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WEATHER

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Tomorrow:
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THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 92, NO. 68

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Tuesday, December 2, 2008



THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

HUSA Push Forces General Assembly to Step Up

BY JESSICA LEWIS
Staff Writer

The Howard University Student Association (HUSA) General Assembly has faced hard times this semester. After failing to reach quorum twice, the assembly voted to lower quorum as a temporary fix to the problem.

Ten representatives were named on the "McCarthy" List, as General As-

sembly vice-chair Corey Briscoe deemed it, after failing to attend two or more assembly or committee meetings. The 10 faced dismissal charges but assembly representatives halted the dismissal until a constitutional process could be drafted.

Former HUSA president, Marcus Ware, and current HUSA president, Nicholas Owen, have stepped in to recommend permanent solutions to the problems in General Assembly - the legislative branch of HUSA.

Ware plans to propose legislation at the General Assembly Constitutional Review Committee today.

"Officially, what my legislation does is make General Assembly the main legislature of the legislative branch," Ware said.

His plan would create two separate boards for programming: the Undergraduate Programming Board and the Graduate Programming Board. These boards will relieve some of the responsi-

bility from representatives who serve on both the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Associations, in addition to the General Assembly.

"The way General Assembly is structured really does not work," he said. "The legislative branch needs to be separated from a programming body."

This split will allow General Assembly to focus on enacting legislation

> See **GA**, page 4

Proposed Legislation:

1. Representatives elected to serve solely on General Assembly.
2. Create the Undergraduate and Graduate Programming Boards.
3. New boards chairs voted on during elections.

Chambers Leaves HU For Coppin State Univ.

BY ANGELA P. SMITH
Staff Writer

After 10 years of service to Howard University, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Franklin D. Chambers, will resign in January 2009 to accept an offer at Coppin State University. His future departure has led to a selection committee devoted to finding a new vice provost to replace him.

"It was a really tough decision," Chambers said. "I really love Howard, and all that it represents. The students here are phenomenal and my experiences have been extremely rewarding."

Following intense recruiting by a national search firm, Chambers was selected by Coppin State University as their new vice president for Student Affairs. The university recently appointed Dr. Reginald S. Avery as their president in January 2008, and he immediately began assembling a leadership team.

"He was looking for candidates who bring experience, vision and reputation in their stated fields of expertise," Chambers said of the president.

Chambers added that after an exhaustive search, both parties thought he would be able to enhance the national reputation of the institution and bring the desired leadership to the university.

"I don't want my statement to be a cliché, but they provided an offer that was difficult [and] near impossible to decline," Chambers said. "I think I have been able to accomplish some great things at Howard, and the university will forever be in my heart."

Student body president Nicholas Owen, a member of the selection committee, said they are in the preliminary stages of finding a new vice provost.

The duty of the vice provost is to improve the quality of life for undergraduate, graduate and professional students. This includes progressing residence life, athletics and other student activities.

"What I am personally looking for in a vice provost is someone who is approachable," Owen said. "This individual will bring a new perspective on the way student affairs should be run."

Owen shares the sentiments of many other Howard students. Chris Goodine, a sophomore business marketing major, said he also wants a vice provost who is easy to talk to and who is reachable.

"He should be visionary as well," Goodine said. "Student activities at Howard are static compared to other universities. I'll



Photo Courtesy of www.howard.edu
Franklin D. Chambers is finishing his tenure at Howard. He will start at Coppin State University in January.



Wreaths are hung and trees are decorated in the Louis Stokes Allied Health Library as Howard University prepares for holiday festivities

Bree Grant-Photo Editor

Howard Women Lend a Hand to the Homeless

Student organizations are reaching out into the community to make a difference

BY BRITTNEY MONCREASE
Contributing Writer

April Harvey, a senior sports medicine major, strolls down a side street with nine other ladies. It is 9:30 p.m., so Harvey and her friends are guided by the street lights. She carries a bag filled with food. Out of the corner of her eye, she notices a lady sitting on the ground outside a closed building. The woman is homeless. Moving closer to the woman, she notices her feet. Both

feet are badly swollen bringing meaning to the discomfort in her face. Harvey greets the woman and offers her the bag of food. With much gratitude, the woman accepts Harvey's offering. She explains her story of how she became homeless. After the woman shares her story, a tear streams down Harvey's left cheek. Feeling as though she has touched a life, Harvey walks away with a sense of warmth.

This holiday, Howard University's chapter of the National Council

for Negro Women (NCNW) is working to feed the homeless. NCNW volunteers, with Mr. Harold Gray of the Bethlehem Rebounders, and members of NCNW go out into the D.C. community and give food to the homeless. The group serves food in areas near Union Station and Pennsylvania Avenue.

"We are on the streets feeding them in their environment and their makeshift homes," Harvey said. "It's as real as you can get." Harvey serves as the community service chair

for NCNW. This has been an ongoing activity for the organization, but it has gained more supporters during this holiday. Harvey said, "They tell us thank you for the food and clothing. God bless you, and many open up to you about how they became homeless and what they are doing to get off of the streets."

