

# Appreciation

OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

## Congratulations Dr. Nurse And Kutztown University



Dr. Learie C. Nurse

Last March, Kutztown University announced the appointment of Dr. Learie C. Nurse as its new Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. This appointment began July first. Nurse was formerly employed at Mary Baldwin University, in Staunton, VA, where he served as the Associate Vice President of Student Engagement and the Title IX Coordinator since 2021.

Prior to his employment at Mary Baldwin University, Nurse served as the Associate Dean of Students at New Jersey Institute of Technology (2018-21). Prior to NJIT, Nurse served as the dean of students at Naropa University, Boulder, Colorado, where he provided general oversight, supervision, leadership, strategic planning, programs and vision for the functional areas of the division of student affairs.

Nurse is a native of Barbados, who started his professional career in the hospitality industry after graduating from Barbados Community College with a degree in food and beverage operations. In 2000, he emigrated to the United States to further his education and earned his Bachelor's Degree in food and beverage management at the New England Culinary Institute (NECI) in Vermont. He went on to earn his Master of Education in interdisciplinary studies and his Doctor of Education in educational leadership and policy studies from the University of Vermont.

THE DRUM congratulates Dr. Nurse on this appointment and Kutztown University for taking a giant step forward in increasing the diversity of its senior leadership!

## Versatile Wesley's A Winner



Wesley Butler

Wesley Butler has continuously excelled in many endeavors. As a sophomore, he was an excellent student and the point guard on the Reading High School's 2017 state championship team. Butler continued his academic excellence and he was the Red Knight's (basketball team's) leading scorer during his junior year.

Butler graduated with honors and was a leading scorer on Kutztown University's basketball team. He did that while being elected (as the youngest ever) to the City Council of the City of Reading, PA in 2021. Councilman Butler's political accomplishments are most impressive! While representing Reading's Fourth District and serving on its Finance Committee, he collaborated with his councilman peers in the allocation of funds for saving the Reading Phillies (baseball team), downtown Reading snow removal, making Juneteenth a city holiday, arranging for a four-way stop sign at 13th and Marion Streets, exempting vehicles parked during a snowstorm, allocation of \$250,000 of ARPA money to rental assistance, allocation of money to non-profit and small business, the allocation of funds for the Blacktop basketball summer league, and a reduction of parking fines.

Finally, Councilman Butler's goals for the future are lowering the automobile accidents on Hampden Boulevard and removing more properties from the blighted buildings list and back on the tax rolls.

Obviously, Wesley Butler is, indeed, a blessing for Berks County!

## Arielle Sparkles On BCTV

We are, indeed, blessed to have six excellent colleges and universities in Berks County. During the second week in August (August 14th, 16th, 18th, and 21st), admissions administrators from all of these institutions provided comprehensive data on admissions and matriculations at these institutions on the Berks Community Television Program, "Diversity: The Wider Vision." Arielle Phillips-Law, who is Alvernia University's Assistant Director for Transfer Students, brilliantly informed the television audience about Alvernia University. She is a graduate of Alvernia University (Bachelor's Degree) and New York University (Master's Degree). Law was accompanied by five other equally impressive admissions administrators: Kristen Marcinko, the Director of Academic Partnerships for Reading Area Community College, Hector Torres, the Reading Site Coordinator for Harcum College, Erica Pulaski, the Director of Enrollment Management for Penn State Berks University, Elizabeth Wieller, the Assistant Director of Admissions for Kutztown University, and Jennifer Williamson, the Director of Admissions for Albright College.

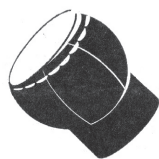


Arielle Phillips-Law  
alvernia.edu

If you missed this most informative program, you can see it online at (bctv.org at its community programs on the date, August 14, 2023, at 8 PM).

## Inside

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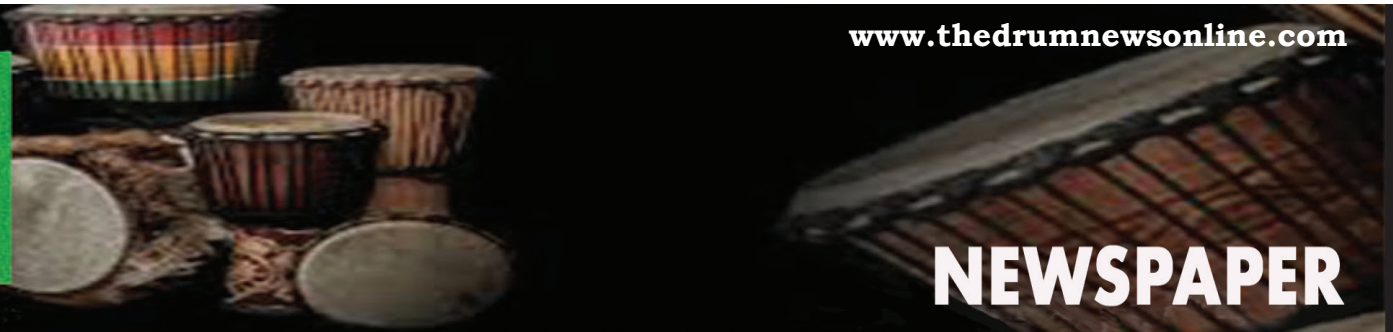


plus more!



