of dollars that you signed over to several African countries last week. Hopefully we will see less disease in the years to come, since that was what this money went toward.

But, I see that you never responded to my last letter when I pointed out how the government treated the wealthy Californians so much better than the poor people of New Orleans in their time of need.

I hope that after this letter I'll hear back from you — or maybe, just maybe, see a change in your crazy ways.

Aside from the speculation that you made this short, leisurely trip in hopes of establishing military bases and getting a head start on the scramble for oil in Ghana, I honestly don't think you made the most of your trip.

I have never made it over to the Motherland so I, a broke college student, cannot comment on your trip too harshly.

But, as a socially conscious American and a descendent of this rich land, I feel that it is my duty to bring a few things to your attention, in case no one has had the guts to say these things to your face...yet.

George W., you cannot go to a country and only visit the rich. We all know that your rep is...pretty bad, to say the least. This is why I would think that you would want to do something about that in the last few months as president.

I mean, we all know that, for years to come, you will be regarded as the president who messed up Iraq.

But it would have been a good idea to help yourself by helping others. Your trip to Africa could have saved you the trouble of possibly being the next Bill Clinton — in the eyes of Africans.

It was nice that you took a trip through time and visited Rwanda and the memorials dedicated to the hundreds of thousands of lives lost there in 1994, but what about what's going on now in 2008?

If I were you, I would have jotted down a little something when I saw the backlash the Clinton Administration got for their indifference during a genocide.

Light bulb! Wouldn't it have been a good idea to work on ending this genocide in Darfur while you were right there?

You went from Benin to Tanzania to Rwanda to Ghana to Liberia. I mean, you detoured away from the gun shots and crying people.

I know Africa is a large continent, but you didn't stop in Kenya, Sudan or Zimbabwe? You were pretty close.

This behavior seems kind of hypocritical, sir. I'm not calling you a hypocrite, but you're certainly acting like one right now.

You're claiming to be working on spreading democracy everywhere when you ignore corrupt governments who exploit their constituents whose voices have been silenced.

Maybe it's because there is not oil there for you to monopolize. But, we'll see how that plays out with you and Ghana since oil has just been discovered there.

And, on a side note, Liberia is in that group of progressive countries that have hit milestones before us, the high-and-mighty Americans.

These former slaves who traveled back to Africa to rule themselves elected a female president. India, Ireland and Argentina, to name a few, have done the same.

This is just one piece of proof that the United States just may not be ahead of the world. We have a lot of catching up to do.



Saviour's Day, observed Feb. 26, commemorates the birth of Wallace Fard Muhammad, the founder of the Nation of Islam. Members of the Nation also meet to discuss pertinent issues.

Saviour's Day Celebrates Faradian Islam

BY JADA SMITH
Staff Writer

Arguably one of the most overlooked holidays in the United States, Saviour's Day serves as a day for members of the Nation of Islam to commemorate the birth of their founder, Fard Muhammad.

Held annually in Chicago, the celebration gives Nation of Islam followers a chance to congregate and speak on important issues, mostly related to the black community.

"The meaning of Saviour's Day, [is that] on Feb. 26, 1877, the founder of the Nation of Islam, a man by the name of Wallace Fard Muhammad, was born," said Mark 7X Cox, a junior speech communications major. "We come together to commemorate the birth of this man. We have various work-

shops to help families connect with each other, become more productive and to mobilize upward as people."

Muhammad, the founder of Faradian Islam, was a preacher who established the Nation of Islam (NOI) and their first mosque, located in Detroit.

After spreading the teachings of NOI for three years, he mysteriously disappeared in 1934. After his disappearance, Elijah Muhammad became leader of the Nation of Islam.

The celebration includes a three-day calendar of events touching on issues of interfaith dialogue, health and nutrition, maintaining healthy relationships, education, economic development, voter education, media and communications, agriculture, prison reform,

criminal justice, a youth conference and a keynote speech made annually by the NOI leader, Minister Louis Farrakhan.

"The ultimate event of the holiday is when we hear the address from Minister Farrakhan," 7X Cox said. "The subject of his speech was 'The Gods at War: The Future is all about Y.O.U.t.h.' [Among other things,] he talked about the upcoming election. He said that we should pray for brother Barack and his success, also that he is safe throughout this election process."

To many members of NOI, the holiday and gathering serve as a needed retreat from the world's realities. Jalil Muhammed, a freshman history major, said Saviour's Day is a place for him to network and engage in fellowship with his

peers from across the country.

"This is as important to those in the Nation of Islam as Christmas would be to Christians," Muhammed said. "All members of the Nation look forward to it. It's a day when men and women of like mind, with similar values and beliefs can come together."

