

SouthernUnityMovement

Powerful Together

2025 Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast

Unafraid & Ready for Change

MONDAY JAN. 20, 2025

The Loudermilk Conference Center | 40 Courtland Street Atlanta, GA 30303



WWW.SOUTHERNUNITY.ORG

Gilead Sciences is proud to support The Bayard Rustin Audre Lorde Breakfast



For more information,
please visit
www.Gilead.com.



JON OSSOFF
GEORGIA



300 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 20, 2025

The Rustin-Lorde Breakfast
Southern Unity Movement
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Friends,

Congratulations to you all on hosting the annual Rustin-Lorde Breakfast.

This Breakfast is a testament to your dedication and the bonds of your community, and I am glad you are able to join together in celebration.

While I regret that I could not be there with you to celebrate, know that you are in my thoughts, and I am appreciative of the work you all do for the people of Georgia.

Please feel free to reach out to my office if we can ever be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Ossoff".

Jon Ossoff
United States Senator

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND THE LAW

NAN GROGAN ORROCK
District 36
206 Washington Street, SW
420-B State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: (404) 463-8054
Fax: (404) 657-9728



COMMITTEES:
Appropriations
Finance
Health and Human Services
Higher Education

E-mail: Nan.Orrock@senate.ga.gov
Twitter: @SenNanOrrock
Facebook: SenatorNanOrrock

The State Senate
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
January 20, 2025

TO: Southern Unity Movement Co-Chairs R. Darlene Hudson & Maurice Robinson-Cook

I am pleased to welcome all those assembled for the 24th Annual Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Community Breakfast. With the evocative theme, "Powerful Together: Unafraid and Ready for Change," the Southern Unity Movement continues in its laudable and essential mission to build a unified Black LGBTQ+ through advocacy, cultural education, and multi-gender intergenerational participation.

This annual gathering began more than two decades ago, thanks to the vision of Darlene Hudson who brought together the initial effort, small but mighty, to engage this community in an annual event on King Day that lifted up the bold leadership and contributions of Bayard Rustin, who stood against homophobia, racism, and anti-communism, and went on to make heroic contributions to the civil rights movement. It was Bayard Rustin who took the concept of the National March for Jobs and Freedom, won others, including Dr. King, to embrace his vision, and proceeded to orchestrate the historic mobilization that brought a quarter of a million people to Washington, the largest assemblage at that time that our nation had ever witnessed.

I participated in that march on August 28, 1963, and, like countless others, was forever changed by the experience that reshaped my life and my priorities, and committed me to stand on the right side of history. It is my hope on this historic holiday, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that those of you who chose to be here, will be energized and inspired to follow these historic leaders on the path they have blazed.

In these critical times, with fascism actually threatening all that we hold dear, finding the courage to stand up, to speak up, to get in good trouble, is how we fight together. Energized by those who came before us, we can fight to achieve a fuller democracy, with a place for all at the welcome table! Now is the time! We are the ones we've been waiting for!

Warm regards,

Nan G. Orrock (she/her)
State Senator, District 36

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
Children and Families
Health and Human Services
Public Safety

The State Senate

Atlanta, Georgia 30334

To the Friends and Partners of Southern Unity Movement,

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the 2025 Annual Rustin Lorde Breakfast, an event that champions the values I take into the Georgia State Capitol every day.

This morning, more so than ever before in recent history, we have the opportunity to not only connect with other activists in the Black LGBTQ+ community, but to energize this movement as we enter into four years of uncertainty. As we begin this MLK Day together in unity, we take time to celebrate and acknowledge the dedication and impact of two powerhouse leaders in our nation's history- Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde.

Bayard Rustin's life of economic, civil, and human rights activism was an incredible testament to the knowledge that when we come together in nonviolent protest, we have tremendous power to affect great and lasting change.

"We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers."
~Bayard Rustin

May you continue to be that group of angelic troublemakers, pushing ever forward for a more just world.

Through her written word, Audre Lorde dedicated her life to speaking truth to power- a powerful example of unconventional protest in the face of sexism, racism, classism, and homophobia.

"Without community, there is no liberation."
~Audre Lorde

May this community be a beacon of hope for others around this city, this state, and indeed the world.

In peace and power,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly S. Jackson" with a small cross-like mark at the end.

Kimberly S. Jackson
Georgia State Senator, District 41



ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

MATT WESTMORELAND
COUNCILMEMBER
POST 2 CITYWIDE

ATLANTA CITY HALL
55 TRINITY AVE SW, SUITE 2900
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

January 20, 2025

Dear Friends,

On behalf of all my colleagues on the Atlanta City Council, a warm welcome to the 24th Annual Baynard Rustin/Audre Lorde Community Breakfast!

It is wonderful to be together this evening to celebrate the remarkable legacies of civil rights architect and activist Baynard Rustin and equal rights activist, feminist, warrior, and poet Audre Lorde.

As a lifelong Atlantan and proud member of our City's LGBTQ+ community, I am so grateful to Co-Founder Roshelle Darlene Hudson, Co-Chair Maurice Robinson-Cook, and all those at the Southern Unity Movement for their efforts to build a unified Black LGBTQ+ community through advocacy, cultural education, and fostering multi-gender, intergenerational participation.

