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**WEATHER**

**80**  
**63**  
**Tomorrow:**  
**82**  
**64**

Established  
**1924**



# THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 92, NO. 18

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM

Wednesday, September 17, 2008

## Wednesday's Notebook

### SPORTS

**BISON WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM GAINS THE VICTORY IN A DOUBLEHEADER AGAINST HAMPTON, 12-2 AND 3-0.**

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**JUST BECAUSE THEY CLAIM TO BE THUGS, DOESN'T MEAN THEY CAN'T GIVE BACK. RICK ROSS DONATES SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND DISPELS STEREOTYPES OF RAPPERS.**

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### EDITORIALS & PERSPECTIVES

**RECENT ACTION IN VENEZUELA PROVES WE SHOULD NOT TAKE THREATS FROM ABROAD LIGHTLY.**

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## Haiti Gets Humanitarian Aid, Awaits Justice After Storms

BY AUSTIN L. THOMPSON  
Contributing Writer

After being hit by four major hurricanes in recent weeks, Haiti is looking for answers. With as many as 1 million people now homeless and 1,000 dead, the government of the first free black republic is desperately trying to get basic necessities like food and water to its people. Prior to the storm, Haiti was the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, plagued by a history of U.S. interference, regressive military dictatorships and government corruption.

In April, a devastating food crisis created a wave of popular protests against the government leading to the resignation of the Prime Minister, Jacques Edouard Alexis. Haiti was once self-sufficient in rice production but after pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, it is now importing more than 80 percent of its rice from abroad.

This Hurricane season's storms have compounded the social turmoil knocking out bridges, power lines and washing away vital roads. The storms have left multitudes in the Haitian city of Gonaïves hungry, without clean drinking water or shelter.

Geraldine Augustine is a Haitian-American sophomore interna-

tional business major from Philadelphia who recently came back from Haiti in August. She is shocked by the mayhem the storms have made in such a short time period.

"I know a lot of friends and family's homes have been hit and been completely destroyed," Augustine said. "They are living in medical centers where they can get access to minimal assistance. There aren't proper roads so it's hard to get help to the people who need it the most."

In the wake of the catastrophe, a large-scale humanitarian effort is underway. The Red Cross has sent \$250,000 in supplies and hopes to see that amount increase. International aid organizations have also joined relief efforts in cities like Gonaïves.

Haitian-American singer Wyclef Jean and actor Matt Damon have made a special effort finding mission to Haiti in order to raise awareness about the desperate plight of the Haitian people after the devastating storms.

However, some people agree that handing out food and clothing in Haiti are short-term solutions to institutional problems on the macro level. The lack of emergency planning, shelters and sustainable infrastructures provided by the government will make the Haitian people

perennial victims of tropical storms and hurricanes. Roberte Exantus, a Haitian international student studying political science says the government clearly has no control over the country.

"The government isn't doing anything. My father was shocked to find orphanages filled with water and no government officials present," he said. Exantus believes that the government is not concerned with the poor and lower class citizens of Haiti.

"With Haiti you can never know how many died. Along the way, they find more and more people," Exantus said. "The favelas in the mountains that are washed down from storms belong to the underclass. They lose everything hoping tomorrow will be better."

Haiti's lack of emergency preparation is in stark contrast to its neighbor Cuba whose government orchestrated highly organized evacuations of people in danger and converted schools, convents and government buildings into make shift shelters. Eugene Puryear, history major and political activist, says that the catastrophe in Haiti is similar to that of Katrina - Mother Nature is only partially at fault.

"The current government has taken minimal action to resolve the underlying crisis of poverty in



Frantz Samedi grieves for his lifeless five year-old daughter, Tamasha Jean, in Cabaret, Haiti, Sunday, September 7, 2008. Tamasha was swept away by floodwaters from Hurricane Ike.

Haiti. American style "Free Trade" agreements and programs, have ravished Haiti since the days of Dictator Duvalier. The disaster following the Hurricane is a direct result of the horrendous nature of infrastructure, the economy and social services presently in Haiti."

In response to the disaster many Howard students are asking what they can do to help. Josh Myers, senior co-President of Kwame Ninsin Society believes Howard Uni-

versity students as members of the Pan-African community are partially responsible for the future in Haiti.

"It is the explicit responsibility of the Pan-African community to support Haiti and facilitate the allocation of needed resources to meet the needs of the people there. We should be there first to enter and the last leave." He and members of the Howard University Student Association are planning to coordi-

nate a course of action and awareness campaign in solidarity with the Haitian nation.

Roberte Exantus wants African-American students to understand how important Haiti is to the history of liberation and independence and support them now. "We need the help of African-Americans leaders and students. You could do so much but you choose to ignore the things that happen around the world."



## McCain-Palin Support Slightly Softens in the Newest Election Polls

WASHINGTON-John McCain and Barack Obama remained neck and neck seven weeks before Election Day, but there's been some softening of the support for McCain and his running mate, a new Ipsos/McClatchy poll has found.

The national survey found registered voters split evenly, with 45 percent supporting McCain, the Republican, and 45 percent supporting Obama, the Democrat.

Two percent supported independent candidate Ralph Nader, 1 percent supported Libertarian Bob Barr, 5 percent supported none of those choices and 2 percent said they didn't know whom they supported.

The latest survey of 1,046 registered voters was taken nationwide from last Thursday through Monday. Its margin of error was plus or minus 3.0 percentage points.

In the subsequent week, McCain's running mate, Sarah Palin, dominated news coverage of the presidential race as financial markets faced a new round of turmoil.

While there was no significant change in the number of voters who said they supported either ticket, the poll did suggest some easing of the commitment to McCain-Palin.

Among those supporting McCain and Palin, 71 percent said they would definitely vote for the ticket, down from 77 percent the week before. The slice of those who said they'd probably vote for McCain-Palin rose from 10 percent to 13 percent, and the total of those who said they could change their minds rose from 10 percent to 12 percent.

"It does suggest a slight wavering on the McCain-Palin side," Young said. "There's a little more doubt in people's minds. There are underlying signs that the convention bump may have a time stamp on it."

- Steven Thomma, McClatchy Newspapers

## Montgomery Voter Initiative Reaches Out to D.C. Metro Area

BY MYESHA BELL  
Contributing Writer

The Howard Chapter of the Montgomery Initiative is dedicating itself to the registration and voter participation of 100 percent of the student body.

Campus-based organizations such as Howard University Student Association (HUSA), Students Advocating for Youth (SAY), Johnson H. Johnson School of Communications Student Council and College Democrats, among others, are collaborating under the Montgomery Initiative Howard Chapter.