For the first time, NCNW helped raise money for families for the holiday with NBC4. "We collected

> See **HOLIDAY**, page 4

Black Friday Successful Before Recession Declared

BY LINSEY ISAACS
Asst. Campus Editor

The United States is officially in a recession and, given the economic issues surrounding consumers this year, the success of Black Friday's revenue is not expected to last long, analysts say.

According to the National Retail Federation, more than 172 million shoppers visited stores or participated in online shopping this weekend, up from 147 million last year. Almost \$375 was spent per consumer on average, an almost 7 percent increase from last year.

Among the most expensive products sold included toys and electronics, leaving other items on the back burner.

"I actually had to work this weekend [for Black Friday]," said Dominique Clifton, a junior fashion merchandising major, who serves as a sales associate at Ashley Stewart. "It wasn't as crowded as it normally is, but corporate already predicted that because of the way the economy is."

Although this year's Black Friday created higher retail revenue than last year, retailers are still concerned that consumers will be less likely to continue

shopping into the holiday season. Consumer spending fell 3.7 percent in the third quarter according to a Commerce Department report Tuesday. The drop is the largest in 28 years and the first in 17 years.

Despite the low drive for consumers to spend money, surveys indicated almost 85 million consumers planned to shop online this year, bringing in Cyber Monday. "Online retailers have been planning their Cyber Monday promotions for months and are eagerly waiting to debut these deals to shoppers," Scott Silverman, executive director of Shop.

org, said in a statement.

The large crowds seen outside stores this weekend were significantly smaller than last year, and retailers noticed the number of shoppers decline after the morning of Black Friday. Most retailers plan to offer special promotions and discounts to lure in more consumers this year. Small businesses are similarly struggling to keep up their sales toward the end of the year.

"I heard they're extending [Black Friday sales] because they expected less people," said Rasheed Van Putten, a sophomore marketing major.



Jonathan Wilson - Philadelphia Inquirer

While students may be waiting in eager anticipation for the end of the semester, they may be greeted with long lines at the airport during the high-traffic holiday time.

Students Faced With Different Travel Expenses for Holiday

BY TAHIRAH HAIRSTON
Staff Writer

With the holidays quickly approaching, Houston, Texas native Brittany Jacobs will be traveling home for free. Unlike Jacobs, for many other college students, 'tis the season to be traveling on a budget.

"I paid \$500 for my Thanksgiving ticket so I feel that a free ticket is well earned, my stepdad's mother was very generous," said Jacobs, sophomore broadcast journalism major. "She gave me her free round-trip ticket."

There are many options for students to travel home, there is even a deal for college students with AirTran. AirTran allows college students to travel home for \$80 dollars each way but the catch is the flight is standby.

"Traveling with AirTran be prepared to have your arrangements before hand or you could possibly be waiting for a long time," said Brittany Dorsey freshman finance major.

"I'm driving to Virginia and I'm excited because it only costs me \$20 to fill up my tank," said freshman television production major Britany Wyatt. "When gas prices were up it cost my like \$40."

Gas prices are steadily falling but that still doesn't account for the fees of baggage check on airplanes and busses or turnpike tolls when traveling by car.

"I'm taking a Northwest plane home to Detroit, usually the ticket is around \$120 but this year I paid \$200," said Andrea White junior television production major. "I'm going to try to keep it to one bag so that I won't have to pay a checked luggage fee."

There is already a price tag on checking luggage with \$15 for the first luggage and \$20 for the second luggage but recently the New Jersey Turnpike plans to increase 50 cents this year and 90 cents by 2012.

"For Christmas, I bought my tickets in advance so it was \$10 round-trip to go to New York on the MegaBus," said Kenisha McIntosh, freshman hospitality management major. "I would advise people to buy their tickets yesterday, not it is approximately \$12 each way."

Timing is everything when traveling by bus, train, or plane.

"I have not bought a ticket but I am working on it," said Dominique Murdock freshman English major. "I was expecting prices to be very expensive but fortunately I found a flight with Northwest for \$132 round-trip."

Many students either find a decrease or increase in prices when purchasing tickets in advance.

"I'm paying less for a plane ticket this year compared to last year but I also booked my flight earlier like mid-November," said Courtney Green, sophomore human development major.

Flying all the way to Trinidad junior finance major Akil Cooper has found that prices depends on when your leaving and when your coming back.

"I paid \$800 for my ticket which is a little more expensive than last year but I bought the ticket later in the semester," Cooper said. "There are so many factors when it comes to pricing."

Some students such as freshman marketing major Datrianna Meeks noticed that flights were more expensive to go home for Thanksgiving than during Christmas break.

"I'm probably going to take a train home because I took the Chinatown bus home for Thanksgiving and it was 7 hours which is twice as long as it needed to be and the bus driver did not seem to know how to drive," said Christopher Pruden, senior exercise physiology major.