These last few months – and especially today's inauguration – is a vivid reminder of our collective responsibility to build a society where our young people can love themselves for who they are— without denying their identities or questioning their self-worth.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to each of you who work every day to help build an equitable, inclusive, and diverse Atlanta for all who call this incredible city home.

Please reach out if I can ever help from City Hall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Westmoreland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Matt Westmoreland
Atlanta City Council Post 2 Citywide
404.408.0980 (cell)



City of Atlanta
Councilmember Liliana Bakhtiari
District 5

Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast

20 January 2025

Southern Unity Movement, Inc.
P.O. Box 10892
Atlanta, Georgia 30310

My Friends,

I am thrilled to welcome you to this year's Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast. Your presence here today is a celebration of the strength, resilience, and unapologetic beauty of our Black LGBTQ+ community.

Today, we gather not just to honor the groundbreaking legacies of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde but to uplift the voices and stories that define who we are—diverse, bold, and unyielding in our pursuit of justice. These two icons blazed trails that continue to guide us. They didn't simply imagine equality—they fought for it, showing us what it means to live authentically and lead with courage.

This breakfast is more than just a gathering. It's a space where we connect, build, and empower each other. It's a moment to lift up voices that have too often gone unheard, to embrace our shared humanity, and to remind ourselves of the power of love and inclusion. Together, we weave a narrative that celebrates diversity and strengthens the bonds that hold us together.

The Atlanta City Council sees you. We celebrate you. And we're in awe of your commitment to shaping a city where everyone—no matter their identity or background—has the freedom to thrive.

In the spirit of Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde, let's make today not just a celebration but a call to action. Together, we'll amplify Black LGBTQ+ voices, honor the beauty of our community, and stand united in building a better tomorrow.

With love,

Councilmember Liliana Bakhtiari



Southern Unity Movement

Powerful Together

2025 Bayard Rustin/ Audre Lorde Breakfast

Unafraid & Ready for Change

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

Roshelle “Darlene” Hudson, CEO & Founder

Maurice Robinson-Cook, Co-Chair

Ashe Helm-Hernandez, Secretary

Gregory Allen, Finance Management



ROSHELLE DARLENE HUDSON

CEO & CO FOUNDER

Greetings and welcome to the 24th annual Rustin/Lorde Community Breakfast. What a year it has been! I've always tried to be an optimist, but the election of 2024 was such an emotional roller coaster. The hateful and dangerous rhetoric directed at the LGBTQ+ community, especially our trans sisters and brothers, was frightening on so many levels. Immigrants were targeted as well. It was particularly disheartening that the attacks came from many prominent leaders, especially those running for office or elected officials, who should be about serving the people and bringing them together.

Trust, trans people and the LGBTQ+ community didn't bring about high food prices, high rents, and voter suppression, nor sign-off on taking away women's rights over their own bodies. News flash, there's no significant link between crime and migrant populations across the states (see American Immigration Council, Brennan Center, National Institute of Justice). Yet many voters ignored facts and voted—or didn't vote—based on false information. Unfortunately, we've seen this before in history where a power-hungry few single out the race, religion or sexuality of a minority group as the reasons for their nation's problems. It has also led to increased violence against those groups. Our differences are exploited.



Unafraid & Ready for Change

Audre Lorde reminded us that difference is not a reason to hate nor fear the other. In her book of essays, *Sister Outsider*, she said, “It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.” At the same time, I know we undoubtedly have differences of opinion on many issues. However, we cannot let a few single issue lead us to ignore the other things we can work on together to benefit us all. Here again, Lorde reminds us, “There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

While it’s okay to be focused on our individual needs and desires to enjoy life’s freedoms, live safely, and be treated justly—everyone else deserves those things too. Some respected voices that have called for the just treatment of all members of society have said, “Liberty and justice for all,” in our pledge of allegiance, Psalm 37:28 declares, “The Lord loves justice; he will not forsake his faithful ones,” and Rev Martin Luther King Jr so eloquently said, “injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Most people attending the Breakfast likely agree with those quotes about justice. But this election reminds us, there’s a whole lot of people out there who don’t. Some may even be family members or neighbors. I’m of the opinion that we have to find a way to talk about our differences.

10

No, we’re not going to win everyone over. Some people are strongly committed to sowing seeds of divisiveness and violence. Naturally, as social justice activists, we have to hold onto our principles too, which are grounded in the belief that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. If we don’t continue to fight the good fight, then we give power over our lives and the lives of the people we care about to those who want to erase our history and deny us our fundamental freedoms. Our very survival depends on us building bridges and forging alliances. For we are definitely more powerful together.



Wishing you peace and strength for the road ahead.

Roshelle “Darlene” Hudson
CEO & Co-Founder
Southern Unity Movement, Rustin/Lorde Breakfast

SONG

SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND



We believe that
social movements
are one of
our main *hopes for*
liberation.



Unafraid & Ready for Change

WELCOME

Attendees, Guests, and Colleagues,

On behalf of Southern Unity, it is with great pride and joy that I welcome you to the 24th Annual Rustin/Lorde Breakfast. Our theme this year is Powerful Together: Unafraid and Ready for Change! As

we gather here today, our community shines with the spirit of unity and resilience, reflecting our commitment to celebrating and supporting one another.