Their purpose is to rally and register voters, and to keep the student body and those in surrounding D.C. communities informed on the electoral process and political issues in this upcoming election.

Andrew Jones, President of the Johnson H. Johnson School of Communications Student Council, gave advice on how to make the Montgomery Initiative's goals more attainable by saying, "Other organizations should unite with us in our efforts to mobilize the entire student body."

During freshman week, Aug. 17-23, the Montgomery Initiative took action by informing the freshmen on the voter registration process.

"Freshman week was extremely successful," said Jared Smith, deputy director of policy and planning for HUSA. "We got a feel for how many of them were registered and were able to tell them about the need to fill out absentee ballots."

Smith, a sophomore economics major, added, "The first phase of this movement will be to get everyone registered then we will start our mailing cam-

paign and HUSA will serve as a hub to send mail in to complete absentee ballots."

As part of their campaign's motto "VIP: Voting is Power" they are ensuring that they will be visible on campus through handing out fliers, registration booths set up on campus, holding discussion forums, and hosting events such as the viewing of Obama's speech at the Democratic National Convention in order to increase voter participation.

"We need to march to the polls like they did 40 years ago during the Civil Rights Movement when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the protest march to Montgomery, Alabama demanding the right to vote," said Marquel Russell, a sophomore finance major.

Russell added, "The Montgomery Initiative can encourage everyone to vote and we need to have the same ambition and drive as they did during the Civil Rights Movement."

Students Advocating for Youth presented ideas including youth related topics as part of the framework of the structure of the Montgomery Initiative.

The organization will reach out to youth to increase awareness of issues about young people who can not vote and need to be represented.

They will accomplish this by going into D.C. communities through door-to-door efforts, and pamphlets. Alexis Logan is a Howard Law School student working for the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and advisor to SAY.

According to Logan, "Howard University has the advantage of having what we do become implications for the entire world."

She continued, "We are to empower people by educating them on who they are voting for. Through our work we will uphold obligations that people have died for."

For some students at Howard, this will be the first presidential election they can participate in.

"This is a great idea and opportunity as we are making history in this presidential election," said Merci Dixon, a sophomore philosophy major. "It is of the utmost importance that everyone exercises the right to vote."



Several campus organizations, such as HUSA and Students Advocating for Youth (SAY), are joining forces in order to register more voters and inform the community about the upcoming elections and issues therein.



# The Student's Guide to Absentee Voting

## Students, Organizations Prepare Campus for Absentee Voting in November's Presidential Election

BY OMARI EVANS  
Staff Writer

This year, college students will play a critical role in determining who will be the next president of the United States.

As Nov. 4 draws near, many out-of-state students are realizing they will have to fill out absentee ballots for their home states in order to vote. Filling out absentee ballots, however, remains elusive to some.

The first step in the absentee voting process is registering to vote, which can be done by downloading a voter registration application from any official state web site.

Each state has different requirements for casting an absentee ballot, including the variety of application deadlines.

For example, Rhode Island has the earliest deadline in the country—October 14—for mailed absentee ballot applications. Mississippi has the latest deadline at Nov. 3, the day before the election.

After obtaining the ballot, long distance voters must fill out, sign and send back the

absentee ballot to complete the process.

HUSA President Nicholas Owen believes the process can be simplified this year with the help of a Web site.

"HU is pushing the Montgomery Initiative, it's all online," Owen said. "All you have to do is go to [montgomeryinitiative.org](http://montgomeryinitiative.org), check your specific state and you will know everything you need for all the deadlines. Just everything is so easy."

The Montgomery Initiative is a nonpartisan group and was developed at Harvard University to "Create a sustained and serious participation in the electoral process and political discourse amongst minority students at Harvard and beyond," their Web site states.

Marquel Russel, The Montgomery Initiative Communal and External Affairs liaison for Howard University, says they will be hosting a Voting is Power (VIP) event this Friday on The Yard from noon to 3 p.m.

The goal of the event is to get everyone registered to vote and prepared to cast their absentee ballots. Many organizations such as Alpha

Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and WHBC plan to attend the event.

Other organizations such as the HU College Democrats and HU College Republicans are also working with HUSA and the Montgomery Initiative to ensure that all eligible students are registered and request their absentee ballots on time.

In addition, the HU Democrats will help students with absentee ballots on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week in Blackburn Center from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

According to political analyst Ron Jackson, absentee voting will not be as important as people think.

"It will play a minimal role," he said. Jackson believes it won't be a big factor because there is not a strong national plan set up to take advantage of the mailing program.

Nicholas Owen disagrees. "It will play a major role because you see a lot of college students now intrigued by the election and absentee voting will be the primary way for them to vote."

Cameron Lewis, Presi-

dent of the HU College Republicans, said, "As far as the HU voters are concerned, absentee voting will probably have a more negative effect on the McCain campaign, if any," Lewis said. "I say that only because the members of the Howard community seem to be overwhelmingly in favor of the Democratic candidates."

HU College Democrats president Amel Bennett-Judge encourages her fellow student Democrats to utilize absentee voting because, "The D.C. Electoral College vote is not too important for Obama's campaign. Therefore, it would be more strategic to vote out of D.C."

Owen and Lewis agree that the best way to help students complete their absentee ballots is through word-of-mouth.

"We all know that verbal communication is sometimes the most effective means of building enthusiasm," Lewis said.

Owen asks students to inform and encourage their friends to go online and to learn about the deadlines.



Voters make their way to the ballots on Election Day. Campus organizations will be preparing students to cast their absentee votes this November.