As the cost of traveling is a concern amongst many individuals, the time spent with family and happiness gained make all the cost worthwhile.

ON THE SPOT!

"To stay organized and stop procrastinating, and to put myself before others but not in a bad way though."

-Nkosazana Barton,
Junior
Pre-physical therapy

What is your New Year's Resolution?



"To stay focused on important things."

-Britni Williams,
Freshman
Print Journalism



"To live a healthier lifestyle."

-Allura Harris,
Freshman
International Business



"I am actually going to study."

-Lindsey Smith,
Freshman
Economics major



"The best of any opportunities that come in."

-Ian Clark
Senior
Math major



"To put more effort into my schoolwork in general."

-Kevin Moses
Freshman
Biology Major



-Compiled by Camille Augustine,
Editorial Assistant

Travel Price Comparison from 2007 to 2008

AmTrak Train Ticket

\$60-\$131-2007
\$68 -\$147 -2008
(11% increase)

Northwest Plane Ticket

2007: \$300
2008: \$400 with fees such as luggage check

Northwest Luggage Fees

1st luggage \$15
2nd luggage \$25
3rd luggage \$125
4th-10th luggage \$200
[for luggages that weigh no more than 50lbs.]

Gas Prices

2007: \$3.00 or more
2008: \$2.00 or less

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Holiday Season Brings About a Giving Heart in Howard Students

Continued from front, HOLIDAY

money to those unfortunate enough to do so for the holiday," Harvey said.

The ladies worked shifts and turned in the money they received at the end of their shifts. They stood outside Chinatown to collect money.

"What we did was we went to the Verizon Center and held up picket signs and buckets to collect money all around Chinatown," Harvey said. The group was featured on the news for their

service.

Another activity the group is doing special for the holidays is a dinner program for homeless women. There will be a specific staff cooking the food, but NCNW will be preparing the salads and arranging the plates. They will then serve the food. This event takes place Dec. 11.

Not only is NCNW celebrating the holiday in a new way, but the John H. Johnson School of Communications Student Council has the holiday spirit as well. Andrew Jones, a junior legal com-

munications major and president of the John H. Johnson School of Communications Student Council said, "We will be having a potluck banquet and volunteering in a local soup kitchen in celebration of the holidays."

Both of these events have never been done by the student council before. This community service project is different from past service projects the council has done.

"We are planning to open this service opportunity up to the entire coun-

cil family, which includes the students," Jones said.

Faculty is also allowed to join the students. The location and date of the event has not been determined. Jones hopes to continue the event in the future. "We are going to continue the legacy of community involvement to future generations of student leaders," he said.

He went on to say that these events are symbolic to the council's service commitment to the community.

The ladies of Alpha Chapter

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. are reaching out to the D.C. community this holiday as well. Victoria Reese, a senior legal communications major said, "We have 'Karoling Karaoke' and a coat drive." The organization will also be celebrating an annual fellowship.

Students of Howard University are doing new activities for the holidays. Even though they are celebrating among each other, they are bringing the holiday cheers to the community.

HUSA Undergoes Changes

Continued from front, GA

that will benefit the welfare of students while the programming boards focus on planning programs.

Constitutional Review Committee chair Rodney Hawkins said, "I cannot say that I completely agree with it, but what he is trying to do makes sense."

According to Ware, this piece of legislation has been discussed by HUSA officials for years and it also falls in line with Owen and HUSA vice president Kellen Moore's platform, "Taking it Back."

"When I was HUSA president, we always talked about splitting the programming from the legislation. I just sat down and started working on it. Hopefully it will get passed," Ware said.

Ware's legislation has won support from the executive branch of HUSA.

"I think a lot of student leaders have seen the issue of General Assembly in that it has never really been a productive legislative body. It is just the conception," Moore said.

Moore also believes the demand to plan programs and enact legislation renders General Assembly representatives overburdened. "We want to make sure that we support Marcus's legislation," he said.

He remains happy that Ware was able to create the legislation and believes his administration was too

focused on other student concerns to effectively address the problem.

"Our Policy and Planning Department is working on the Pan-African Summit, writing to the provost regarding the tuition and the recycling plan," Moore said.

The HUSA administration, however, took a different route in handling the General Assembly problem.

On Nov. 24, Owen formally filed a grievance against the legislative branch of his government.

In a Policy Board meeting held Nov. 5, corresponding secretary Lloyd Talley toyed with the idea of filing a grievance against the legislative branch of HUSA so the Policy Board, the judicial branch, could dismiss the representatives on the "McCarthy" List.

After Policy Board chair Charles Taylor decided the measure would be unethical, the Policy Board justices sent two letters. One was sent to Owen and another to General Assembly representatives.

Upon his return from Rwanda, Owen filed the grievance against General Assembly.

"As an executive branch, we decided the grievance was the best route. It is about holding people accountable," Owen said.