He continued, "The beautiful thing is that you get to see young people from all over the country who are not smoking, drinking or being promiscuous, trying to elevate our people mentally, spiritually and morally."

Despite the holiday's religious appeal to members of NOI, the events attract people from various backgrounds and faiths.

"Usually, this is the highlight for conscious people all over the world, not just those

in the Nation of Islam," Muhammed said. "Russell Simmons was there last year."

In an interview with *The Final Call*, Farrakhan said today's battle lies with the young people of the NOI to carry out the mission started by the forefathers of the religion.

"Today's generation of young black people do not know the enemy as their fathers and grandfathers knew the enemy," Farrakhan said. "When we demand justice, freedom and equity, we excite the worst in our slave masters and their children, and they come against us. These cases of the Jena '6,' Megan Williams, Martin Lee Anderson, Sean Bell and Generalow Wilson — they are just a smidgen of what is going on throughout America by evil white people bent on teaching us a lesson."

Howard Lags in Campus Recycling Programs



Colleges in Washington, D.C. have programs to recycle items like plastic bottles, office paper, batteries and cellular phones.

BY GANET LAKEW
Contributing Writer

Even in the nation's capital, people in Washington, D.C. litter and do not practice ideal recycling habits.

With the average person producing 4.5 pounds of waste each day, local colleges and universities are working to curb wasteful behavior.

Howard University does not have official information on its main school Web site regarding recycling programs.

This information may not be readily available because there is no widely recognized and established "Green" effort.

"I think that Howard hasn't really gotten on board with the whole 'Going Green' because of the cost. And I think if it could be made affordable and easy, everybody probably would participate," said Victoria Phiifer, freshman health management major and vice president of the Tubman Quadrangle dormitories.

The Howard University Chapter of Target H.O.P.E. recently launched a year-long program that looks to encourage the Howard community to improve their living styles by becoming less wasteful and more environmentally aware.

Target H.O.P.E. hosted a Green Week designed to educate others about the disastrous effects of global warming and discuss possible solutions to the issue.

Despite such endeavors by

concerned students, there does not seem to be forceful and present recycling programs on Howard's campus.

One such concerned student is Naima Blakes, a sophomore biology major, who is actively involved in Target H.O.P.E.

"Considering how many recyclable products are handed out and sold on Howard's campus it's ridiculous that there is no campus-wide recycling program," Blakes said.

It seems that the primary reason for Howard's lack of a comprehensive recycling program is not student apathy or idleness, but rather a lack of opportunity to participate in such campus-wide activities.

Blakes said, "I feel that if all the people and organizations on campus desiring change join together and use our voices in addition to holding those in student government accountable for their promises of advocating for us, the students, we will hopefully see some changes made in a positive direction very soon."

American University

American University utilizes two types of containers for waste management: a black one for trash and a blue one for paper. This encourages students and staff to recycle office paper, newspapers, bottles and cans, which are then brought to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) where they are further arranged and organized to be made into usable goods.

In addition, AU has recycling centers for old and unwanted

clothing available in a couple of the residence halls.

Georgetown University

Georgetown Recycles is an organization responsible for all the recycling and waste management tasks on campus. Materials like aluminum cans, plastic, batteries, glass containers and newspapers are collected for recycling.