## State-by-State Absentee Voter Application Deadlines

State	Absentee Ballot Application Deadline	Ballots Due By
Alabama	Received October 30	Postmarked November 3
Alaska	Received October 25	Postmarked November 4
Arizona	Received October 24	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Arkansas	Received October 28	Received 7:30 p.m. Election Day
California	Received October 28	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Colorado	Received October 24	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Connecticut	No specific deadline	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Delaware	Received October 31	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
D.C.	Received October 28	Postmarked November 4
Florida	Received October 29	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Georgia	Received October 31	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Hawaii	Received October 28	Received by close of polls
Idaho	Received October 30	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Illinois	Received October 30	Received by close of polls
Indiana	Received October 27	Received by close of polls
Iowa	Received October 31	Received by 12 p.m. on November 10
Kansas	Received October 31	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Kentucky	Received October 28	Received 6 p.m. Election Day
Louisiana	Received October 31	Received November 3, 2008
Maine	No specific deadline	Received by 8 p.m. on Election Day
Maryland	October 28	Received by 8 p.m. Election Day
Massachusetts	Received noon November 3	Received before close of polls
Michigan	Received 2 p.m. November 1	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Minnesota	No specific deadline	Received by close of polls
Mississippi	At least two weeks before the election	Received 5 p.m. November 3
Missouri	Received 5 p.m. October 29	Received by close of polls
Montana	Received noon November 3	Received by close of polls
Nebraska	Received 4 p.m. October 27	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Nevada	Received 5 p.m. October 28	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
New Hampshire	No specific deadline	Received 5 p.m. Election Day
New Jersey	Received October 28	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
New Mexico	Received October 30	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
New York	Received October 28	Postmarked November 3
North Carolina	Received October 28	Received 5 p.m. November 3
North Dakota	No specific deadline	Postmarked November 3
Ohio	Received noon November 1	Received 7:30 p.m. Election Day
Oklahoma	Received 5 p.m. October 29	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Oregon	N/A	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Pennsylvania	Received 5 p.m. October 28	Received 5 p.m. October 31
Rhode Island	Received 4 p.m. October 14	Received 9 p.m. Election Day
South Carolina	Received October 31	Received by close of polls
South Dakota	Received 3 p.m. on Election Day	Received by close of polls
Tennessee	Received October 28	Received by close of polls
Texas	Received October 28	Received by close of polls
Utah	Received October 31	Postmarked November 3
Vermont	Received 5 p.m. November 3	Received 7 p.m. Election Day
Virginia	Received October 28	Received close of polls
Washington	No specific deadline	Postmarked November 4
West Virginia	Received October 29	Received by close of polls
Wisconsin	Received 5 p.m. October 30	Received 8 p.m. Election Day
Wyoming	No specific deadline	Received 7 p.m. Election Day

### Pros of Absentee Voting

- You get to participate in the electoral process of your home state.
- You will have the chance to get your voice heard.
- You could be the "swing" your state needs to solidify a win for either candidate.
- A vote in D.C. may not be as useful as a vote in an actual state.

## Things Every Student Voter Should Know

Myth #1- My vote won't count if I do absentee.  
YES IT WILL! Every single vote could make or break a candidate in an election.

• I'm not sure if I'm registered to vote or not.  
If you're not sure about your registration status, check your home state's Web site. Many states have the option for citizens to enter their driver's license numbers to see if they are registered.

Myth #2- I have to go through too much to get an absentee ballot.  
WRONG! Most states only require currently registered voters to print simple forms from the Web site and mail the form back to the state's voter registration office.

• I'm only 17; I can't register to vote.  
Yes you can! Seventeen-year-olds can register to vote, but must be 18 years old by the time November 4, 2008, rolls around.

Myth #3- I missed all the big registration days on campus, and I lost my Howard ID so I can't get into the lab to print out a registration ballot online, so there's no other way for me to register!  
WRONG! If you have exhausted all possible resources to get your ballot, then you can go to any D.C. Library (MLK in Chinatown), fire station or police station to pick up a registration form.



The "I Voted" sticker has become the necessary fashion statement on voting day. Be sure to check your home states Web site for more information on absentee voting.

- Compiled by Jada F. Smith, Nation & World Editor



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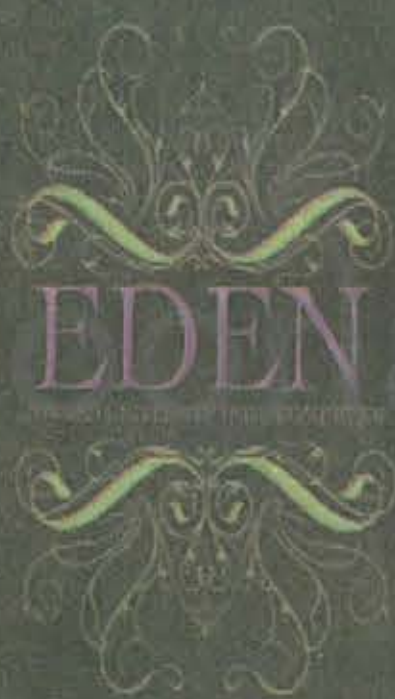
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As we launch the start of the planning and implementation of our initiative to  
Close the Achievement Gap, we want as many members of the community to "take-off"  
with us, and move forward towards Closing the Gap!

Food will be available for purchase

Mix and Mingle with Research Professionals, Graduate Students,  
Nonprofit Organization Leaders, Educators, and Community Leaders

We encourage you to **RSVP to Daphne Charles at [dcharles@level-ten.org](mailto:dcharles@level-ten.org)**  
with name, organization affiliation, and number of attendees.







No one looks back fondly  
on the time they spent in a parking garage.



When we lose a historic place, we lose a part of who we are. To learn how you can help protect places in your community, visit [NationalTrust.org](http://NationalTrust.org) or call 1-800-315-NTHP. History is in our hands.





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## FOOTBALL TICKET DISTRIBUTION

Get Your Tickets to the

Howard University vs. Florida A & M University

game on Saturday, September 20, 2008

Tickets will be distributed to validated students on a first come  
first serve basis:

DATE: Wednesday, September 17th and Thursday, September  
18th

TIME: 10:00 am until 3:00 pm

PLACE: Lower Level of Cramton Auditorium

Please bring your HU student identification card. If you are not  
validated in the Banner system, you **MUST** bring proof of



# Bison Softball Team Looks Impressive, Driven in Doubleheader Victory Over Hampton University

Courtesy Of Howard University  
Sports Information Office

When the Howard Softball Team departed in May from Ormond Sports Complex in Daytona Beach, Fla. it's safe to say that everyone was nothing short of devastated.

The 2007 MEAC Champions went to Daytona with plans of winning back-to-back conference championships.

The team included experienced players from that 2007 Championship team including senior pitcher Dale McNeal, the 2007 MEAC Rookie of the Year, outfielder Courtney Young and all conference third baseman, Kristina Cordova.

The team entered the 2008 tournament with the #1 offense and the #1 defense in the conference and appeared poised to make softball history.

As it would turn out, Daytona Beach would not play out the way Head Coach Tonja Braxton and her team had planned.

After knocking off both of the Florida schools in day one of competition and the two number one tournament seeds (Hampton and North Carolina A&T) being knocked out the first day, the Lady Bison found themselves on day two in two grudge matches with Delaware State and Norfolk State.

During the regular season the Lady Bison defeated the Hornets in two out of three contests at DSU and did the same to the Spartans down at Norfolk State.

However, the regular season would not be an indication of how the teams would perform in the post-season. When they needed their offense the most, Howard struggled to put together hits.

"We didn't hit timely, we didn't get bunts down and we didn't capitalize on opportunities to push runs across," Braxton said. "This was not one of our fastest teams, so manufacturing runs was not something that we had a lot of success with like last year. We were very much a stand up and hit team. We added insult to injury with bad base running," Braxton added.