This event stands as a testament to the remarkable legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose vision of equality and justice continues to inspire us. Today, we honor his contributions alongside the enduring strengths and triumphs of the LGBTQ+ community. It is a time for reflection, celebration, and renewed dedication to the values we hold dear.

We are thrilled to host such a diverse and vibrant group of individuals who demonstrate every day the power of love, courage, and action. Your presence here today is a powerful reminder of the progress we have made and the importance of continuing to strive for an inclusive future for all.

Let us enjoy this opportunity to connect, share stories, and strengthen the bonds that unite us. Welcome to a day of inspiration and fellowship.

With warm regards,

Maurice Robinson-Cook
Co-Chair
Southern Unity Movement, Rustin/Lorde Breakfast

Co-Chair Maurice Robinson-Cook

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR LGBTQ EQUALITY IN GEORGIA

CIVIL RIGHTS
GENDER INCLUSION
HIV & HEALTH POLICY EQUITY
SAFE SCHOOLS & YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
LOCAL & STATE ELECTIONS



ACTION ALERT SIGN UP

To sign up for GE Action Alerts, stay informed on breaking news, and receive notices on when your elected representatives need to hear from you, go to:
www.GeorgiaEquality.org/Join



EQUITY



The **Center for Black Equity** is steadfast in creating and promoting a global network of LGBTQ+ individuals, allies, community-based organizations and Prides dedicated to achieving equality and social justice for **Black LGBTQ+** communities through **Economic Equity**, **Health Equity** and **Social Equity**.



centerforblackequity.org
f @ /ctr4blackequity



**CELEBRATING 55 YEARS
OF PRIDE IN 2025!**



JOIN NOW!

**HELP SUSTAIN PRIDE BY BECOMING A
FOUNDING MEMBER OF OUR 70 CLUB!**



ATLANTAPRIDE.ORG
OCTOBER 11-12, 2025 | PIEDMONT PARK



PURPOSE. PASSION. POWER.

Marcia S. McNeill

We salute Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde alongside Dr. King on this day of Dr. Martin Luther King's celebration. Paying tribute to three like-minded individuals whose lives were instrumental in helping to bridge the gap of injustice and inequality amongst the people of our culture in the fight for freedom and equal opportunities.

Said to be the man that transformed the Civil Rights Movement and close advisor to Dr. King, Bayard Rustin was an openly gay civil rights activist influential in mentoring Dr. King in nonviolent practices, planning the "Journey of Reconciliation" used as a model for Freedom Rides, logistical planner on the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, human rights and gay rights movement activist, who served as president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, a civil rights organization in New York City, from 1966 to 1979. Affectionally called Mr. March on Washington, Rustin was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013.

A phenomenally inspiring lesbian poet, essayist, feminist, civil rights and equal rights activist, Audre Lorde's literary works were influential in bringing awareness to feminism, racism and LGBTQ+ rights, as seen and heard through her speeches, essays and poetry. Some of her inspirational work include: *The First Cities*, *Cables to Rage*, *From a Land Where Other People Live*, *Coal*, *The Black Unicorn* volume, *The Cancer Journals*, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, which included one of her most well-known essays, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House". Audre Lorde was a professor of English

continued on page 18

Unafraid & Ready for Change

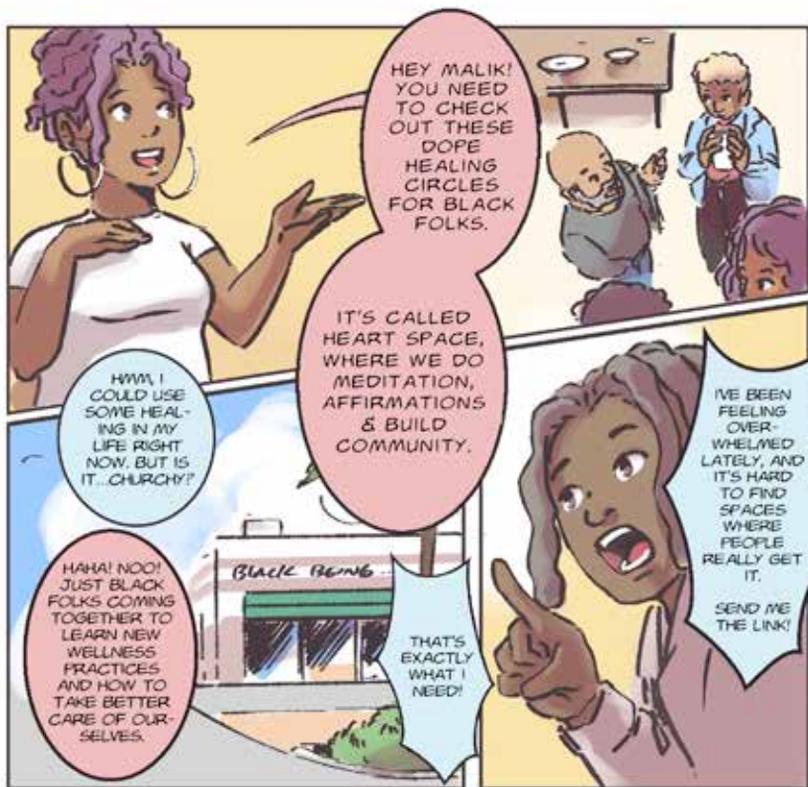
15

BLACK EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH COLLECTIVE

BEAM

BEAM

BLACK EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH COLLECTIVE



**HEART
SPACE
ATLANTA**

**EVERY
MONTH**

**FREE FOOD
AND DRINKS
PROVIDED**

LEARN MORE



WWW.BEAM.COMMUNITY

Congratulations to the Southern Unity Movement

Rustin/Lorde MLK Breakfast of celebrating the legacy of
Audre Lorde and Bayard Rustin for 24 years
From Tans(forming)