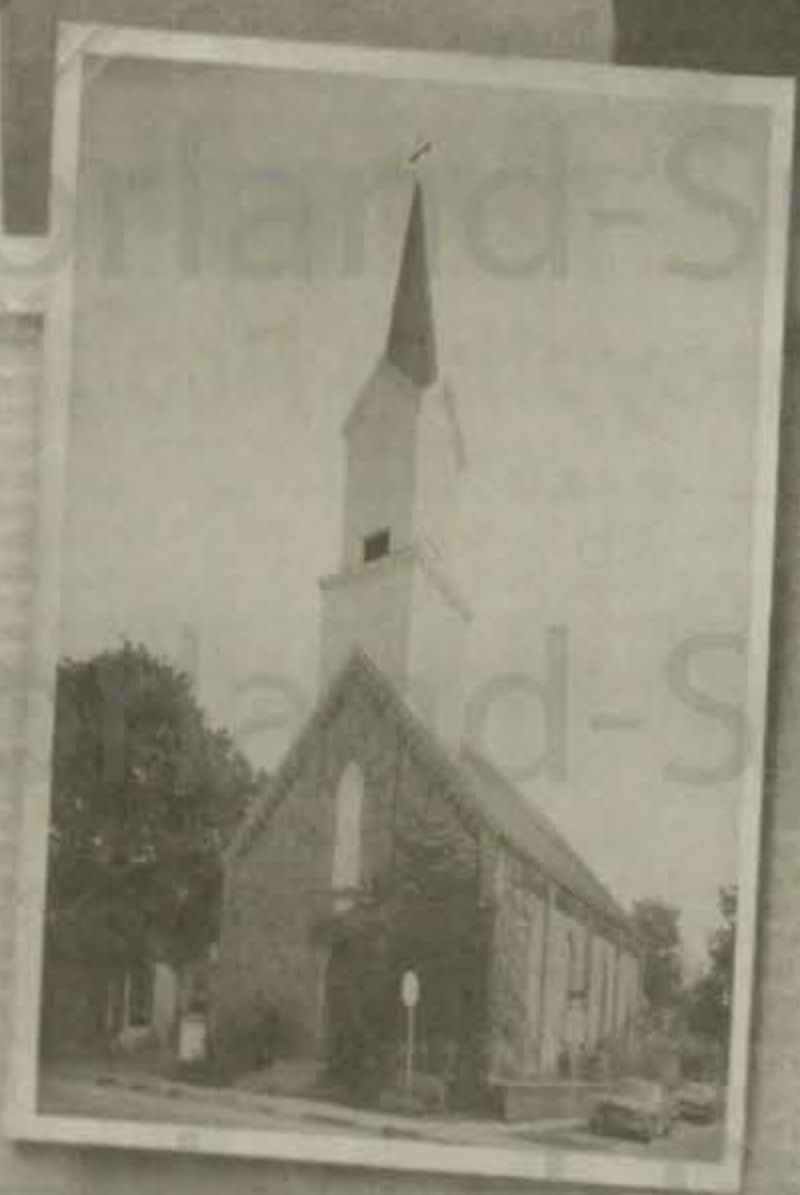
Georgetown also participates in the Wireless Foundation's Donate a Phone Program, in which students, staff and faculty are able to give away their old and unwanted cellular phones and chargers. These old phones are then repaired and redistributed to domestically abused individuals throughout the United States.

Catholic University

Catholic University is enrolled to compete in this year's RecycleMania, a 10-week competitive activity among various college recycling programs with the purpose of waste reduction. Blue recycling bins exist throughout the campus for recycling paper, cardboard, plastic and plastic bottles.

George Washington University

George Washington University has a battery recycling and disposal program in place to aid people with the proper handling and discarding of several types of batteries in a safe and efficient manner. Even items such as used oil, light bulbs, electronic materials and ink toner cartridges, which are not commonly recycled, are salvaged. GW was one of the top five winners of the 2007 RecycleMania competition.



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Directions:
Each row, each column, and each 3x3 box must contain each and every digit 1-9 exactly once.

			2	6	5			
				8				7
		2					9	
7		2	8					6
		5	6		7	3		
1			5	9				4
	2					7		
5			9					
	6	7		3				



Marcus Bird - Cartoonist

Majority Will Be the Minority

According to Reuters, by the year 2050, white people will be the minority in this country. This trend will be due to the growing rate of immigrants coming to the United States.

According to the study done by Pew Research Group, white people will be 47 percent of the population in 2050. Latinos will be responsible for 60 percent of the growth and 29 percent of the population, as they will continue to populate this country.

The study certainly seems plausible, considering the growing number of Latinos in America, and the growing number of the immigrant population in general. The Asian population will increase from 3 percent to 9 percent, while the black population will remain steady around 13 percent.

The question is: will this change much as far as the economic, political and social situation for blacks and other minorities? Since blacks will continue to be only 13 percent of the population, the major difference will be their relations with Latinos.

In addition, there is no real strength in numbers, especially since whites will still have a re-

spectable presence in this country. This country is capitalist, and therefore money will continue to be the most important factor in the distribution of power.

Although the Latino population will increase significantly, unless their educational level and socioeconomic status increase along with it, it won't make much

problematic. If there is a split among minorities, white people will still continue to hold power in this country. If blacks and Latinos become competitive, and Asians remain skeptical of both races, it won't matter that minorities are no longer the minority.

Even observing a city such as Los Angeles, it is easy to see how racial tensions can occur due to a diverse population. In cities and states that are more segregated, there tends to be less racial tension because there is only one race present.

Nevertheless, the black population will remain steady and continue to make a contribution to this country. It will be interesting to see what happens in 2050, but just because whites will be the minority doesn't mean they won't still be in power.

Hopefully, with work from all sides of cultural and racial divides, the power will become more equally distributed by 2050. In the meantime we, as a community, should look forward to building our community up and making sure that our voices will be heard no matter who's the majority.

