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RE: 2024 Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2024 Bayard-Rustin Audre Lord Breakfast.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on 23 years of service in educating communities about the life and contributions of Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast, and other activists.

The Rustin-Lorde Breakfast is grounded in Black LGBT organizing yet it convenes a multiracial, intergenerational platform for mobilization. The Bayard Rustin / Audre Lorde breakfast was founded in January 2002 to achieve the following goals: to provide attendees the opportunity to connect before participating in the Martin Luther King, Jr. March; to educate communities about the life and contributions of Bayard Rustin, Audre Lorde and other activists; to enhance mutual support and continued learning among participants working for social justice. Co-founder Roshelle Darlene Hudson conceived of the breakfast as a fellowship space for LGBT people to enjoy before joining the Martin Luther King Jr. March and Rally on MLK Day.

The work is necessary to promote the agency and well-being of people who are Black and LGBTQ or otherwise gender/sex non-conforming in the South. This annual event is held on the national Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday with the support of the MLK, Jr. March organizers, and is a precursor to the Atlanta MLK, Jr. march/parade.

On behalf of the City of Atlanta, I extend my best wishes for a memorable and successful 23rd celebration.

Keisha

Keisha Sean Waites Councilmember, Post-3 At-Large



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FULTON COUNTY

FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
141 PRYOR STREET SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

NATALIE HALL COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4



TELEPHONE (404) 612-8226
FACSIMILE (404) 612-0440
EMAIL natalie.hall@fultoncountyga.gov



January 8, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and residents of District 4, it is my sincere pleasure to welcome you to the 2024 Bayard Rustin/ Audre Lorde Breakfast. Now in its 22nd year, the annual Black LGBTQ+ signature event honors the legacies of civil rights pioneers and change agents, Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde through a culturally inclusive program that embodies Dr. Martin Luther King's vision of a beloved community.

I applaud The Southern Unity Movement, an Atlanta-based social justice organization and the official organizer of the annual Bayard Rustin/ Audre Lorde for their commitment to building a more unified Black LGBTQ+ community through advocacy, education, and recreation.

I encourage you to join me in supporting The Southern Unity Movement in their 22nd annual celebration of the legacies of Black LGBTQ+ Civil Rights Pioneers.

If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact my office via email or phone at Natalie.Hall@fultoncountyga.gov and (404) 612-8226. You have my best wishes for a productive and memorable event!

Sincerely,

natalee Hall

Natalie Hall Fulton County Commissioner, District 4





ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL atlantacouncil@atlantaga.gov

55 TRINITY AVENUE, S.W. SUITE 2900 ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

(404) 330-6030

January 15, 2024

Bayard Rustin/Andre Lorde Breakfast Southern Unity Movement, Inc. P.O. Box 10892 Atlanta, Georgia 30310

Re: Bayard Rustin/Andre Lorde Breakfast 2024

Dear Friends:

The Atlanta City Council is delighted to extend a heartfelt welcome to each and every one of you attending the Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast. Your presence at this celebration is a testament to the strength, resilience, and beauty that defines our Black LGBTO community.

As we gather on January 15, 2024, we come together not just to honor the legacies of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde, but to illuminate the stories and experiences that shape the rich tapestry of our shared humanity. These two extraordinary individuals have left an indelible mark on the path towards equality and justice, embodying the courage and conviction needed to challenge the status quo.

This breakfast is more than a mere event; it is a space for connection, understanding, and empowerment. It is a platform where voices, often unheard, can rise and resonate, weaving a narrative of love, acceptance, and inclusion. In these moments, we find strength in our diversity and unity in our shared commitment to building a more compassionate society.

The Atlanta City Council commends your dedication to creating a world where every person, regardless of their background or identity, can thrive and contribute to the vibrant mosaic of our city. May this breakfast serve as a catalyst for meaningful conversations, new connections, and a renewed sense of purpose as we navigate the path towards a more just and inclusive future.

In the spirit of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde, let us seize this opportunity to amplify the voices of the Black LGBTQ community and stand united in our commitment to a better tomorrow.

Best.