MLK Day 2025



Trans(forming) is an inter-generational,



Metro Atlanta membership-based organization
led by and for Trans, Intersex, Gender non-conforming,
and Non-Binary persons, who were “wrongfully”
assigned female at birth.



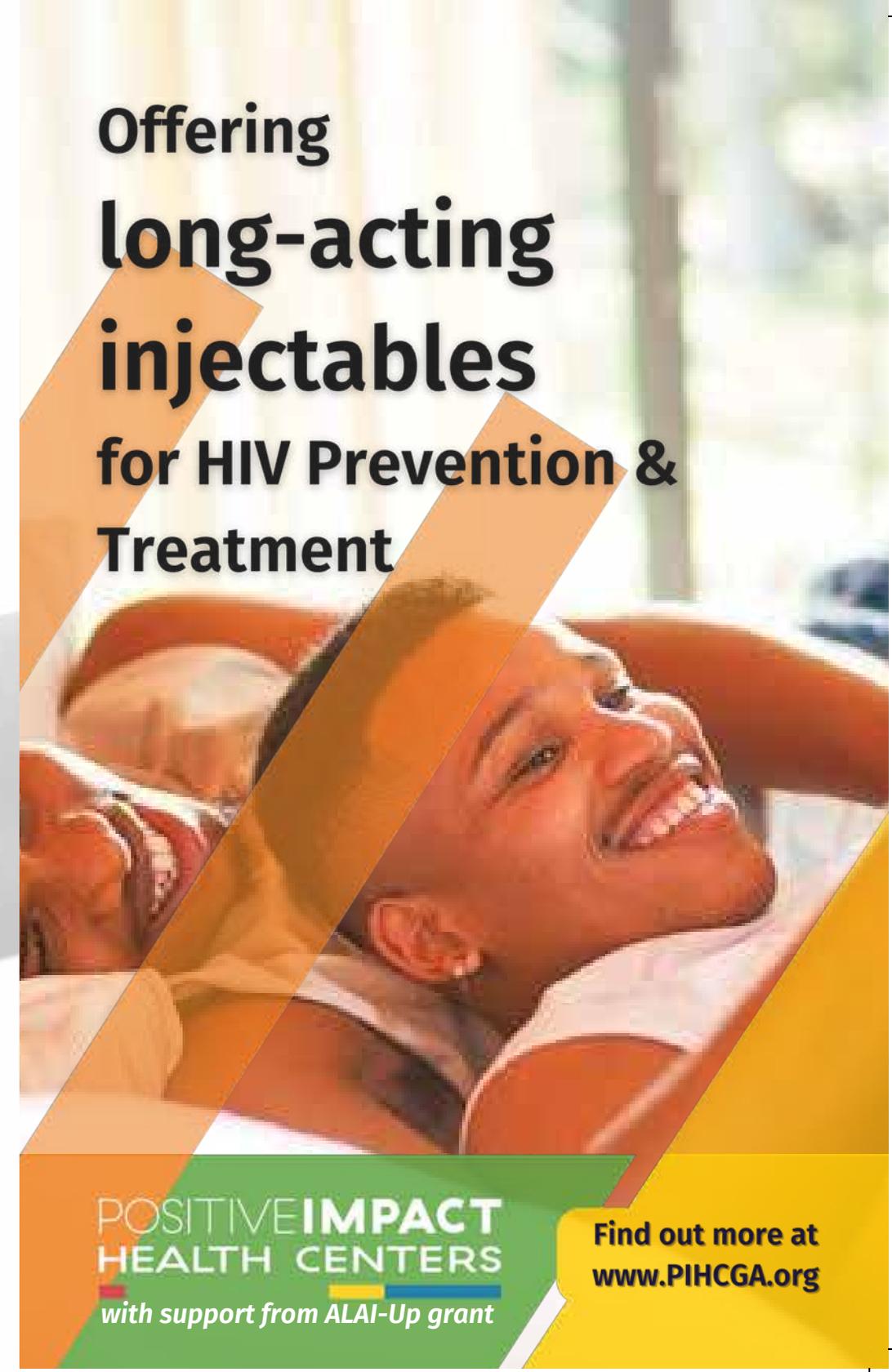
at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Hunter College. She was the poet laureate of New York from 1991–92. She was also nominated for a national book award for poetry.

One of the most prominent Civil Rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister, nonviolent social activist and political philosopher in which we celebrate today who led the movement to end segregation and counter prejudice in the United States through peaceful protests. Today we celebrate the accomplishments of Dr. King’s “breaking of barriers with the Birmingham Campaign, the giving of a speech that altered the course of history, being the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, his leadership of The Montgomery Bus Boycott, founding of the SCLC and leading a great March on Washington”, just to name a few.