Our View:

There is no power in numbers, unless we're talking dollars.

of a difference. Nevertheless, we believe Latinos will progress. Their work ethic and emphasis on community and family will allow them to have adequate footing within politics, business, entertainment and vocational industries by 2050.

Blacks will not only have to deal with whites in positions of power, but will also have to work with Latinos and Asians in high positions. There will be a more colorful workforce, and this country will hopefully become more racially and culturally aware.

CORRECTION: The story "Lamont Marcus Brands His Name on Campus" in yesterday's Life & Style section had a byline for Danielle Kwateng, but was written by Teni-ola Ogunjobi a contributing writer.

Perspective

Locked Door a Useful Precaution

I'm a pretty sound sleeper. I have to set two alarms to make sure that I get up in the morning. But, after the events of Sunday morning, I will forever sleep with one eye open.

It was around 6:30 a.m. Sunday morning when I felt my bedspread turn back and someone climb into my bed with me.

Talk about a rude awakening.

She crawled into the foot of my bed, got cozy and went to sleep like she was at home. Utterly disturbed and not believing my eyes, I got up and tried to wake her up. For approximately three minutes, I tapped, shoved and pushed her arm, only for her to shrug off my attempts to get her up and out of MY bed.

Oh, heaven help me this early Sunday morning.

Once she finally came to, she muttered a question to me as if we'd been friends for years. "What's up?"

Umm, excuse me? What's

up? Do I know you? No...GET UP! Get out of my room!

It had been about seven minutes at this point, and she stands up wearing underwear and a blue College of Arts and Sciences T-shirt. Yes, that was it.

You would think she was ready to leave, but she's not done asking questions.

"So you're kicking me out?"

"YES! Get out," I said.

"What about all these other people in here?"

WHAT?

I believe I must have been delirious at this point because in my right mind, I would have been freaking out and yelling at this girl. All these other people? Really? So, you sleep walk and you see people? That's a problem.

For some reason, unknown to myself, I remained calm. Who knows what this child has been through?

She finally decides she's ready to leave. I'm not down for violence, so I let her leave at her own pace. She could have been crazy, and crazy always beats sane.

As she leaves, she slams my door as if I have done her wrong. I can't believe this just happened.

I hastily lock my door, only to hear her attempt to come back in. She opens the suite door and leaves. I listen to her stomp down the hallway.

I lock the suite door, which should have been locked in the first place. This is why you should follow the rules and listen to your friends.

But there is another problem here. If the girl happens to read this and suddenly has a flashback, please...either get some help or say no to drugs, whatever applies.

-Erin Evans
Copy Chief

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Now in its 84th year, The Hilltop is published Monday through Friday by Howard University students. With a readership of 7,000, The Hilltop is the largest black collegiate newspaper in the nation.

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Got some issues?

Write a perspective
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Confessions of an L&S Editor

BY DANIELLE KWATENG
Life & Style Editor

Dear Howard,
I hate to get on my soapbox AGAIN, but I have to speak on this. It really, really irks me that there are NEVER any black folks at the Academy Awards. The few that we have never win anything.

Poor Ruby Dee, who in her entire career, has never won an Oscar, finally gets nominated for a movie about a black gangster. Now, I'm not knocking "American Gangster," because it was a fly movie, but dang we just forgot about "A Raisin in the Sun," "Gone with the Wind," and "Do the Right Thing." This woman has had a career that spans seven decades, and she has never been awarded by the Academy.

There was an issue with Halle Berry and Denzel Washington winning in 2001. Many people applauded them, but I'm still mad. Yes, "Monster's Ball" might have been a good movie (still can't force myself to watch it), but having real sex with Billy Bob Thornton? Anyone should be commended for going through that.

Halle made so many, in my opinion, thought provoking and tasteful movies without lying in bed with a man. And with Denzel, of course, we have "Glory," because you know y'all felt for him during the whipping scene. But what about "Malcolm X" and "The Hurricane?" Come on the

Day26 Ready to Give Fans an 'Exclusive'

BY JADA SMITH
Staff Writer

"Exclusive (No Excuses)" has been the running song associated with the five men of MTV's hit reality show "Making the Band 4."

Make sure you don't get caught calling them "the guys from 'Making the Band,'" because the official name for the men known as Willie, Qwanell, Mike, Brian and Robert is now Day26.

"The band formed on Aug. 26, 2007, the day all of our lives changed," Willie said. "That's the day we became a band, got signed, everything."

The name was chosen from a throng of prospective names that were sent in from fans and viewers across the country, but according to the guys, Day26 was the only one that felt right.