The grievance stated, "The Assembly has taken little action to rectify these egregious violations despite numerous opportunities. There-

fore, I am calling for an interpretation by the Policy Board of Article IV, Section 4 of the HUSA Constitution, as well as the automatic dismissal of any Representative who has violated these guidelines."

Article IV, Section 4 of the HUSA Constitution states that "All members are subject to dismissal after two unexcused absences of the General Assembly or their designated committee meetings."

According to Taylor, the Policy Board will now decide whether or not the representatives will be removed in a hearing to be held on Thursday in the Locke Hall in Smart Room 105.

However, immediately after the grievance was filed, Briscoe, General Assembly vice-chair, sent out an email to representatives so they could vote on the legislation drafted by Taylor that was introduced at the last assembly meeting.

The Policy Board did pass the legislation and added an amendment to General Assembly by-laws that specifies the process to remove and replace representatives.

"I do not think that the grievance provided a stimulus for us to introduce the legislation, but I do believe that it helped representatives realize the pertinence of getting it done," Briscoe said.

He believes that Ware's legislation will be vital. "We have to really get back to the heart of student advocacy," he said.

Obama Announces His National Security Team



Nancy Stone- Chicago Tribune(MCT)

While the announcement Sen. Hillary Clinton as the Secretary of State overshadowed his other appointments, President Elect Barack Obama announced his pick for U.N. Ambassador, Susan Rice (far right), and also announced that Robert Gates will stay on his National Security Team.