Atlanta City Council





City of Atlanta Councilmember Liliana Bakhtiari District 5

7 February 2024

My Dear Friends at Southern Unity Movement,

It is with great delight that I write to you celebrating the 22nd Bayard Rustin/ Audre Lorde Breakfast — a gathering that transcends the mere comforts of a warm meal and friends, offering a feast for the soul through nourishing conversations, shared ideas, and the richness of connection within our Black LGBTQ community.

This breakfast is a celebration of the intersecting identities within Atlanta's Black LGBTQ community, acknowledging invaluable contributions in the relentless quest for equality. In doing so, it elevates our shared commitment to inclusivity and the pursuit of social justice, creating a space where our community can join together in unity.

As a public servant, I am proud to be part of this community that champions diversity and equity, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all who continue to make this work possible.

May this year's Rustin Lorde Breakfast continue in its storied tradition as source of inspiration for all.

Sincerely.

Councilmember Liliana Bakhtiari

TROUBLEMAKERS



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AFFAIRS

It is my honor to welcome all the visitors and attendees to the 22nd Annual Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast on January 15, 2024 at The Loudermilk Center in Atlanta and what a great day for a breakfast on the actual birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Also want to congratulate and commend the breakfast host and organizer, the Southern Unity Movement, an Atlanta based social justice organization committed to building a more unified Black LGBTQ+ community through advocacy, education and recreation. This signature event is one of the highlights of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Celebration. It brings out civil right activist, social and human right activist, labor advocates, elected officials and community leaders, while honoring the legacy of two great pioneers of the civil rights movement, Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde.

The Rustin/Lorde Breakfast is truly what Dr. King vision of what a beloved community should be...

I look forward to attending the Rustin/Lorde Breakfast each and every year before the start of the Martin Luther King Jr. March and Rally which starts on Peachtree.

Again, a Big Welcome to all that will be visiting Atlanta and attending the Bayard Rustin/ Audre Lorde 22nd Annual Breakfast and participating in the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on January 15, 2024.

"Happy King Day"

Always

Representative Dewey McClain HD 109



KIMBERLY S. JACKSON District 41

P.O. Box 1411 Pine Lake, Georgia 30072

321-B Coverdell Legislative Office Building 18 Capitol Square, S.W. Atlanta, Georgia 30334 (404) 656-6882

Email: Kim.Jackson@senate.ga.gov



COMMITTEES:

Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Government Oversight Natural Resources and the Environment Public Safety

The State Senate Atlanta, Georgia 30334

January 15th, 2023

Good Morning,

As Georgia State Senator for District 41, it is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the 23rd Annual Rustin-Lord Breakfast. This event and the Southern Unity Movement highlight the value nearest and dearest to me- honoring the Black LGBTQ+ community.

As you spend this morning celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, connecting with activists in the LGBTQ+ world, uplifting the social justice work of the Black LGBTQ community, and learning more about the transformational lives of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde, I hope you will be filled with inspiration and activated to enhance your own lives of advocacy and social change.

The work that YOU continue to do in pursuit of multiracial, intergenerational unity and justice is a constant inspiration to me as I push for legislation that will lead to a more prosperous Georgia for ALL. Your activism, commitment, and determination are a daily reminder to me that hope is all around us in this fight for justice. Hope abounds, if only we take the time to acknowledge and celebrate it!

May your celebration of the strength of the Black LGBTQ+ community today and every day be filled with joy, hope, and unity.

In peace,

Fis. Jal

The Reverend Senator Kim Jackson



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

15 January 2024



KHALID KAMAU MAYOR@CITYOFSOUTHFULTONGA.GOV

Dear Southern Unity:

As one of the sons of the Rustin Lorde Breakfast, it is with greath pleasure that i welcome our distinguished guests to the 2024 Bayard-Rustin Audre Lorde Breakfast.

i want to take this opportunity to congratulate Southern Unity on 23 years of service in educating communities about the life and contributions of Bayard Rustin, Audre Lorde, and other activists.

The Rustin-Lorde Breakfast is grounded in Black LGBT organizing yet it convenes a multiracial, intergenerational platform for mobilization. The Bayard Rustin-Audre Lorde Breakfast was founded in January 2002 to provide community organizers the opportunity to connect before marching to commemorate one of the greatest organizers of all time — the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March.

On behalf of the great City of South Fulton, Georgia — Atlanta's twin city & the Blackest City in America, i extend best wishes for love, courage and success on this 23rd celebration of freedom & justice.