"It had meaning to us," Willie said.

"Making the Band 4" (MTB4) is now in its second season. Cameras follow the newly formed group as they embark on the strenuous journey of recording a freshman album — in five weeks, when most new artists have at least a year.

Even though the stress from competing for a coveted spot in the band is over, a whole new avenue of pressure has emerged in the form of creating the No. 1 album that would be expected from Diddy's latest reality show.

"We took it back to that Jo-

deci-type singing," said Brian, as he hummed an old school R&B tune. "We were thrown into the situation and we had to learn to adjust to one another. We weren't gellin' at first, but now I think we sound great."

Not only have the guys had to learn to adjust to each other, but they also had the difficult task of staying on task with five young women living right down the hall.

In addition to Day26, the season features Danity Kane, the winners of "Making the Band 3," and Diddy's solo pick, Donnie. Despite the fights, antics, and hookups that have taken place so far in the season, the guys say that even though editing can be a form of manipulation, nothing that happened on the show was false.

When asked about Qwanell's budding relationship with Danity Kane member Dawn, he responded, "Stay tuned to 'Making the Band 4,' Monday nights..."

With "MTB4," being the highest-rated show to date on MTV, the guys' celebrity status has skyrocketed over night, making them the object of affection for many young girls across the country.

Each member told a story about the colossal effect they had when going to a mall, movie theater, or other public place and then being told not to come back.

"This one mall I went to



Jada Smith - Staff Writer

Day26, the newly named guys of "Making the Band 4," are preparing for the release of their debut album.

told me I caused too much commotion and I could never come back," said.

Despite the attention they now demand and the busy schedules they follow, it makes it hard for the two dads in the group to maintain close relationships with their young children.

"It's hard," Willie said, referring to his 3-year-old-son. "We make very short trips home and it's equally as hard to leave him. But I know that I'll be able to do a lot more things and provide him with a lot more."

The experience is similar for band mate, Brian, who also has a young son at home in Houston.

"It gets harder every time," Brian said. "He's growing so much, and he screams so much when I have to leave. He's starting to understand that daddy's on TV and daddy doesn't stay long. Every time we go to the airport, it's like 'daddy where you goin' over and over."

Howard students who attended the 2007 Homecoming comedy show remember when the audience was told that the guys from "Making the Band 4" were going to perform their single, "Exclusive (No Excuses)."

Some can also remember the confusion and disappointment they felt when they saw only one part of the fivesome, Robert,

perform the song.

"It was a misunderstanding, and it was very last minute," Mike said. "We didn't really know what was going on."

Qwanell said, "Yeah, we're new artists, and we can't be turning down no performances. But we're sorry and we're here now. We love Howard...HU!"

Day26's album will be released on Bad Boy Records on March 25, and will include the new single, "Got me Going."

"There's no more 'Exclusive,'" the guys said, laughing.

Robert said, "That was a show song, kinda made for promotion of the show. But it's about our album now."

Academy!

Since the history of film began, African Americans have been somehow involved, whether in the production or focus of the movie. Let me educate for those not in the School of C (shameless plug).

One of the first full-length films created in 1903 was a 12-minute feature film entitled "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It had an all-white leading cast in blackface, with real African Americans as the extras.

Back in 1927, these two brothers by the name of Warner created the first talk-

ing film entitled "The Jazz Singer." The movie starred Al Jolson, who was known for performing in blackface.

According to Wikipedia, film historian Donald Crafton said "The entertainer, who sang jazzed-up minstrel numbers in blackface, was at the height of his phenomenal popularity. Anticipating the later stardom of crooners and rock stars, Jolson electrified audiences with the vitality and sex appeal of his songs and gestures, which owed much to African-American sources."

Although some love, and some hate,

Hattie McDaniel, the beloved mammy of "Gone with the Wind" (1939) was the first black person to win an Oscar. It took another 50 years for another black actress to do the same, with Whoopi Goldberg winning for "Ghost" in 1990.

I just feel like when certain award shows come on, I have no reason to watch. I was wrestling with even putting the Academy Awards winner results in yesterday's paper. My frustration comes from pride. I appreciate and love my people. I know I'm biased, but we are an extremely talented

race. Yeah, I said it!

And it's not that I'm hating or racist, because "Juno" was a good movie, but I just wish the Academy would recognize our talent as well.

Yeah, it's Black History Month. And yeah, blacks have done a lot for this country. But dang, can we get a little recognition for that, within the same playing field as the Academy?

I don't mean to get on my soapbox, but I had to speak on this.

-Dani K.

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