RES FEST 2009

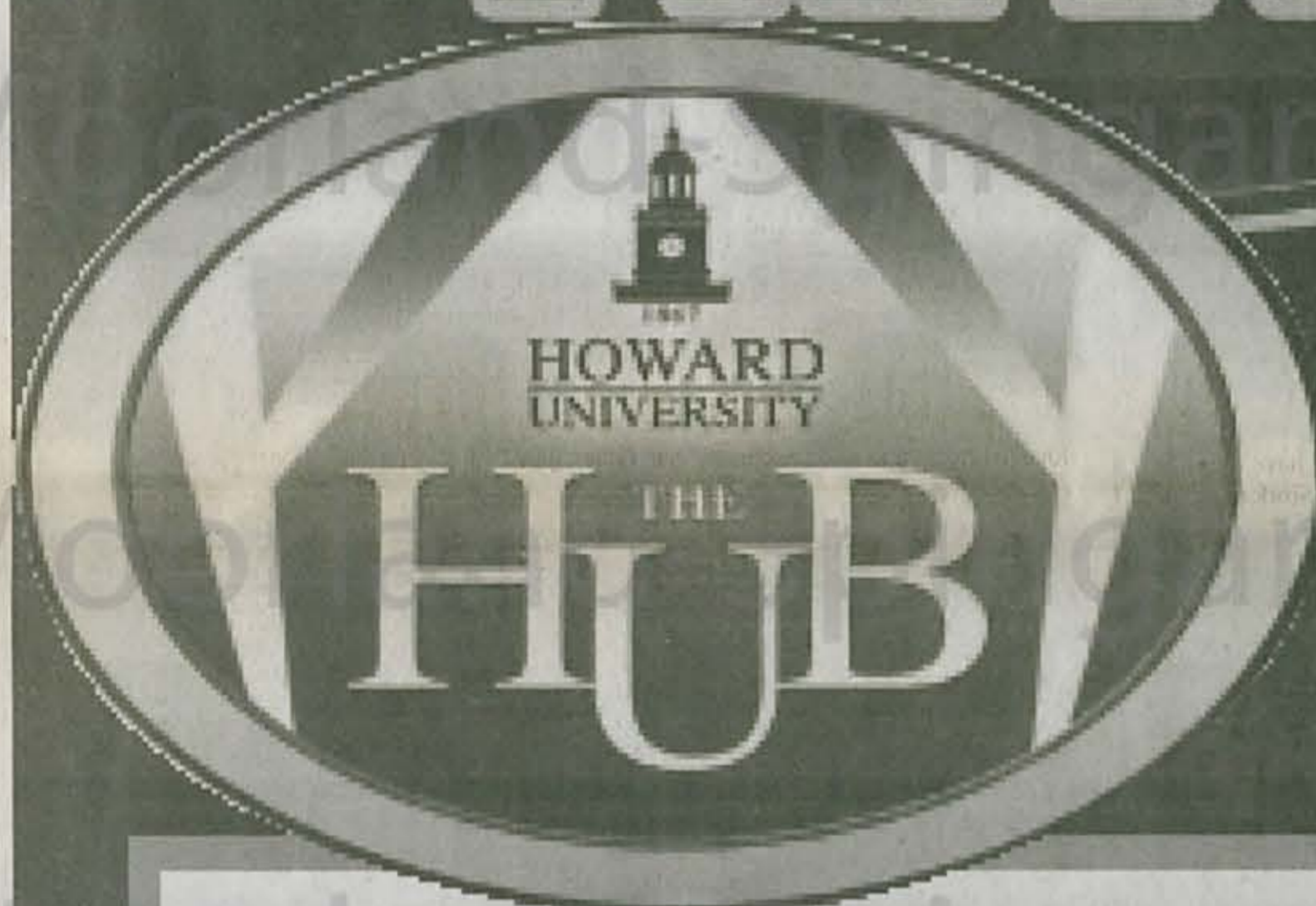
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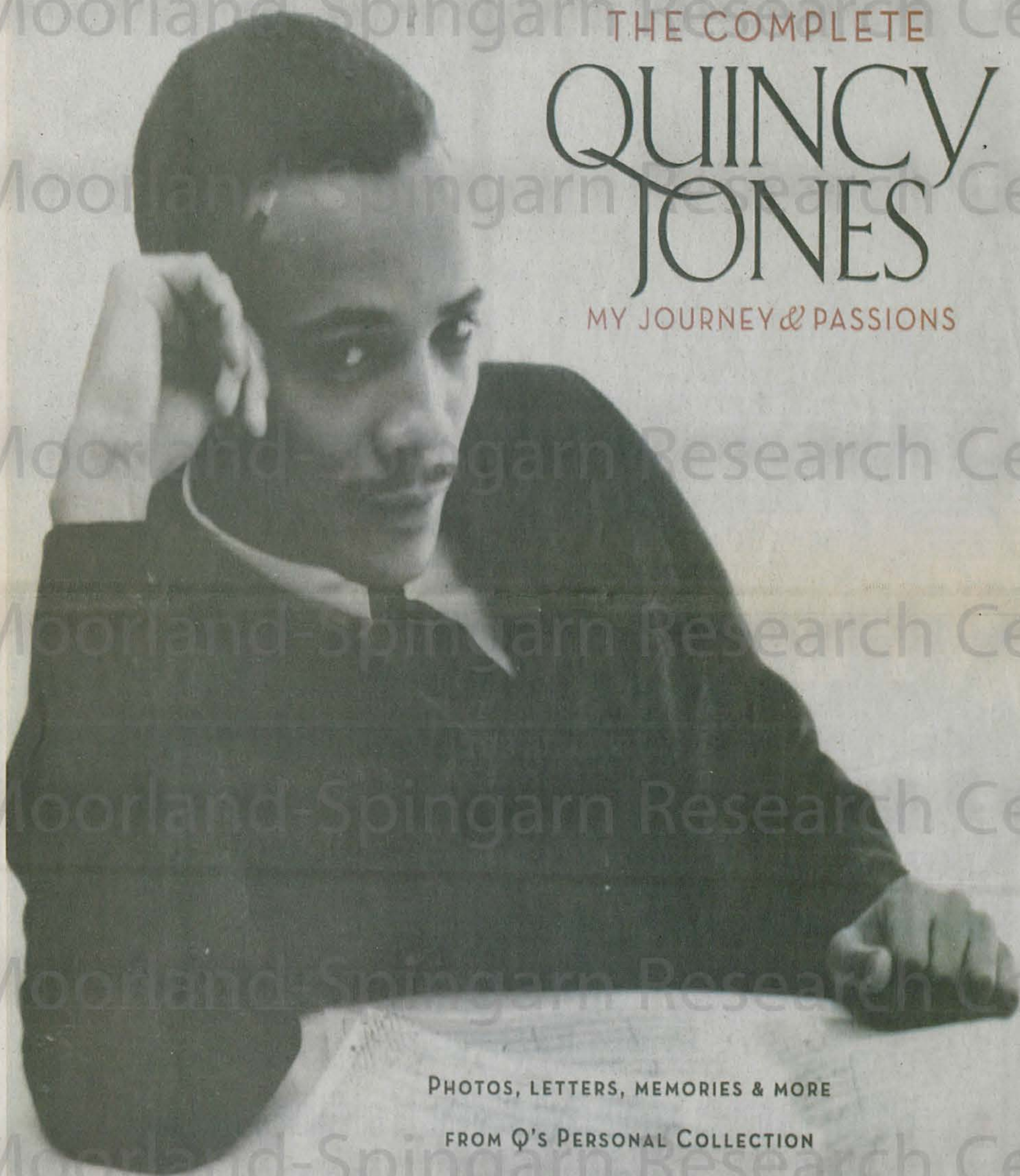
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Volunteering During Holiday Season Benefits Those in Need, Those Who Help

BY OLAJUMOKE OBAYANJU
Contributing Writer

As the year rounds up and the Christmas trees roll out, many Howard students are preparing for the holidays and adding volunteering to their to-do lists. Reaching out and helping the needy is a great way to kick-off the holiday season.

Ariel Jones, a sophomore advertising major, plans to volunteer during the holiday season.