MLK Day, also known as a National Day of Service, encourages volunteerism and philanthropic activities. We use this day to give back to our communities and we remember Dr. King’s mission to “create a world where love and acceptance were the driving force of everything we do”. Today we capture this amazing effort through the Rustin Lorde breakfast by recalling the purposeful, passionate and powerful works of Rustin, Lorde and Dr. King.

May the God of love, light, hope and peace bless us all with love, light, hope and peace as we continue to be inspired, uplifted and motivated by the inspirational works of Rustin, Lorde and Dr. King to be the change we want to see in this world.

Thank you, Bayard Rustin, Audre Lorde and Dr. King, for living your lives out loud through purpose, passion and power. Continue to rest in power! For we are Powerful Together: Unafraid & Ready for change!



**Offering
long-acting
injectables
for HIV Prevention &
Treatment**

**POSITIVE IMPACT
HEALTH CENTERS**

with support from ALAI-Up grant

**Find out more at
www.PIHCGA.org**



SouthernUnityMovement

25th
Anniversary

2026

We are looking for

Sponsors • Volunteers • Vendors • Marketing gurus

All Breakfast planning Alums are invited to attend

visit our website for updates: www.southernunity.org

Program

9:00 am - Doors Open

9:30am – 10:45am - Breakfast

11:00am - Opening Ceremony

Recognition of the Sponsors & Volunteers

Co-Chair: Roshelle "Darlene" Hudson

Co-Chair: e.Maurice Robinson-Cook

Program Flow

Introduction of our Emcee - *Tangela Washington*

Emcee *Ms. Tori Cooper*

Welcome

Bayard Rustin Illumination - *Tim'm West*

Audre Lorde Illumination - *Keisha Waites*

Words from Our Sponsors

Opening

"Out of The Mouth of Babes"

Presentation from Children & Youth - *Marcia McNeil*

Panel Discussion

Tangela Washington

In Memorial

Tori Cooper

Call To Action

Southern Unity Movement

10 Year Vision of Southern Unity Movement

Co-Chair: e.Maurice Robinson-Cook

Community Closing

Come To California!

Saturday, March 22 2025



**NATHAN
HALE
WILLIAMS**
HOST

**BISHOP
OC
ALLEN**
KEYNOTE

**GEORGE
M
JOHNSON**
KEYNOTE

**DAVID
MALEBRANCHE
MD**
KEYNOTE

YOU'RE INVITED!

6TH ANNUAL

WELLNESS SUMMIT

THE POWER OF AUTHENTICITY

Empowering Black Gay Men and Allies in the Coachella Valley

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, March 22, 2025

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

at Riviera Resort and Spa
Palm Springs, CA



For Tickets Visit
[BODWellnessSummit2025.Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bod-wellness-summit-2025)

Set Your Brand for GREATNESS

Where Your Brand Meets Its Audience

Our Services:

- ✓ Marketing
- ✓ Branding
- ✓ Photography
- ✓ Tech Tools
- ✓ Design
- ✓ Videography



Visit Our Website
bgpromotionsinc.com



Email
info@bgpromotionsinc.com



2025 Is The Year To Start That Business!



WWW.ICONCITY.ORG

CALL 844-990-4266
Event Production
Content Promotion
Consulting

EMAIL support@iconcity.org



Anye Este

In Memoriam



Nikki Giovanni, born June 7, 1943 in Knoxville, Tennessee and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, passed away on December 9, 2024. She was a fierce poet, writer, activist of the Black Arts Movement of the 70s and beyond, and distinguished professor. Her notable books of poetry include, *Black Judgment* and *Those Who Ride the Night Winds*, and 2004 Emmy award-nominated *The Nikki Giovanni Poetry Collection*.

HistoryMaker

Cornelius Baker, a long time AIDS activist and person living with HIV, died on November 8, 2024. He was born September 30, 1961 in upstate New York, and also spent part of his childhood in Apopka, Florida. Cornelius championed the importance of HIV testing and helped establish June 27th as National HIV Testing Day. He held positions with the federal government and large nonprofits, and lobbied for more funds for AIDS research and care, especially often neglected minority groups.

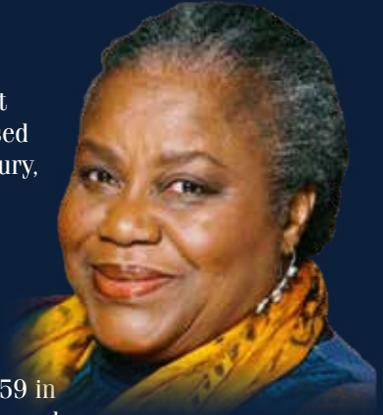


Vanity Williams, a transgender woman and Airforce veteran, was tragically killed in Houston, Texas on August 3, 2024. She was just 34 years old and had recently entered nursing school with a goal of opening her own med spa. According to the National Black Justice Collective, hers was at least the 25th murder of a trans, nonbinary, or non-gender conforming person at the time of her death. Vanity was known for her passion to lift up the Black community and women, and encouraged others through her many friendships and social media platform.