Yours always,

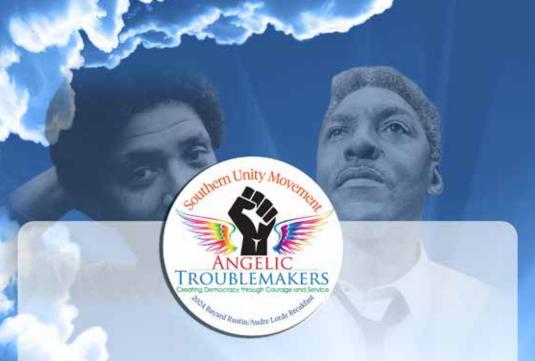
Mayor khalid

CITY OF SOUTH FULTON, GEORGIA

5440 FULTON INDUSTRIAL BLVD., 30336



yor khalid



The Governing Board, Staff, and volunteers of the Southern Unity Movement believe that the Rustin Lorde Breakfast is more than a single event, it is a commitment that we make all year long. Our team will continue to work and create inclusive events, thought-provoking programs, and long-lasting partnerships that celebrate our collective accomplishments, diversity, and resilience.

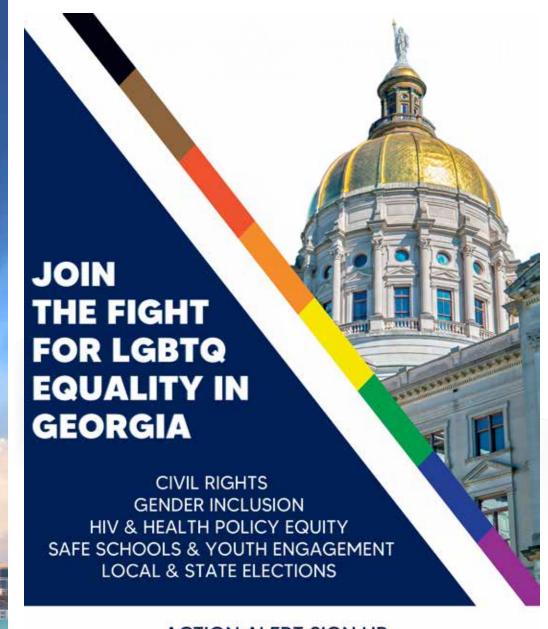
BOARD MEMBERS

R. Darlene Hudson, CEO & Founder

Maurice Robinson-Cook, Newly Elected Co-Chair of the Southern Unity Movement

Ashe Helm-Hernadez, Secretary

Gregory Allen, Newly Elected Finance Management Officer



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www.GeorgiaEquality.org/Join







CONGRESSWOMAN NIKEMA WILLIAMS GEORGIA'S FIFTH DISTRICT

Congresswoman Nikema Williams 100 Peachtree St., Suite 1920 Atlanta, GA 30303

January 15, 2024

Welcome to the 2024 Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast!

The Southern Unity Movement is an essential partner as Black LGBTQ Atlantans continue striving for true equality. Your work is writing the next chapter in the long civil rights history of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District. Everyone deserves to lead the life they want no matter who you love or how you identify. I am confident today's breakfast will inspire everyone to continue their advocacy toward that goal.

Thank you for your service on behalf of some of our most marginalized communities. I am proud to call you coconspirators for justice as you build on the legacy of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde. Don't hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do to support your work.

Yours for the People,

Nikema Williams Member of Congress



Welcome and thank you for showing up! The Rustin/Lorde Breakfast, now in its 23rd year, started with 50 participants and now hundreds attend. We are grateful we have persevered in the political climate we find ourselves in today, which has also seen decreased funding for community activism/building. We are here again, thanks to the efforts of our volunteers who contribute to planning, show up to help with programming, incredible presenters and artists, and great sponsors (see listed). Big props to our talented graphics designer, Maurice Robinson-Cook, who also became our new Co-Chair. As a Christian, I know the Lord has a hand in motivating me to continue the work of seeing that the Breakfast goes on each year.