Daytona Beach would come and go, and the Lady Bison would have to settle for a third place finish in the conference championship. In the months since, Coach Braxton and her staff have spent time replaying, reliving and re-creating those moments where, by her terms "we did not seize the moment."

The Bison softball team returned to campus in September 2008 with many new faces. Out goes Dale McNeal (P), Brienne Gutierrez (shortstop), Candice Tatum (2B), Mya Spencer (OF), and Fallon Jones (OF) who all graduated leaving rather large shoes to fill.

In comes the class of 2008 which includes three impact freshmen according to Braxton; Rebecca Kirshner, a middle infielder from Gaithersburg, Md., Ciera Gordon, an outfielder from Chattanooga, Tenn. and Trina Kindred, a utility player from Moreno Valley, Calif.

In addition, the Bison have secured the services of transfer utility player, Aisha Ledet who comes to Howard after spending the last two seasons at SWAC powerhouse, Mississippi Valley State.

Lastly, the Bison now have the services of last year's redshirts and transfers who had to do a year of residency; Carly Martin, a sophomore pitcher from Seton Keough High School in Maryland, Nicole Saez, a junior catcher from Arkansas-Pine Bluff and Tierra Maxwell, a senior outfielder from Mesa Community College in Arizona.

If Friday's performance is any indication, it appears that the Lady Bison are ready to reclaim their title as champions.

Howard traveled to Newport News, Va. with just nine players. This motley crew, without the services of All-Conference performers Cordova and Young, third year pitcher Christina McCoy, Maxwell and senior outfielder Sondra Jones, swept the Lady Pirates in the doubleheader.

Sophomore pitcher Jessica Hurston pitched a no-hitter into the 6th inning and ultimately went the distance in the 3-0 shutout while sophomore pitcher Carly Martin gave Hampton more than they could stand in her six innings of

work in game two. Emily Johnson closed the second game behind Martin.

Martin secured the 12-2 win. Offensively, all nine of the Lady Bison contributed in the wins. Saez led the way with five RBI while Johnson, Ledet, Jennifer Bien-Aime and Martin turned in strong appearances at the plate. Each of the Bison freshmen contributed with one hit apiece and added strong defensive performances.

Coach Braxton was extremely happy after taking both games of the doubleheader and had good things to say about her "motley crew."

"I think if you poll our team, they will all tell you the same thing...we choked in Daytona, nothing more, nothing less," Braxton said. "We had all the pieces in place, we were well rested, we had the team, but we just didn't take care of business."

Coach Braxton further went on to mention that the team had a lot of distractions last year (most of them self-inflicted).

When all was said and done she feels like the team lacked focus at some points during the season and lacked good internal leadership and accountability to each other at other points.

"We are doing some things differently this year and hopefully these things will make us more accountable to each other," Braxton elaborated. "There is no doubt in my mind that if this team stays focused, we can bring another championship here. If we lower our standards and accept mediocrity from each other, then we will again be sitting on the side, watching someone else play for our championship. That's just not what we want."

The team's self-proclaimed mantra for the year is without a doubt... "It's all about the ring!"

The Lady Bison return to action on Friday October 17 at 3 p.m. for the first Alumni Game in program history. After that, they will close their fall season with a tournament at Bowie State University on Sunday, October 26.



Lawrence Johnson - All Pro Photography

Sophomore pitcher Jessica Hurston winds up to throw a pitch against the Hampton Pirates. The softball team gave Howard fans some Bison pride after the football team's loss to their arch rival.



Lawrence Johnson - All Pro Photography

Freshman Emily Johnson gets her first collegiate hit against Howard's oldest rival Hampton. Johnson plays the infield and is from Jacksonville Florida.

## Howard's Tennis Team Rewarded by the ITA For Exceptional Performance On and Off the Court

BY ASHLEY JOHNSON-ALFORD  
Contributing Writer

Sophomore African-American Studies major Amato Nocera watched his father sweat profusely on the tennis courts growing up. Once he became old enough he decided to follow suit.

Enveloping himself in his newfound hobby, he laughs when he reminisces on his academic performance in high school or the lack thereof.

Now, twelve years later, he is one of four students named All-Academic Scholar-Athletes who have embraced the struggle of succeeding in sports and studies simultaneously.

The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) has given this title to student athletes at Howard for 12 consecutive years. This year Amato and alumni Neilabh Avasthi received the honor for men's tennis.

Alumni Courtney Dorsey and senior Whitney Ambush were awarded the honor for women's tennis. The award is given out based on how well students perform on the court as well as in the classroom. Bison head tennis coach Larry Strickland knows exactly how the program manages to continue to be recognized.

"As you know, this is the 12

consecutive year that our student-athletes have been recognized," Strickland said. "Every year we just try to recruit good tennis players as well as good scholars so that they can be successful."

Strickland places high expectations on his players to dominate on the court and in the classroom.

"[Academics] are very important for sure. That is something I have understood for a very long time now and that is something we plan to continue to teach," Strickland said.

In order to be awarded the ITA Scholar-Athlete award, the students must have attended an institution for at least one full academic year, won a letter on their team and held at least a 3.5 grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. With practice five days a week, prioritizing is necessary.

"Between practices and classes, they are hard to balance," Amato said. "I am taking 15 credit hours this semester and when I work out hard in practice earlier in the day, when I go to classes a little later on, I am very tired. By 7 o'clock, all I want to do is go to bed."

Although no mandatory study halls are put in place, the students must discipline themselves to achieve the grades they need.

"They are college students. Obviously they are required to stay on

top of their schoolwork," Strickland said. "But there are no required study times (only for freshmen). They have to study on their own."

For this reason, Amato has developed a solution for those nights where he fights sleepiness in order to complete his assignments.

"I spend a lot of time in the library," he said. "I usually put myself in uncomfortable situations to make sure I get my work done. For instance my desk chair is the most uncomfortable, so I sit there to do my work. You just have to discipline yourself. It's not that hard anymore."

In comparison to other sports programs on campus, tennis serves as a big time commitment.

"Tennis is a fall and spring sport and there is rarely any down-time for the players," Strickland said. "They are either in season or preparing for the season at all times."

Amato agreed whole-heartedly with his coach.

"I've played tennis for so long, I don't really know how to be a normal student," he said. "I don't like to go out to the same extent as other students. I socialize a lot though. I'm a people person."

In spite of the time commitments, Amato as well as his teammates have



Photo Courtesy of howard-bison.com

Senior Whitney Ambush was one of four tennis players named an All-Academic Scholar Athlete by The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA).

mastered prioritizing and continue to positively represent their school and program.