In Memoriam

Bernice Johnson Reagon, a child of Southwest Georgia, was born on October 4, 1942 and passed away on July 16, 2024. For more than half-century, she was a major cultural voice for freedom and justice, singing – she founded the group Sweet Honey in the Rock - teaching, and marching for freedom as a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).



Shay Youngblood, was born on October 16, 1959 in Columbus, Georgia, and passed away on June 11, 2024. She

lost her mother at 2 years of age. A gifted novelist and playwright, Shay wrote about her upbringing by her church-going grandmother and great-grandmother and circle of maternal surrogates, “Big Mamas,” and other stories that centered around the lives of Black women. She loved to travel and lived in Japan and Dominica for a period of time. Her novel, “Black Girl in Paris,” was informed by her travels to that city. Shay was also an award-winning author of numerous children’s books.



Unafraid & Ready for Change

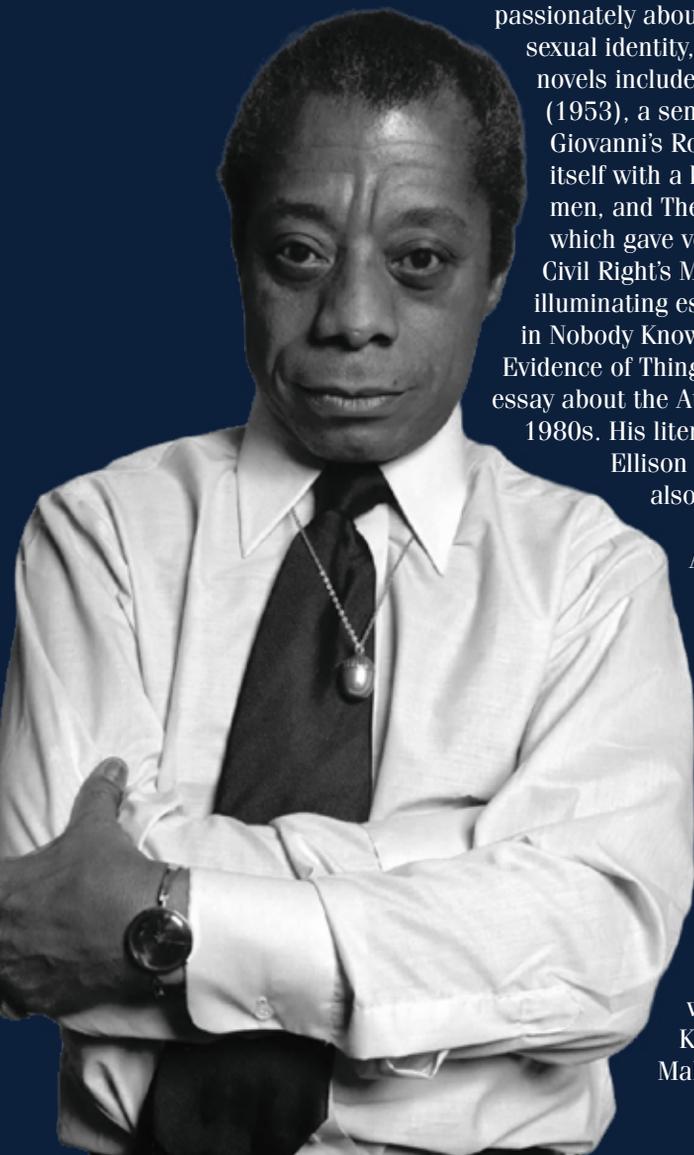
James Baldwin

Stefanie Steele

August 2, 1924–December 1, 1987

The year 2024 marked the centennial birthday of James Baldwin, Harlem-born Black queer novelist, essayist, civil rights activist and social critic, who wrote passionately about race, religion, politics, sexual identity, and culture. His impactful novels include, *Go Tell It On the Mountain* (1953), a semi-autobiographical work, *Giovanni's Room* (1956), that concerns itself with a love affair between two men, and *The Fire Next Time* (1963), which gave voice to the emerging Civil Rights Movement. He also wrote illuminating essays, such as the collection in *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961) and *The Evidence of Things Unseen*, a book-length essay about the Atlanta child murders in the 1980s. His literary heroes were Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, who also mentored him.

At age 24 Baldwin moved abroad to escape American racism and focus on his writing, mainly living in Paris, France and Istanbul, Turkey. He frequently traveled back to the US to see his family and stay engaged with the Civil Rights Movement. He participated in the 1963 March on Washington, and developed friendships with Rev Martin Luther King, Medgar Evers, and Malcolm X – all three of whom



were assassinated within a few short years of each other. Their deaths took an emotional toll on Baldwin who moved to a village in southern France, St Paul de Vence, to recuperate. There he continued to write and speak-out, returning to the US periodically to teach college students, but made the French village his home until his death in 1987.

Following Baldwin's death, in an article for the Washington Post, journalist Juan Williams beautifully summed up the impact of the writer's body of work when he stated that it, "became a standard of literary realism. ... Given the messy nature of racial hatred, of the half-truths, blasphemies and lies that make up American life, Baldwin's accuracy in reproducing that world stands as a remarkable achievement. ... Black people reading Baldwin knew he wrote the truth. White people reading Baldwin sensed his truth about the lives of black people and the sins of a racist nation."