"I think it's a great thing [to volunteer]; a lot of people aren't as fortunate as some of us, and I think it's our duty as citizens to give back during the holidays," said Jones.

Jones is one of the many students who finds alternate and creative ways to serve their community.

"I volunteer every week at a church with a Saturday program called 'Our House,'" Jones said. "When it comes to holiday volunteering, I like to do Christmas arts and crafts.

Several Howard students agree that volunteering ultimately is worthwhile. "It makes me feel great when I volunteer; the thing about giving back to the community is that it is a way of showing your appreciation for the things you've been able to accomplish and a way to help others," said Francis Roberts, a senior international business major.

This holiday season, Roberts along with his Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Beta Chapter brothers are hosting a coat drive for individuals in the area who don't have winter jackets this season.

"We're going to collect 102 coats for specific individuals, and we're doing

this in partnership with a neighboring church."

While going to a soup kitchen or donating money may not suit everyone, D.C. holds a variety of activities for those with a charitable spirit. "It's a good thing to help people who aren't as fortunate as we are, and the smallest thing like giving canned food helps," said Alexander Oladele, a freshman pharmacy major.

Rummaging through your closet and giving out the clothes you don't wear anymore could make a major difference to someone who doesn't have any clothes. Going to a local nursing home and bringing a small gift or just spending quality time with an elderly person with no family could brighten a day.

Whatever the case is, the holidays are times to be merry and to spread merriness to others; life is about helping and being helped.

"I always encourage people to give and help by just letting them know how fortunate they are and letting them know everyone else is not as privileged," Oladele said.



The Salvation Army is just one of the many organizations that chooses to help those in need during the holiday season.

Alan Kamuda-KMT

Black Friday Dawns on Local Mall

BY INNIS BUGGS
Contributing Writer

It was 5:59 a.m. and everyone was wide awake, "game face" intact and staring down their opposition. The sky gradually began to lighten—yet the sun was still nowhere to be found.

Standing in the Virginia cold outside Tyson's Corner Center, hundreds of anxious shoppers were anticipating the sights of red tag sales and plummeted prices in their favorite stores.

Robert Johnson, a mall security staff member, approached the glass window with a fear-filled grin, thinking he may be one minute away from being trampled.

"I was sincerely nervous. The duty of unlocking that door was not taken lightly," Johnson said.

Eventually 6:00 a.m. hit, Johnson timidly unlocked the mall doors and stepped to his right. Mayhem instantly ensued—Black Friday was officially in effect.

"I probably arrived here around 5:30 this morning and it took me about 20 minutes to find parking," said Elizabeth Sanders of Fairfax, Virginia. "This is an annual thing for me—nothing new—I expect the worse."

Not everyone was as prepared as Sanders. Some shoppers were overwhelmed by the event, many expressing their tension verbally and others even took it upon themselves to showcase some physical assertiveness. George Mason student, Jack Abrams, said he witnessed many frustrated shoppers.

"Two women were arguing because one bumped into another. But to be honest, it's almost impossible not to run into somebody in this place."

However, according to the majority of shoppers, the good outweighed the bad. An event dedicated to spoiling shoppers with deals, allegedly did just that. Stores like Aldo, Urban Outfitters and Express thrilled buyers by offering bargains tailored for the occasion. Arsiema Yeibio, a Howard University senior, found an assortment of good buys in several of her favorite stores.

"I definitely took advantage of the good sales at Aldo. Most stores I shopped at had sections featuring their sale items," Yeibio said.

According to Yeibio, there was no room for second guessing. Most of the mall's more popular stores were overwhelmingly crowded, and the most admired items were vanishing left and right.

"You have to make sure you are set on a decision because there is a strong possibility that it [merchandise] will be gone if you decide to come back," Yeibio said, adding that most shoppers were most excited to pick up deals on electronics.

The mall's retail employees have noticed some effects the economy has had on its consumers—compared to years past. However, these employees remain hopeful, judging by the nature of this year's crowd, the economy will not have a huge impact on this year's holiday season. Kristen Hamilton, a sales associate at Nordstrom, believed, if anything, the financial tribulations have created focus in most shoppers.

"Shoppers definitely have a mission this year," Hamilton said. "They are serious about finding the best deals. They are very budget conscious; they've done their research and then they'll go home."

Now in their second year of being apart, the couple has learned to cope with the regular absence. Both agree that, when home, they try and spend as much time as possible together and not really answer others' phone calls. And though each semester can be trying, Foster feels as though her relationship is worth waiting for. "It [the holiday season] feels fantastic because it gives me something to look forward to," Foster said.

So young couples, do not lose heart. Though the initial holiday season may seem a little less cheery without that special someone, through dedication and communication, anyone can overcome those dreaded "mistletoe blues."