# THE DRUM

# NEWSPAPER



## Donray Bennett: A Star Who Continues To Soar



Donray Bennett  
ku.edu

In his relatively short four decades of existence, Donray Bennett has accomplished more than most people do in 60 years. The reasons for his success are intelligence, ambition and,

most importantly, a commitment to “a passion for leveling the playing field for the underrepresented.”

Donray Bennett is an alumnus of Kutztown University (a Bachelor’s Degree and Masters of Education), who has been a math teacher, a school principal, a founder of a bilingual academy, and an associate director of admissions for a university. Bennett is a former Associate Director of Admissions at Kutztown University. Since November of 2022, he has been the Director of Strategic Engagement and Recruitment at the University of Akron in Ohio.

THE DRUM proudly congratulates Donray Bennett.

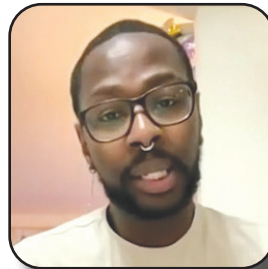
*“It is easier to build strong children, than to repair broken men.”*

*-Frederick Douglass*

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## James Williams Sparkles On BCTV



James Williams  
bctv.org

Last Month (September 14, 2023), Michelle Dech, the Executive Director of the LGBQ Center of Greater Reading, Dr. Deborah Sieger, a former President of the National Organization of Women (NOW) and a Professor Emeritus of Kutztown University, and James Williams, a local dancer choreographer, made a very important appearance on Berks Community Television (BCTV). The purpose of the program was to enlighten the viewers about the pitfalls of homophobia and to offer support for our LGBQ community. Dech encouraged people needing counseling to take advantage of the counseling services provided by the LGBQ Center of Greater Reading.

James Williams’ presentation was very important because, as a gay Black man, he is a most important role model for Black males, who are the most oppressed members of the gay community. Williams’ confidence, great sense of humor, and non-threatening demeanor enable him to be most effective.

Williams has been dancing for more than twenty years, and is a former dancer and dance teacher at Reading High School. He presently teaches dance for the Rize Program in Reading. All three of the panelists provided very important data relative to the issue facing the gay citizens of Berks County. If you missed the program, you can see rebroadcasts of it online at bctv.org. Once you reach the BCTV web page, click on menu and scroll onto community programs, then go to the date of the program (“Diversity: the Wider Vision,” September 11, 2023 at 8 PM).

## THE DRUM QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**Location of the Interviews:**  
Danny Moore’s Barber Shop  
530 Center Ave., Reading, PA

**Date of the Interviews:**  
August 18, 2023

**The Question:**  
*Can the Philadelphia Eagles get back to the 2024 Super Bowl?*

### Responses:



**Vicky Price:**  
“Yes.”



**Felix Hernandez:**  
“Yes.”



**Ronnie Bradley:**  
“Yes.”



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# BLACK HEROES

## FAMOUS BLACKS BORN IN OCTOBER

### Neil Degrasse Tyson (1958 - )

Dr. Neil Tyson, who was born on October 5, 1958 in New York, NY, is a renowned astronomer, author, columnist and television personality. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Harvard in physics, a Master's degree in astronomy at the University of Texas at Austin, and a Doctorate in astrophysics at Columbia University.



Neil Degrasse Tyson  
britannica.com

Tyson is a former faculty member in the department of astronomy at the University of Maryland and a former columnist for the *Natural History Magazine*. Some of his columns therein were later published in his books, Death by Black Hole and Astrophysics for People in a Hurry. Tyson is also a former columnist for the magazine, *StarDate*. Columns in *StarDate* were later published in his books, Merlin's Tour of the Universe and Just Visiting the Planet. He has written eighteen additional books and thirteen scholarly articles.

Between 2001 and 2020, Tyson received fourteen prestigious awards, the most recent of which was the YouTube Gold Play Button Creator Award in 2020. He has also been awarded eleven honorary Doctorates.

Most importantly, Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson has helped to popularize the study of outer space via scores of appearances on television programs and films.



### ABOUT US

THE DRUM is published 6 times annually. We publish in February, April, June, August, October, & December. Unless otherwise indicated, all articles herein are written by the Publisher/Editor, Joseph Amprey.

**OUR MISSION IS TO CELEBRATE BLACK ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS.**

Please call us at 240.729.5293 or email us at [readingdrumnewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:readingdrumnewspaper@gmail.com) or write to us at **THE DRUM**, P.O. Box 12711, Reading PA, 19612 with topic suggestions.