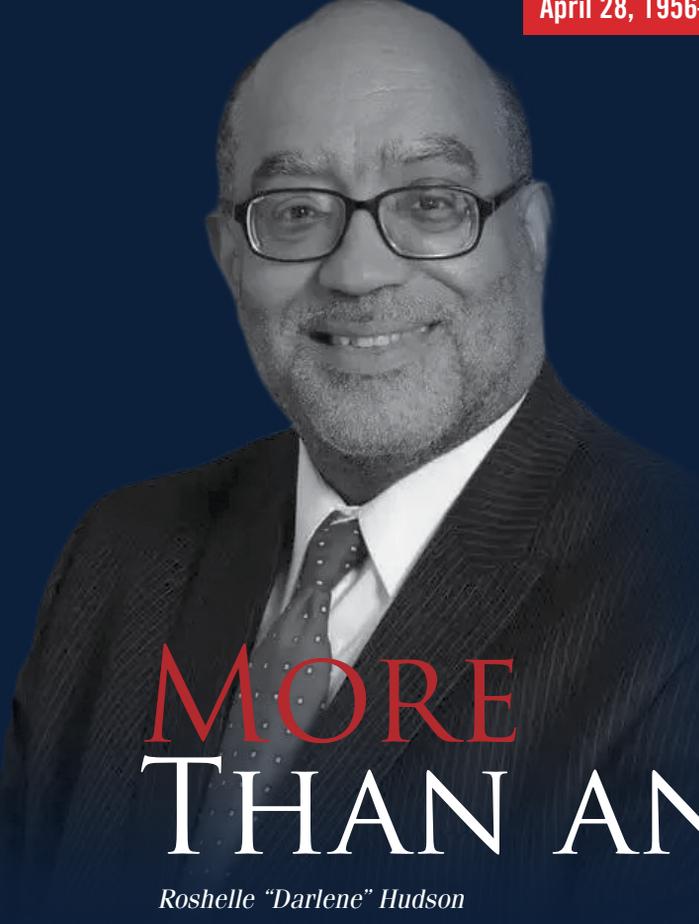
To learn more about James Baldwin,
see <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/james-baldwin>

"Not everything that
is faced can
be changed; but
nothing can be changed until
it is faced."
James Baldwin



Senator
Vincent Fort

April 28, 1956–December 22, 2024

A black and white portrait of Senator Vincent Fort, a middle-aged man with glasses, a beard, and a mustache, wearing a suit and tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

MORE
THAN AN *Ally*

Roshelle "Darlene" Hudson

The late Senator Vincent Fort was more than an ally to the LGBTQ+ community; he was our friend. And once he became our friend, he helped us connect our fight with the fight for Civil and Human Rights. He was a man of integrity and did not allow personal interests and gains to sway him from advocating for what was right. There were no backroom deals for Vincent, who, like the late Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was unbought and unbossed. Vincent once told me, "The time is always right to do right," something he said he drew from the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. He marched with us as we yelled, "Stand Up and Represent"

in our Labor Day marches for Black Pride. He showed up during the Atlanta Pure Heat Pride festivals and encouraged us to use our voices at the ballot box by voting to create change. He responded to calls and concerns voiced to him.

Vincent Fort served as a member of the Georgia State Senate from 1996 to 2017 and represented the 39th district, which includes parts of Atlanta and East Point. His legislative efforts consistently focused on social justice, economic equality, and the rights of marginalized communities. One of his most notable contributions was the sponsorship of Georgia's first hate crimes legislation, which aimed to protect individuals from violence and discrimination based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, and other characteristics. This legislation was significant in that it was one of the first to recognize and address the unique challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community in Georgia.

Vincent's commitment to economic justice also had a profound impact on the Black LGBTQ+ community's economic well-being. He was the first author of Georgia's predatory lending law, which was considered one of the strongest in the country at the time, to protect vulnerable communities from exploitative lending practices. In addition to his legislative work, Vincent did not hesitate to support Grady Memorial Hospital when it was threatened with closure. He saw the hospital as a critical healthcare provider for poor and marginalized groups, like many in the Black LGBTQ+ community.

Senator Fort departed this life on December 22, 2024, at the age of 68. His legacy of unwavering commitment to justice and equality has left an indelible mark on the Black LGBTQ+ community and will continue to inspire us and those who believe in freedom to stand up.

He has gone on to join the ancestors and sit with the giants of the Civil Rights Movement-which started here in Georgia-like Rev. King and Coretta King, Rev. Orange, John Lewis, and Joan Garner, who passed the torch to him. Vincent believed in justice for all, not just the privileged few, and served with integrity and honesty. He leaves this world having fought the good fight and with his death, passes the torch to us.

Well done, Vincent. We are grateful for all you've done and for your life. We will not let you down. Rest well, Legend.





The
FuneralSpecialist

CORNELL W. ROBINSON-COOK

The

FUNERAL SPECIALIST

As a Consulting Firm, we understand that losing a loved one is a difficult time for families, and our goal is to provide compassionate and professional funeral services that meet their unique needs.

Contact Us Today!

404.235.9947

cornell@thefuneralspecialist.com | www.thefuneralspecialist.com

Prof. Fred Smith, Jr.