"I just make sure that we have good people," Strickland said. "This is

my 24th year working here and I'm still loving what I do because of the great people that continue to come through the program and do well."

## TODAY IN SPORTS HISTORY

September 17, 1937

The first NFL game was played in Washington D.C.  
The Redskins defeated the Giants 13-3.

Courtesy of [www.todayinsports.com](http://www.todayinsports.com)

Do you have a passion for sports and writing?  
If so, e-mail  
[thehilltopsports@gmail.com](mailto:thehilltopsports@gmail.com)





Tyrone Clemens - Staff Photographer

Graffiti imaging or lettering painted on public property began in Philadelphia and became popular in the 1980s along with the rise of hip-hop. There is still debate as to whether the drawings are a valid form of art or simply vandalism.

## Graffiti Remains Relevant to Artistic Expression

BY LAUREN McEWEN  
Contributing Writer

Despite numerous 'No Vandalism' signs and the threat of arrest, graffiti artists scale fences and dodge police in the name of their passion.

Facing opposition from law enforcement, community groups and business owners, graffiti artists continue to spray their works onto anything—from the sides of buildings and rail cars to freeway overpasses.

New pieces seem to appear almost daily in some metropolitan cities, causing some to wonder how this subculture has survived beneath this onslaught of negativity for more than 30 years.

"Graffiti and hip-hop are the only true art forms that came out of the '80s. It started as people caught on to hip-hop culture," said Joe Joe Webb, a graffiti artist who goes by the name of JoeX2.

"As long as hip-hop is strong, graffiti will be strong, surviving through the media as people use the style in their graphics and in their campaigns."

Influenced by his father, a painter from Trinidad, JoeX2 has had a successful career as a graffiti artist. He has created pieces for television shows such as "CSI: NY" and "Everybody Hates Chris," and he has recently done artwork for pop singer Natasha Bedingfield's music video for her single "Pocketful of Sunshine."

Graffiti is not a new concept. In fact, it has classical roots. It was common practice for ancient Greeks and Romans to scribble their names and thoughts onto bits of public property.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the term graffiti even originated from this time period, stemming from the Greek word *graphein*,

meaning to write; it is actually the plural form of the Italian *graffito*.

The connotation of vandalism that has become commonly associated with graffiti was not present until recent years, causing some to argue that the writing found in the catacombs of Rome and other ancient ruins cannot be classified as true graffiti.

"It's interesting to know that graffiti started that long ago, but it has to be against the law—that's part of its appeal," said Kellie Daley, a freshman biology major.

The history of modern-day graffiti, with all of the fence-hopping and late-night tagging, started in the mid-to-late 1960s in Philadelphia, Pa. Two "bombers" named Cornbread and Cool Earl wrote the first noticed works.

They covered the city with their names, gaining notoriety from the surrounding community and forming the beginnings of an entire subculture.

From Philadelphia, this new phenomenon trickled over to New York. Though there were a number of early writers, graffiti first gained the attention of the press when the mysterious tag, the signature of graffiti artist 'Taki 183,' began appearing in subway cars and on the walls of subway stations all around the city.

In 1971, the *New York Times* tracked down and interviewed the writer responsible for the tags, a youth from 183rd Street in Washington Heights, N.Y. named Demetrius (aka "Taki"), who penned his tag on anything that sat still while making his rounds as a foot messenger.

The publicity that graffiti gained from that *New York Times* article spawned a slew of new writers. Graffiti became competitive as writers searched for new

styles and more shocking locations for their work to get noticed.

It also marked the beginning of the perception of graffiti as vandalism. Store owners and politicians believed that this explosion of graffiti was defacing property, a sentiment still felt today.

"If I were a business owner and graffiti took away from the appearance of my building, I would be highly upset," said Nickia King, a sophomore biology major.

As graffiti becomes more prevalent in the media, some question whether or not "legal graffiti" can really be classified as graffiti art.

"Where do you draw the line between saying vandalism is graffiti or the legal wall that I just drew on isn't? It's in the eye of the artist. It's hard to draw the line," JoeX2 said.

Graffiti is not always viewed in a negative light by the public.

"It makes art more available to the people instead of hiding it away in galleries so that only the financially privileged get a chance to experience it," said Kristen Johnson, an undecided freshman.

JoeX2 cites an artist named Seen, who has been called the 'godfather' of graffiti, as one of his major inspirations as a graffiti artist.

"I didn't choose graffiti, graffiti chose me. I do everything there is to be done in graffiti. I'm a writer, a bomber, a tagger and an artist, and not just because I work on a canvas," JoeX2 said.

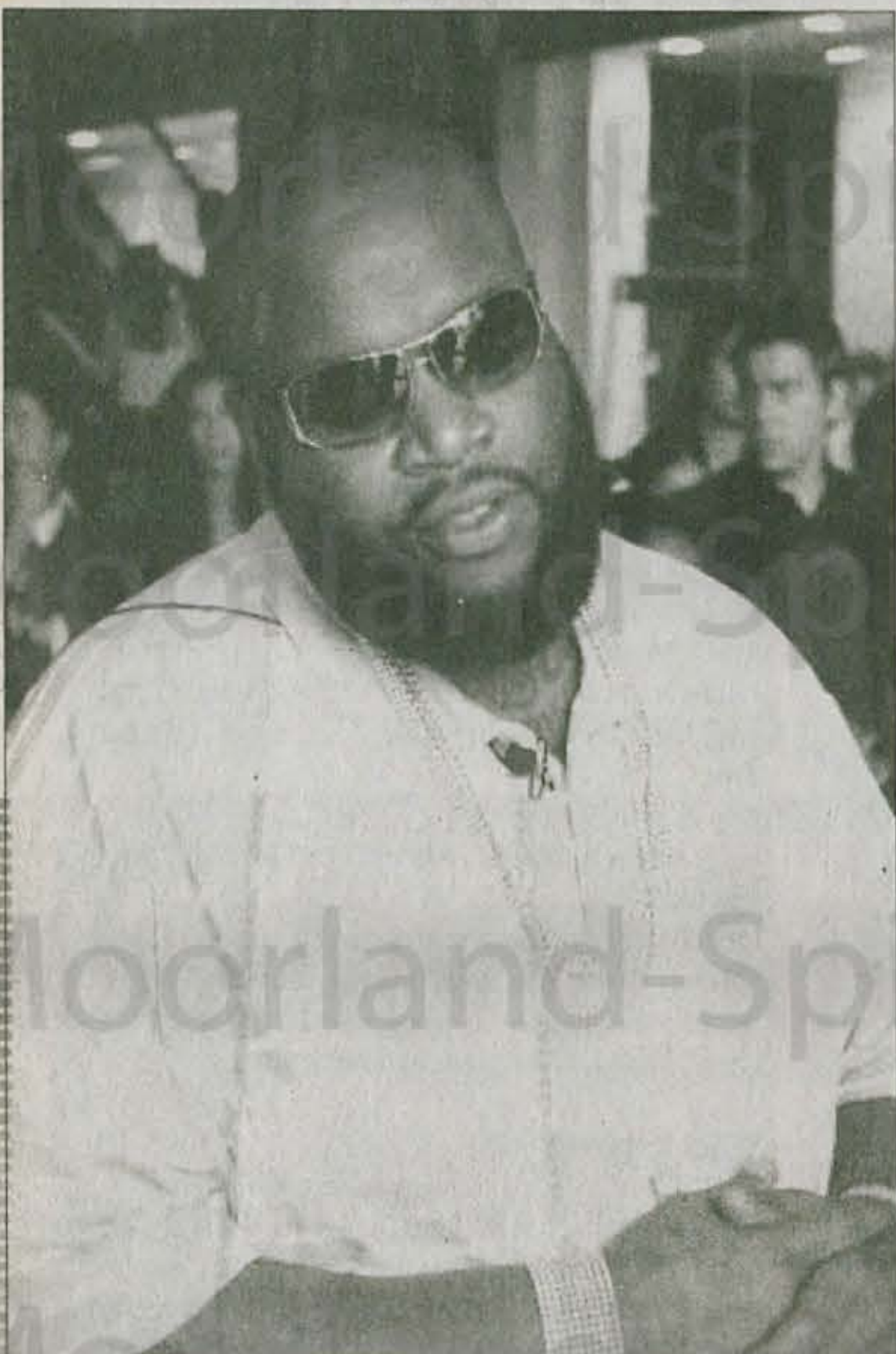
He continues, "Not everything I do has to be beautiful; it can be grimy and street."