Want to help someone have a happy holiday? Visit any of these charitable organizations Web site:

Capital Area Food Bank:
www.capitalareafoodbank.org

Toys for Tots:
www.dctoystots.org

Angel Tree:
www.angeltree.org

Salvation Army:
www.salvationarmydcmetro.org

Food & Friends:
www.foodandfriends.org

The Holiday Project: www.holidayproject.org

Love Is In The Air

Who: JC Penney
What: Sean Jean "Unforgivable" Cologne
Price: \$57

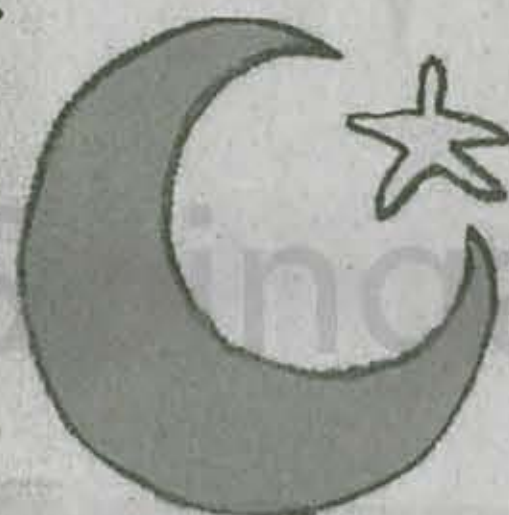
Out Of This World

Who: LunarLandOwner.com
What: One acre of land on the moon
Price: \$29.99

Weezy Tickets

Who: Ticketmaster
What: Lil Wayne Concert Tickets
Price: \$49.95

For Him



A Few of The Hilltop's Favorite Things



Luscious Locks

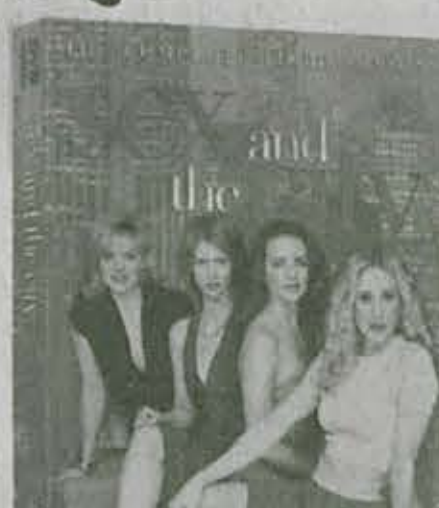
Who: Carols Daughter
What: Khoret Amen
Recipe for Gorgeous Hair
Price: \$43

For Her



So Icy

Who: Juicy Couture
What: Pave Leaf Stud Earrings
Price: \$48



City Girls

Who: Amazon.com
What: Sex & The City Season one through three
Price: \$60

-Compiled by Jada Smith and Danielle Kivateng

Under the Mistletoe: Why Winter Break May Be a Test for Some

BY CANDACE SMITH
Contributing Writer

For many students, the holiday season is filled with the happy anticipation of carols, television specials and good cooking that is to come. Students conjure up images of honey baked hams, sledding and mistletoes as they spend the entire time from Thanksgiving break up until Christmas break dreaming of the holiday season. For other students, however, the mistletoe simply does not smell as sweet, as many students will spend their holidays away from their significant other.

In Breanna Skinner's "Perceptions of College Students in Long Distance

Relationships" published in the Journal of Undergraduate Research VIII, an estimated 42 percent of all college students are in long distance relationships, "as defined by being able to see their partner almost everyday." With such a high proportion, one may wonder how exactly these couples maintain a stable relationship without daily physical contact.

Jonathan White, a sophomore theatre administration major, believes that even though physically being together is not possible, there are other ways of sustaining a healthy relationship.

"Communication is key," White said. "Hit them up everyday. Let them know you're thinking about them. Just because you're away doesn't mean there's no communication."

White has been with his girlfriend since February of freshmen year and admits the first time they were apart was not an easy time.

"Summer was hard but it actually helps the relationship because you can't depend on the physical. You have to find that common ground," said White.

He now feels like an old pro saying that the first time was the hardest but now it will be smoother.

Just as White knows calling often is important, studies support his claim of frequent communication as an integral component of a successful relationship. Studies show that "the greater effort made by the dating partners to maintain the relationship, the longer the relationship's stability," according to Skinner's

publishing.

Ryan Foster, a sophomore public relations major, had to learn about putting effort into a relationship the hard way. "I felt neglected," she said. "I felt like he didn't have time for me because he was living his own life."

Foster's boyfriend of 4 1/2 years, Cameron Saxton, a second year freshman at Eastern Michigan University countered by saying, "I wasn't neglecting her on purpose. It just happened though."

Though Foster could have been like some other girls by overreacting and assuming his negligence was based on infidelity, Foster never had those thoughts. "He never gave me any reason to doubt him. He's always been very honest and faithful," she said.

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

Perspective

A Resolution for a New Year Is So Last Year

So its almost that time of year again-when those stupid Christmas commercials make way for the stupid New Years commercials and everyone makes their resolution that sounds oddly familiar (most likely because it didn't get accomplished the year before.) But going green is in, so I guess there's no harm in recycling resolutions too.