I believe the Breakfast is needed now more than ever to not only remember and celebrate the contributions of Rustin and Lorde to civil and LGBTQ rights, especially for Black LGBTQ people, but to advance the type of activism necessary to continue to fight for those rights. In these times, we are living in an era where hundreds of harsh anti-LGBTQ bills are being introduced by state and local legislators, including bans on transgender sports and genderaffirming care for trans youth. Some have become laws. Violence against trans and gender non-conforming people, especially Black and other racial minorities, has been unprecedented.

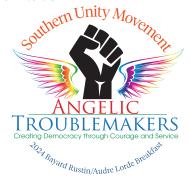
Right now, majority Black voting districts are being targeted by right-wing, racist groups and legislation in many states, especially in the south, to take away or discourage voting. According to Fair Fight, an organization that promotes fair elections, from 2010-18, at least 1 million voters were purged from the voting rolls. In the 2018 Georgia elections, thousands of absentee ballots were rejected or lost. Tens of thousands of voters waited in long lines, "missing work and other obligations, or leaving without voting because they could not afford the wait." This was especially the case for Black voters and students.

But let us also celebrate our victories, many of which came about because people organized, spoke out, and voted. In June, a judge overturned Arkansas' ban on gender-affirming care, and the Ohio governor vetoed a bill that would have banned most gender-affirming care in the state. Two Biden appointees, Kentanji Brown Jackson, the first Black female Supreme Court judge (2022), and Dr. Rachel Levine, who is the first openly transgender assistant secretary of health in HHS (2021), are serving at the highest levels of government. According to a June 2022 article in the Hill newsletter, at least 1,185 LGBTQ people are serving in public office, more than double what it was in 2017, and are more racially and ethnically diverse compared with elected officials overall. Yeah!

This year the Breakfast has adopted its theme around the words of Bayard Rustin who called us to action as "angelic troublemakers." He believed through the philosophy of non-violent resistance to injustice; America could become a democracy for all. As social justice and social change leaders and

influencers, we must continue to show up and speak truth to the issues that confront us daily. In other words, WE must create the democracy we want to see. So, as they say in the church of our elders, "members don't get weary," we have much work to do.







Attendees, guests, and colleagues—welcome!

Thank you for joining us in celebration of The Rustin/Lorde Breakfast, now in its 23rd year. We are proud once again to host all of you this morning for breakfast as we come to honor and celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our team of "Angelic Troublemakers" responsible for organizing this event have outdone themselves. As Co-chair of our organization, I extend gratitude to the crew for investing their energy and creativity to provide a top-notch event. I also am grateful for the leadership of our Chairperson Roshelle "Darlene" Hudson. Her leadership and drive is inspiring and infectious. I am a better man working alongside her.

Leadership is a challenging yet rewarding commitment. Our goal is to create a unified community with the definitive purpose to "TAKE UP SPACE"!! We hope that by the end of this event, you will consider joining this beloved community. During this event, we encourage you to make connections that help you feel included. If I can be of any assistance in this endeavor, then please feel free to reach out.

Our agenda features expert guidance and research to help us better understand the dynamics of leadership and community-driven projects. We believe that promoting diversity, acknowledging struggle in your community, and fostering a climate of encouragement and healthy exchange are foundational for effective leadership. Our intention is for you to find this event helpful in moving you toward your ideals in your community involvement.

So I invite you to sit back, enjoy yourself, and spread love throughout this day as we celebrate Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde our premier "Troublemakers"