Vandalism or art? As graffiti becomes more mainstream, it seems harder to distinguish between the two.



Photos Courtesy of JoeX2

Graffiti artist JoeX2 has done artwork for several popular shows, including "CSI:NY" and "Everybody Hates Chris." He says that "as long as hip-hop is strong, graffiti will be strong."



Rapper Rick Ross founded non-profit organization Rick Ross Charities, Inc. in 2006 to support at-risk youth. Despite their controversial music, several rappers are creating charities.

## Rick Ross Supports, Donates To Local Community Through His Rick Ross Charities, Inc.

BY ASHLEY STONEY  
Contributing Writer

Social consciousness has become the new black in Hollywood and Miami rapper Rick Ross is no exception to the trend.

Ross founded a charity group, Rick Ross Charities, Inc., in 2006 as a non-profit organization that serves at-risk youth in the City of Miami Gardens.

According to Rick Ross Charities, Inc. publicist Elora Mason, the mission of the organization is "to strengthen the lives of at-risk youth from all backgrounds and create diversity by providing solid resources through education advocacy, mentoring programs and financial resources to deserving students."

A major tenet of the organization is that it shall serve as a catalyst to inspire positive change. Thus, it creates and supports empowering programs that will help improve the well-being of today's youth.

A signature event the organization sponsors is the "Rick Ross Be Out Day," a day at the park with free food, health screenings and entertainment. Free school supplies and backpacks are also distributed at the event.

A native of Carol City—now the

City of Miami Gardens—Ross feels compelled to give back to a his hometown. According to Mason, the City of Miami Gardens leads Miami Dade County in homicides.

"Ross felt it [was] important for him to assist in the development of programs that would provide positive alternatives to children in neighborhoods such as Carol City," Mason said.

While rappers are criticized by the media for influential lyrics that demean women and promote violence, the formation of programs such as Ross' suggests that rappers do assume some responsibility concerning the state of their community.

Senior biology major Andre Porter states, "It shows maturity that rappers can rise to stardom, and even though a lot of their lyrics advocate drug use, they allow those lyrics to be purely lyrics and show the kids who listen to their music the right way to go about life."

"[Because] rappers [are] in a position in which they can influence so many people, I think it's necessary that they promote social change," Porter said.

Contrarily, some rap artists' lyrics contradict the message of their charities aimed to teach kids.

"While it is certainly commendable

for rap artists to give back, I strongly believe that the best way a rap artist can be socially responsible is by creating, maintaining and controlling the institutions that produce their music," senior finance major Josh Myers said.

He continues, "Coupled with a cultural philosophy that speaks to the need of the community, an artist-controlled industry will do more to affect change than any charity."

Several other rap artists have taken the same route as Ross and established their own organizations designed to support communities.

Nelly has a foundation called 4Sho4Kids Foundation, which is dedicated to improving the quality of life for children born with developmental disabilities.

Ludacris created The Ludacris Foundation in 2001, with a vision to inspire youth to live their dreams, uplift families and foster economic development in the community.

Last December, Young Jeezy created a week long toy drive in Atlanta during the holiday season, which included a bowling party, a toy drive at a local skating rink and a dinner at P. Diddy-owned restaurant Justin's.



# TopShop Brings London Style to the States

BY TAHIRAH HAIRSTON  
Contributing Writer

From the Spice Girls and "American Idol's" Simon Cowell to Leona Lewis, it seems that everything that comes to America by way of London has an influence on American pop culture.

Similarly, the American shopping experience is expected to be influenced by the arrival of TopShop, opening this fall on 478 Broadway in the SoHo area of New York City.

TopShop is a women's fashion retailer. TopShop owner Sir Phillip Green now has stores in 30 countries and 300 stores in the U.K. alone. The opening of the store in NYC marks the brand's expansion into America.

According to American publicist Kerry Youmans, the store is scheduled to open Nov. 17 and will be located in a district in direct competition with stores like Bloomingdales, H&M and Forever 21.

In a press release, Youmans stated, "The site in SoHo will not only house the hottest trend-driven pieces for men and women but will offer a host of services that ensure the shopping experience is as modern as the clothes."

Beyond the clothing and shopping services, TopShop also aims to provide a chic aesthetic.

"Fusing original features with modern materials, the Broadway store features

details such as raw brick, dramatic floor-to-ceiling windows on every level, glossy acrylic finishes and sleek walls and doors constructed in glass," Youmans said in the press release.

TopShop will have four retail floors and will also provide in-store services such as a stylist, tailor and a personal shopper who can deliver the hottest new looks to a customer's home with no obligation to purchase.

TopShop first opened in 1964 in the basement of a department store in England; since then, the store has won over a large consumer base. Topshop.com reports the flagship store in London attracts over 200,000 shoppers a week and over 700,000 shoppers online.