Toward the end of December, I know I can always look forward to overhearing people talk about the brand new person they want to be in the next year or signing into Facebook and seeing it's a new year and I've got a new attitude, outlook or even academic major in statuses far and wide. But I'd like to know first: who cares? and second: what's the point of it all?

I'm not saying setting goals is cliché, but New Year's resolutions are a tradition, among many others, that I just can't respect anymore.

After all, people who typically wait for a new year to have a resolution end up having no resolve in the first place. After six months, less than half of adults with resolutions actually follow through on them, according to the Journal of Clinical Psychology. After the first week in a new year, a quarter of

adults with resolutions don't even remember them, so maybe we're better off keeping our goals to ourselves anyway.

Between the last night of one year and the first morning of the next, I feel like there isn't some moment of epiphany or metamorphosis that just magically changes the person you are into the one you want to be, knocking out those resolutions left and right. Aside from the hangover some might have from the New Year's Eve party, they're essentially the same person with the same capabilities as they had the night before.

So, why is there so much emphasis on changing ourselves to keep in time with the changing of the calendar year? I'm not saying we should all throw the whole slate out instead of wiping it clean every now and then, but maybe if people stopped putting pressure on themselves to improve something about their life starting at the very beginning of the year they would actually be able to do it in their own time.

Yes, there is a lot to be said for explicitly stating goals and working toward them (I mean, we are in college) but, do they always have to come at the same time each year? And do we really have to tell the whole world all about them?

When people don't know what you're working toward it takes the pressure off I've found, so New Year's resolutions are absolutely out of the question in that respect.

And I'm sorry, but bludgeoning someone with personal goals for the next year just seems so self indulgent, plus I would think airing our shortcomings to others isn't the most comforting way to watch the curtains close on another year.

I'd rather just watch 2008 go peacefully, thanks.

New Year's resolutions get the "Too Little Too Late In 2008" award in my opinion. I'm not pushing for a nihilistic New Year's, I'm just saying maybe this time we'll be better off setting goals to accomplish in our own time and keeping them to ourselves so they can actually get done-without the added pressure.

After a semester that's been "the L," not having a resolution this time around honestly sounds like a win-win situation, and staring down the barrel of Spring 09 semester I'm all about ending on a bright note-or something close.

- Phillip Lucas
Junior,
Print Journalism Major

Perspective

A 20/20 Vision Guided by Faith

Desmond Tutu reminded us that when the missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and Africans had the land.

The missionaries said, 'Let us pray and they all closed their eyes.'

When they opened them Africans had the Bible and the missionaries had the land.

'This quote speaks volumes to most African countries, especially Rwanda, a landlocked nation in eastern Africa known as 'the land of a thousand hills'.

This tiny country of 9 million is largely agriculturally based and has five volcanoes, 23 lakes and numerous rivers.

According to the World Fact book on religion 93.6 percent of the people identify themselves as Christian.

In the past, development was largely conceived of in economic terms.

More recently the concept of human development has come into focus emphasizing aspects of people's lives that go beyond the economic dimension, such as health care and education.

Human development should be understood as including the spiritual dimension of a person's life.

In July of 2000 the Rwandan government developed Vision 2020 which emphasizes how Rwandans envision their future and what kind of society they want to become.

It focuses on having universal education for all, a literacy rate of 100 percent, and laptops for every child.

It also details plans in the reduction in the infant mortality rate from 107 deaths per 1,000 down to 50.

The maternal mortality rate is planning to decrease from 1,070 per 100,000 to 200.

Malaria and other potential epidemic diseases will have been controlled and the AIDS prevalence will have been reduced from 11.2 percent to 8 percent.

This plan takes into account people's full range of resources, which include their spiritual resources to take into account ideas, practices, organizations, institutions, experiences and most im-

portantly a fundamental belief in caring about the well-being of every single member of their society.

VISION 2020 represents an ambitious plan to raise the people of Rwanda out of poverty and transform the country into a middle-income economy through appropriate measures.

Rwanda is on track to have the exclusive right to decide their own political, economic and cultural destinies guided by their RELIGION.

Just getting back from a trip to Rwanda with other Howard students, we all thought it would be a great idea to present what we saw, who we met and what we learned so that every Bison can be a part of something greater than them.

Come check us out tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. in the Blackburn Digital Auditorium. See you there!

- Nicholas Owen
Howard University
Student Association
president

THE HILLTOP

The Nation's Only Black Daily Collegiate Newspaper

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THE HILLTOP

2251 Sherman Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20001

(202) 806-4724 (Editorial)

(202) 806-4749 (Business)

hilltopec@gmail.com

hilltopbusiness@gmail.com

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.



Photo Courtesy of Nicholas Owen

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\$305/pp for 4 to a room, \$315/pp for 3 to a room, \$325/pp for 2 to a room

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