God Bless You Always,

e. Maurice Robinson-Cook

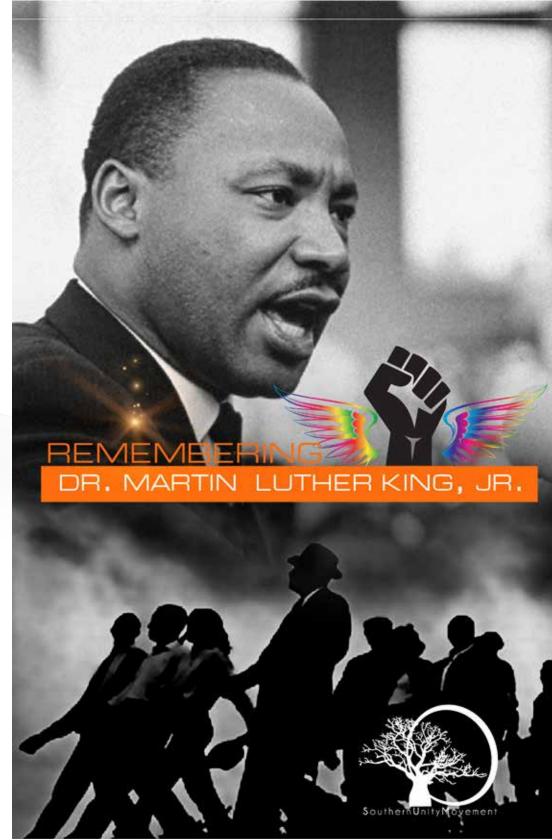
e. Maurice Robinson-Cook





Creatina Democrac

Post Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast



Congratulations
to the Southern
Unity Movement's
RustinLorde Breakfast
for 23 years of
celebrating the
legacy of Audre
Lorde and Bayard
Rustin.





Ms. Tori Cooper, BA, MPH, SGE (she, her, hers) is HRC's Director of Community Engagement for the Transgender Justice Initiative and a Health and Equity Consultant. She is among the highest ranking transgender women in the US government as a member of PACHA, the President's Advisory Council on HIV and AIDS. Tori brings a long history of fighting for health and financial equity for those whom traditional systems have failed.



Ms. Cooper earned a Bachelor's degree in Human Services and a Master of Public Health degree. She is founder and executive director of Advocates for Better Care Atlanta, providing capacity assistance, curriculum development, and multi-disciplinary trainings for large and small organizations. She is a certified national trainer and Subject Matter Expert with the CDC and also a Public Health Advisor. Over the last thirty years, Tori has built a reputation for excellence as it pertains to increasing visibility, access and opportunities for Black people, people living with HIV and transgender communities. As a proud, Black transgender woman who aims to inspire through excellence, she is dedicated to improving health outcomes and advancing policies that bring greater equity for marginalized communities.







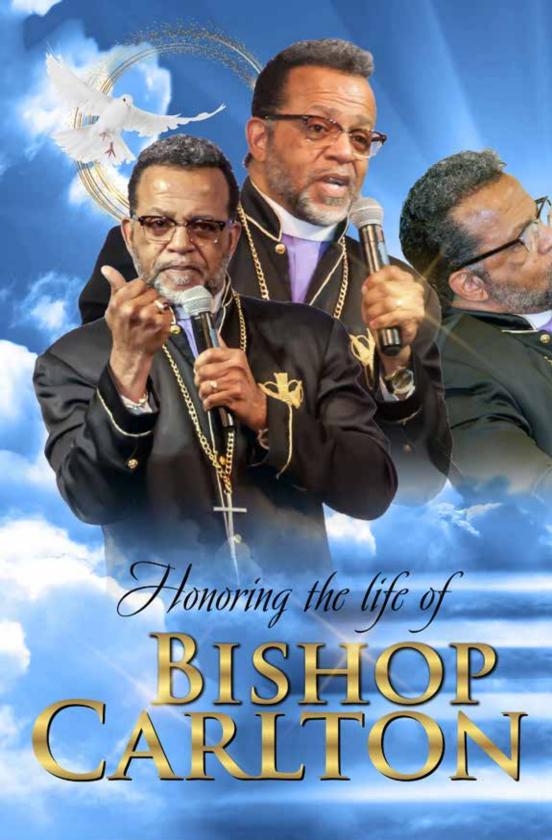
Debut Memoir is A Love Letter to the Georgia Cities that Shaped Her By Darian Aaron

To non-Southerners, existing at the intersection of Blackness and queerness in the South can be perplexing, especially to those who subscribe to the idea that freedom from oppressive systems for queer people is only a coastal reality. But Raquel Willis, a celebrated trans activist, journalist, and author of the new memoir "The Risk It Takes To Bloom—" and an Augusta, GA, native, makes it clear that the South has all the necessary "ingredients" to develop revolutionary leaders.

Willis is one such leader. Her journey unfolds in "Bloom," describing how she grew up in a Catholic home, then college as a University of Georgia journalism student, coming to terms with her sexuality and gender identity, to becoming one of the most formidable Black trans activists in history.