Freshman political science major Carolyn Smith said, "I would really like to go there because not only can you buy clothes, but it's like everything you need is in one location and it is in the fabulous city of New York where fashion is 'so fetch.'"

From the edginess of its Punk Couture collection to its famed clothing line by model Kate Moss and vast shoe department, the store aims to provide something for the unique styles of each of its shoppers.

"I really like the idea of the Punk Couture collection; I love things from that era [and] there should be more stores like this," said Zikia Jones-Martin, a fresh-



TopShop and TopMan, two London-based clothing stores, will be opening their first locations in the United States this fall in NYC.

man fashion merchandising major.

With its affordable and chic fash-

ion and VIP level for its celebrity customers, it seems the 40,000-square-foot store is ready to take America by storm.

TopMan, the male counterpart to TopShop, will also be tagging along to the Big Apple.

## Caught In Style

**"I think that if a guy has on a bow tie it speaks volumes of [him]...it shows that you're definitely bold..."**



**Who:** Pierre C. Whatley, sophomore, economics

**Caught:** In Douglass Hall

**What are you wearing?**

Navy-blue suit, Ralph Lauren  
Pink button-up dress shirt, Ralph Lauren  
Polka-dotted bowtie, Ralph Lauren  
Leather belt, Ralph Lauren  
Leather dress shoes, Grandma's Christmas present

**So do you dress up because you're in student government or because you just enjoy it?**

Actually, it's both. I do dress up a lot just because I think that it's what is required of me [since I'm] involved in student government. I think if you're going to act the part, you should definitely look the part as well. Also, I just like dressing up because where I'm from people tend to do that.

**Do you identify with McCain's style or Obama's?**

I definitely identify with Obama. But the funny thing is that Obama, when he first started out in this campaign, if you look at his earlier speeches and the way he dresses compared to the way he dresses now, he has stepped his game up in the style department.

**How do you identify with Obama's style?**

[I like] tailor-made suits or suits that just fit to your body. It's not so much just going to the store and buying a \$500 suit. It's the little detail[s] that matter; you know you can buy a simple suit but get it tailored to your body and get alterations and it makes the suit look that much better.

**Can you elaborate more on your bow ties?**

Let me tell the Howard man or just black men in general: Bowties definitely are a reflection of your personality. I think that if a guy has on a bowtie, it speaks volumes of [him] because it shows that you're definitely bold; you go against the norm.

**"I shop for sport."**



**Who:** Taylor Bryan, sophomore, economics

**Caught:** In Blackburn Cafeteria

**What are you wearing?**

Earrings, Bloomingdales  
Gold bangle, Aunt's closet  
Sandals, vintage store  
Purple floral dress, Duchess' Closet in Atlanta, Ga.  
Necklace w/ cross pendant, Apparel Mart

**What do you look for in terms of clothing?**

Mostly I look for things that I don't see other people in, and I look for a lot of stuff at vintage stores. A lot of stuff I take from haute couture because, I mean, it's not really stuff that you can translate directly; but if you look at it, [however], it just inspires you to certain styles or certain pieces you can pick up and put into a regular outfit.

**Where do you like to shop?**

I really love Annie Creamcheese and just a lot of the ones that you wouldn't expect, like a lot of the ones that are just run-down. I actually look for the ones that look like crap because you can find the best stuff in there, because nobody goes there.

**Do you have a budget when you go shopping?**

No, I never do that because then it's no fun. I shop for sport.

**What are your plans for the future?**

I want to be a corporate attorney and ultimately I want to start my own non-profit philanthropy organization, targeting inner-city youth.

**When and how did you make these plans?**

I [made them] because I've always worked with youth, but coming to D.C. was my first time working with inner-city youth. Seeing how drastically different they were from the youth I was used to working with made me really want to step in.

**"I just wear whatever."**



**Who:** Obinna Morton, senior, French

**Caught:** Outside of Douglass Hall

**What are you wearing?**

Shoes, Lost & Found  
Hair bow, gift from the girls she teaches dance to  
Dress, Georgia Ave. Thrift Shop  
Vest, revamped from old sweater  
Bag, made from old jeans from sister  
Scarf, Goodwill  
Shoelaces, flea market on Georgia Ave.

**How would you describe your style?**

I just wear whatever. Whatever I see people wear that I think is cool, I try to imitate. I think it's a mix of a lot of different stuff.

**Where do you usually shop?**

I shop at thrift shops or my mom or sister might give me clothes. Like, my brother just gave me a shirt the other day that I want to make into a Spider-Man dress. Mostly thrift shops though. I shop wherever. I got some of this stuff from ATL and I have some stuff from D.C. Wherever there's a shop, it's whatever.

**So you teach dance...where? And how did you get started?**

I teach dance across the street at Banneker [High School]. There was an ad in Blackburn and they were looking for an instructor, so I applied for it and got it. I teach ballet, jazz and hip-hop.

**What inspires you?**

Easy. [The] '80s all the way. There's Madonna, Michael Jackson, and Janet Jackson... '90s stuff, like how TLC looked real just thrown-together and how Aaliyah looked like a boy but a girl at the same time. [Also], the girls that I teach [and] people on Howard's campus because Howard has its own style, too; [Also] mainstream style and life, I guess.

- Photos and interviews compiled by Eboni Washington, Contributing Writer





Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez recently announced that there are Russian bomber planes in his country. Venezuela and Russia have become very vocal about their antagonism towards the U.S.

# U.S. Must Strengthen Alliances, Foreign Policy to Remain Powerful

America's reputation as "Big Brother" to the rest of the world is in jeopardy once again. Last Wednesday, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez announced the presence of two Russian bombers in Venezuela and that they should serve as a warning to the United States.

Chavez, a former paratrooper, said that he would be taking control of the air crafts while continuing to work with his Russian alliances.

Chavez also referred to the United States as an "empire" that neither he nor his country and its alliances are afraid to go up against.

Sean McCormick, the State Department spokesman, said that the U.S. considers these bombers to be "Cold War assets" and that we should be keeping a close eye on the military activity in Venezuela.

Since we are preparing to elect a new president, the state of our national defense is in a very vulnerable position.

Unfortunately, other countries who are used to being intimidated by our past leaders are tired of being bullied and are also aware of the vulnerability of this transition period.

For the past eight years, our foreign alliances and diplomatic affairs have been neglected and at times have felt nonexistent. For presidential nominees McCain and Obama, repairing diplomacy should be a foremost concern.

Although there is no current, serious threat to the United States, it is important for our government to realize that other countries do have military forces they are willing to use against us.

We are not the only world power anymore and we should stop driving countries so far away from us that they are willing to use bombs to attack us.