Dr. Everett Long

are proud to support the Rustin/Lorde Breakfast



Southern Unity Movement

Powerful Together
2025 Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde Breakfast

Unafraid & Ready for Change



**LAMBDA
LEGAL**

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

Thank you for helping us make 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 at lambdalegal.org

Unprecedented Past.
Unstoppable Future.

Proud to Support the Rustin/Lorde Breakfast



OWINGS MACNORLIN
IMMIGRATION LAW

AFFIRMING COUNSEL

Asylum / Deportation Defense / Family Cases



CONTACT US 833-3825423

omimm.com

Virtual appointments

Bilingual. Se habla español.

Special Thanks

TO ALL VOLUNTEERS 2025 RUSTIN/LORDE BOARD AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Southern Unity Movement Inc. Governing Board

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

Program Committee

Marcia S. McNeil
Tangela Washington
Tracee McDaniel

Children & Youth Space

Dante DeStefano
Patricia Reid
Tracee McDaniel

March

Sir Jesse McNulty

Current Community Planners

Jimmi Lee
Jon Ivan Colter

Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator

Dr Jillan Carter Ford

Vendor Coordinator

Rick Thurmond

Registration

Cornell Robinson-Cook

Friends of Rustin/Lorde

Dr. Sandra Jones
Survey Development

Marketing Team

Maurice Robinson-Cook
Miko Evans
Aigner “Antye” Ellis
Felicia McCoy

Stefanie Steele
Content Contributor

Tim’m West
Content Contributor



www.meakproductions.lgbt

21 YEARS of the
World's 1st LGBTQ
EXCLUSIVE
Talent Agency &
Production
Company

**NOW CASTING
NEW TALENT
REGISTER NOW ONLINE!!**

www.meakproductions.lgbt
Toll Free Hotline: 1-855-MEAKPRO

@meakproductions



DAVID

PEACH

MEAK PRODUCTIONS IS A PROUD MEDIA PARTNER OF RUSTIN/LORDE BREAKFAST SINCE 2012!

meak productions, inc.

world's 1st lgbt exclusive talent & creative agency
nglcc www.meakproductions.lgbt



RL RUSTIN. LORDE.







SouthernUnityMovement

Unafraid
& Ready for
Change

TANGELA
WASHINGTON
THE PEOPLES COACH®

Certified Master Life Coach

With over 25 years of experience, I specialize in providing tailored solutions that empower individuals and organizations to excel. My career has been dedicated to delivering innovative strategies, fostering growth, and creating value across diverse industries.

Passionate about helping clients overcome challenges, I focus on long-term success by leveraging my expertise and commitment to excellence.

- Individuals
- Couples
- Business
- Non-Profits & General Organizations

404.931.9688

www.tangelawashington.com



Coach Tangela

CALL FOR
YOUR FREE
CONSULTATION





SEASONED PROS

print
web
social media

MAKING YOUR IDEAS A

REALITY!

EM Designs Group (EMDG) is well known for high quality, innovative, and creative designs. The EMDG philosophy, team, and creative process all work together to yield the highest quality and most effective designs to equal marketing success for your company and products.

MAURICE ROBINSON-COOK | PRESIDENT/CEO

404.849.1027

WWW.EMDGLLC.COM



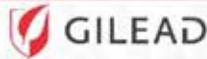
@mcookemdg

SOUTHERN UNITY MOVEMENT SENDS A SPECIAL



Thank You 2025 Sponsors

RUSTIN/LORDE PLATINUM



FREEDOM ORGANIZER



GOOD TROUBLE



Center for Black Equity
Empowering the Voice of Black LGBTQ+ People Globally

POSITIVE IMPACT
HEALTH CENTERS
CHARLES • DECATUR • DULUTH • MARIETTA



ANGELIC TROUBLEMAKERS



LAMBDA
LEGAL

NATIONAL CENTER FOR
CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS
LGBTQ+ INSTITUTE

Prof. Fred Smith, Jr.
Dr. Everett Long

FREEDOM MARCHER



OWINGS MACNORLIN
IMMIGRATION LAW

AARP®
Atlanta

MEDIA SPONSORS



Icon City
2025 WALKER BLDG 1118
10 100

meak productions, inc.
Atlanta, GA • www.meakproductions.com





WHAT WE LIVE FOR.

STANDING
SIDE BY SIDE
WITH THE
COMMUNITY

It will take all of us working together to address the stigmas and disparities that fuel the HIV epidemic.

By working hand in hand with the community, we are working to break down the barriers that stand in the way of people feeling accepted, seeking the care they need, and being their true selves.

Together we are helping correct common misperceptions and silencing the stigmas around HIV. We are spreading the word through local community events and educational programs such as Healthysexual® and Stop the Virus.

Together we are lifting each other up until HIV is no more.

GILEAD is proud to support:
The Bayard Rustin/Audre Lorde
Breakfast

GileadHIV.com

 @gileadhivus

 @GileadHIVUS

WHAT WE LIVE FOR, HEALTHYSEXUAL, GILEAD, and the GILEAD Logo are trademarks of Gilead Sciences, Inc.
© 2023 Gilead Sciences, Inc. All rights reserved. US-UNSC-1343-02/23



GILEAD

HIV

President
Jimmy Carter

October 1, 1924–December 29, 2024



BLESSED ARE THE
PEACEMAKERS