In "Bloom," Willis writes about the impact of her father's death at age 19 and her parents' response to her coming out as gay and later as trans.

"I had to come to an understanding that, in some ways, there was a lesson in his passing," Willis said." And the lesson was that life is too short, and I needed to figure out my path. And also, I needed to be able to relinquish his



March 19, 1953 - November 19, 2023

Acknowledge the passing of Bishop Carlton Pearson on November 19, 2023, at the age of 70. The nation and world, particularly the Black LGBTQ community, are indebted to him for bringing forth the Gospel of Inclusion, even at the risk of losing everything he had accomplished. At the height of his preaching, he had one of the largest ministries in Tulsa numbering in the thousands, hosted a national religious television program that reached millions, counseled two Presidents, and had friendships with prominent evangelists Black and white. He lost his church, lost his prominent backers, and more, but held onto his integrity.

Bishop Pearson questioned the belief in hell and damnation and called on us to look at human behavior as the cause of much of our suffering. He refused to condemn people based on their sexuality, preached inclusion, and asserted that God loves us all which he covered in his book, "God is not a Christian, Muslim, Jew or Hindu...that God Dwells with Us, in Us, around Us, as Us."

He was a man ahead of his time, and yet a man for these troubled times. His legacy lives on and is preached each Sunday by affirmative voices of love and inclusion. Rev Carlton Pearson, your work is done on this earth, and we have all benefited from your prophetic voice. It's time for us to carry on. May you peacefully rest.

PEARSON



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Program

9:00 am - Doors Open

9:30am - 10:45am - Breakfast

11:00 am - Opening Ceremony Emcee Ms. Tori Cooper

Program Flow

Introduction of our Emcee

Welcome from the SUM Board of Directors

Greetings from MLK March Committee and Elected Officials

Recognition & words from our sponsors

Movement is Art Entertainment

Tim'm West

Special Presentation & Community Dialogue *Moderated by Monica Simpson*

Presentation from Youth Space

Recognition of the Planning Committee & Volunteers

Community Closing

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US



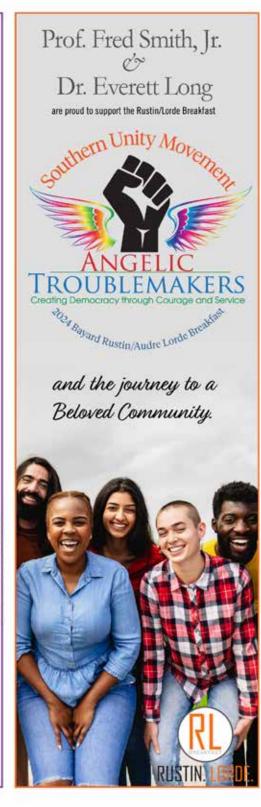




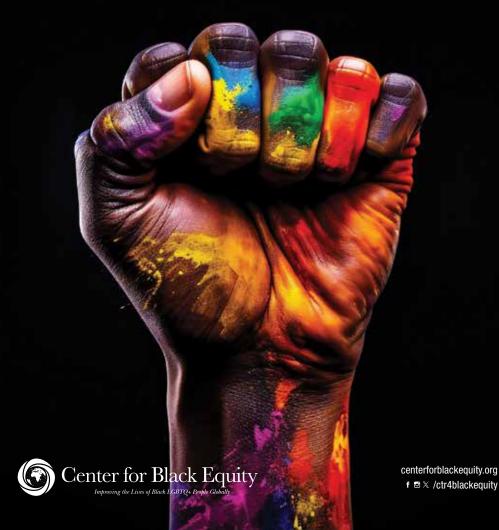


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continued from page 17

expectations. [And by doing so], I was freed up to understand my transness and womanhood."

We're all transitioning

While Willis often speaks of lessons learned from her mother, supporters received a rare opportunity to hear directly from the Willis family matriarch about lessons learned on her journey raising a trans daughter during the Atlanta stop on the "Bloom" book tour last December.

"You have to listen," Marilyn D. Willis said. "I've been a mom now for 44 years, and I don't take it for granted. I've learned so much from Raquel. I've been transitioning too," she said.