September 11 was a prime example of how another country can threaten our position in the world.

Instead of vowing to help other countries, we have become comfortable and blind to the fact that other countries are building alliances against us.

The ignorance of the Bush administration has left us in a situation we can not afford to be in for much longer.

The next president, whether it is Obama or McCain, should plan to improve foreign policy, strengthen alliances and restore diplomacy.

**Our View:**  
*America's position in the world is being challenged by new global power and the government should not take other countries and their threats lightly.*

Have an Opinion That You Would Like To Share?

Submit your perspective to [hilltopeditorials@gmail.com](mailto:hilltopeditorials@gmail.com)

Perspectives should be no less than 500 words.

# Daily Sudoku

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

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

DO YOU WANT TO WRITE FOR THE HILLTOP?

Come to our next budget meeting !

Sunday @ 6 p.m. in the West Towers

# THE HILLTOP

The Nation's Only Black Daily Collegiate Newspaper

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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.

The opinions expressed on the Editorial & Perspectives page are the views of the The Hilltop Editorial Board and those of the authors and do not necessarily represent Howard University or its administration.

The Hilltop reserves the right to edit letters for space and grammatical errors and any inappropriate, libelous or defamatory content. All letters must be submitted a week prior to publication.



## CLASSIFIEDS

**National Council of Negro Women Membership Drive**  
Sept. 15-19  
Lower Level Blackburn  
10 am - 3 pm

**Top Reasons to Join Heads Up**

Co-lead a classroom of 10 to 15 students  
Help K through 8th graders become better readers  
Use Federal Work Study or volunteer  
Develop valuable teaching and leadership skills

Gain firsthand knowledge of an urban school  
Form friendships with peers from other universities  
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**Living Stones Worship & Arts Ministry Interest Meetings**

M 9/8

W 9/10

F 9/12  
(Pick One)

Locke 244  
7 - 8pm

**All Talents Welcome!**

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\$12 or more per hour.  
Register free for jobs near campus or home. [www.student-sitters.com](http://www.student-sitters.com)

**Hey!**  
Have a zest for writing or photography and a love for the Mecca at HU?

**Join the 2008-2009 staff of the Bison Yearbook as a Contributing Writer or Photographer!**  
Volunteer Interest Meetings will be held in Blackburn G-06 on September 15, 2008

**Volunteer Photographer Meeting** will be held at 6:00pm

**Volunteer Writer Meeting** will be held at 7:30PM  
See you there!

**9/16/08 "BRYANT STREET BLUES" MR. AND MRS. CPNAHS PAGEANT 7PM, BLACKBURN BALLROOM**

*THE LADIES OF ALPHA CHAPTER, DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY INC. PRESENT'S*

**DELTA WEEK 2008**

*"AMPLIFY THE M.T.S.I.C.: MOTIVATION FOR UNPRECEDENTED SOLUTIONS TO INSPIRE CHANGE"*

SEPTEMBER 14, 2008

*CALL TO CHAPEL CRAMTON AUDITORIUM 11:00 A.M.*

SEPTEMBER 15, 2008

*"THE AMERICAN DREAM-ACHIEVING FINANCIAL FORTITUDE" DIGITAL AUDITORIUM 7:00 P.M.*

SEPTEMBER 16, 2008

*"DREAM CATCHER: GOALS, EXPECTATIONS, AND THE INEVITABLE CONCLUSION" DIGITAL AUDITORIUM 7:00 P.M.*

SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

*"ROUGE ET BLEU: THE 'WRITE' TO SAVE HAITI" BLACKBURN FORUM 7:00 P.M.*

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

*"EYES WIDE SHUT: THE REAL EFFECT OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL" DIGITAL AUDITORIUM 7:00 P.M.*

SEPTEMBER 19, 2008

*"A CHANGE IS GOING TO COME: MINORITIES ON THE HILL" TBD*

**The School of Business Student Council & UGSA Present...**

**Mr. & Mrs. School of Business Pageant Wed. Sept. 17, 2008 7pm - 9pm**  
Doors open at 6:30pm

**"HEALTH PROFESSIONS SOCIETY (HPS) WELCOMES THE CLASS OF 2012!"**

**ALL INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS SHOULD ATTEND OUR FIRST MEETING ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH FROM 5 TO 7:30 PM IN THE BIOLOGY BUILDING'S AUDITORIUM!**

**GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE. WE WILL HAVE FREE PIZZA AND SODA.**

**PLEASE RSVP BY JOINING OUR FACEBOOK GROUP OR SEND AN EMAIL TO CONTACT. [HUHPS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HUHPS@GMAIL.COM)**

Vocalist/Singers wanted: The Dawson Youth Community Workshop is looking for young adult singing voices (18-25). To work on C-D project. (Compensation available.) Lead & Background: Male or Female. Will be working with Writer, Arranger, Producer and Recording Artist, Gee. [www.gypsyman.com](http://www.gypsyman.com) Must have experience. Call Mr. Dawson (202) 882-1447

*The Ladies of Alpha Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Incorporated would like to you to join us in the fight against obesity for the 2008-2009 school year. The 1000 LB Weight Loss Challenge Initiative is open for all Students, Faculty, and Staff to sign up and visit us once a month to keep track of your weight loss. Location: Punch Out Date: September 18, 2008 Time: 12pm-2pm*

Alpha Eta, Chapter Gamma Sigma Sigma National Service Sorority, Inc. Presents: The Anatomy of a Rose  
9/15-9/17 Meet Gamma Sigma Sigma from 11-2pm Lower Level Blackburn  
Wed. 9/17 @ 6:52pm Informational - TBA

Thurs. 9/18 @ 6:52pm I am not my hair pt. II - Blackburn Rm 142  
Sat. 9/20 @ 7:45am Service Project Meet in front of West Towers

**J.H.J. School of COMMUNICATIONS Student Council Week**

**Monday Sept. 15th KNOW YOU'RE YOUR RIGHTS 7PM @ Digital Auditorium Blackburn Center**

**Tuesday Sept. 16th FRESHMAN MENTORSHIP MEET & GREET 7PM @ Drew Hall Lounge**

**Howard University DC, MD, VA, Club Presents**

**"Welcome To DC"**  
September 14 - 19  
Events are open to ALL students

**Monday - "Live DC" panel**  
Douglass Rm 116 7pm

**Tuesday - Game Night**  
Room TBA 7pm

**Wednesday - "DMV's Finest" Date auction**  
Douglass Rm 116 7pm

**Thursday - "DC Goes to the Movies" Movie Night**  
Douglass RM 116 7pm

**Friday - "How Well Do You Know" Meet & Greeter/Scavenger Hunt Conclusion**  
Punchout 3pm