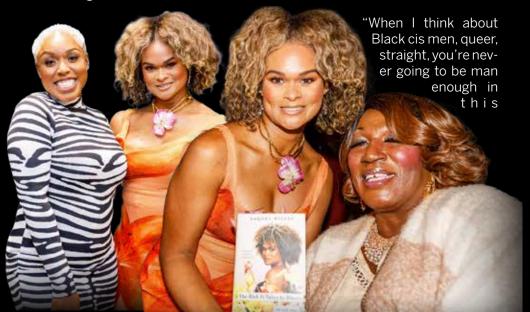
Marilyn D. Willis said she's adapting to evolving language around gender identity.

"I'm learning to co-exist comfortably and to allow my daughter and her community, our community, to continue to thrive. If you truly love someone, it's unconditional," Marilyn D. Willis added.

"God didn't say love thy neighbor as thyself but peel away that which is not like you. We're all different, and I appreciate differences. If we were all the same, it would be a boring world."

Willis says the restrictive ideals imposed upon her by society about how she was expected to navigate the world are not only hurting trans people but cis people, too.

"Trans and nonbinary folks give us a glimpse of what's possible when you let all that s**t go," said Willis.



white supremacist society because you will never be able to live up to those ideals set before you, and that's what we have in common, so let's own that together," Willis said.

"And similarly, when there are Black cis women who think that Black trans women are trying to take their spot. No, honey. I love you in your spot. I want you to get your tens. You deserve your tens, and I deserve mine, too," she added. "But you will never be able to live up to these ideals around womanhood in a white supremacist society either. So, let's figure out what we're going to do with that. Can we own that by being Black, we're inherently gender non-conforming?"

With the release of "Bloom," Willis adds a specific Black Southern experience to the trans literary canon—one that she hopes will "plant seeds to leave the soil richer for those to come."

"I want folks to understand their inherent power. We don't have to accept the path laid out for us; we can build our own," Willis said. "And honestly, building your own thing is a glorious revolution."



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Timm Tallest

Tim'm T. West (he/they) is an educator, poet, youth advocate, and hip-hop artist who is a graduate of Duke University (BA), The New School for Social Research (MA), and Stanford University (MA). Tim'm served as an inaugural faculty at Oakland School for the Arts, impacted outcomes as an English teacher and basketball coach at Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School for Public Policy (DC), and as Director of Youth Services at Chicago's Center on Halsted. For nearly a decade Tim'm served as the Director for Teach For America's National Prism Alliances, advancing safer and braver classrooms for LGBTQ educators and students in grades preK-12. Bringing together his Hip Hop, poetry, and commitment to healing, Tim'm launched the Brave Educator podcast in 2020 and is moving into its third season. After 8 years serving on its advisory board, in January 2023, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights announced Tim'm as the Executive Director of its LGBTQ+ Institute where he focuses on advancing the freedoms of LGBTQ+ folxs, with an emphasis on the U.S. South.





SCAN ME



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Presented by Southern Unity Movement (SUM)



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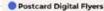




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"Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation." - Coretta Scott King

We've made the case for equality for more than 25 years in the South and 50 years nationwide. Visit us online to see how the work continues.

Thank you to the Rustin/Lorde Breakfast for continuing to gather us to fight and laugh together.

More information at:

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Gold Level









Bronze Level



Fred Smith Jr. Everett Long Jr.

Patron Level





Freedom Marcher



SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL VOLUNTEERS

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Roshelle. Darlene Hudson, MSW, CEO & Founder
Maurice Robinson-Cook, Co Chair & Board Chair
Ashe Hernadez – Secretary
Gregory Allen, MBA- Finance Manager Officer

Community Chairs /Officers of the Rustin Lorde Breakfast

Tracee McDaniels Children Space Coordinator
Sir Jesse McNulty – Youth and Children Coordinator
Dr Jillan Carter Ford – Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator
Monica Simpson – Program Development Coordinator
Felicia McCoy – Marketing & Social Media Coordinator

Current Community Planners

Dr. Y. Falami Devoe
Dr. Funmi Tyson Devoe
Nathen Akinyela
Rick Thurmond
Jon Ivan Colter

Friends of Rustin Lorde

Dr. Sandra Jones Stefanie Steele Javier Akil Perry Brown Anare' V. Holmes



Horis A. Ward - Fairview Chapel and Fairview Memorial Gardens