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### Mae Carol Jemison (1956 - )

Mae C. Jemison, who was born on October 17, 1956 in Decatur, AL, is an African American engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut. In 1992, she served as a mission specialist aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavor. That made her the first African American woman to travel into outer space.



Mae Carol Jemison  
airandspace.si.edu

As a young girl, Jemison had interests in both dance and science. She studied all kinds of dance (ballet, jazz, and modern dance), and she continued participating in dance activities while earning a Bachelor's Degrees in (a BS in chemical engineering and a BA in African American Studies) at Stanford University. Jemison also earned a medical degree at Cornell University.

Following her graduation from medical school in 1981, Dr. Jemison worked for a year as a general practitioner. In 1983, she joined the Peace Corps and served as a medical doctor in Africa (in Liberia and Sierra Leone) for two years.

After completing her Peace Corps assignment, Jemison entered a private medical practice until 1987 when she was chosen as one of 15, out of 2,000 applicants for the NASA Astronaut Group 12.

From September 12-20, 1992, Jemison was part of the seven-member crew on the Space Shuttle Endeavour. During that eight day space flight, Dr. Jemison conducted numerous experiments (on medical cures, biofeedback, bone cells, frog ovulation).

After her space mission, Jemison has had a multifaceted career as an author, college and university professor (Dartmouth and Cornell), commencement speaker, choreographer and producer of shows of modern dance and African dance. She has also encouraged minority youth to pursue careers in science.



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## AFRICAN AMERICAN *Do you know?*

1. Who are the African American identical twins who are very successful in different fields, and what are their professions?
2. What is the title, and who is the author of the first play by an African American to be produced on Broadway? What prestigious award did the author receive?
3. Who was the first African American to graduate from Kutztown University?
4. Who is the most successful African American Lawyer?
5. Who is the former World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, who made millions from his barbecue grills?
6. Who is the African American writer who won a Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1987, and what was the name of the novel for which she received that award?
7. Who was the black founder of Chicago, IL?
8. Who is the African American woman, who has been appointed to become the next dean of the Harvard Divinity School on January 1, 2024?
9. Who are the alumni of Lincoln University (PA), who were our best lawyer and our best poet?
10. Who is the native of Reading who wrote the history of Bethel AME Church of Reading, PA?

*The answers can be found on page 6.*

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## An Insult Becomes A Blessing

Former US President Donald Trump's recent insult of Judge Tanya S. Chutkan has been a blessing for her. His criticism motivated us to examine her credentials.



Judge Chutkan  
ballotpedia.org

Chutkan was born on July 5, 1962. She is the daughter of an Indo-Jamaican doctor, and an Afro-Jamaican mother, who was one of the leading dancers at the National Dance Company of Jamaica. She has two siblings, both of whom are also physicians.

Judge Chutkan was appointed by former President Barack Obama as Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. She is a graduate of George Washington University (Bachelor's Degree) and the University of Pennsylvania (Juris Doctorate).

From 1987 to 1990, Chutkan was in private practice at the law firm, Hogan & Hartson (now Hogan Lovells). From a partner in 2007. Her practice focused on complex civil litigation and specifically antitrust class action cases.

We are obviously delighted to share with our readers the outstanding credentials of Judge Tanya Chutkan.



## PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

# THANK YOU!

## FOR ALL THAT YOU DO!

**Super Bo & Super Sally:**  
Episode 13  
**BLACK SUPER HEROES**  
Story by Joseph Amprey  
Illustrations by Stan Barnes

Because her parents had lots of problems Jamika was raised by her grandmother.



When Jamika's grandmother noticed that Jamika recently seemed depressed, she asked Sally to talk to her.



During their conversation, Sally learned that Jamika's low self esteem was based on her "out-of-style clothes," dark complexion, and kinky hair.



Two weeks after her conversation with Sally, Jamika became the best dressed and most popular person in her class.



*to be continued...*



OCTOBER 2023

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## SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

Presented by: PA Department of Agriculture & Berks County Area Agency on Aging

**Program RUNS June 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>**  
Checks are distributed based upon availability until 9/30/23

Program Eligibility requirements include must be 60 years old by 12/31/23 or older and income requirements by household size.

Eligible seniors receive five - \$10 checks for a total benefit of \$50, ONE TIME during the program year.

Use checks to purchase only fruits, vegetables & herbs grown in PA. Items not covered include jams, honey, nuts, cider, baked goods, citrus, tropical fruits or processed foods (sliced fruit).

Checks are available at the Berks County Area Agency on Aging office and all Berks County Senior Wellness & Activity Centers.

Checks must be used by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

For more information call 610-478-6500



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



*"He who is not courageous enough to take risks  
O accomplish nothing in life."*

*~Muhammad Ali*

# THE DRUM

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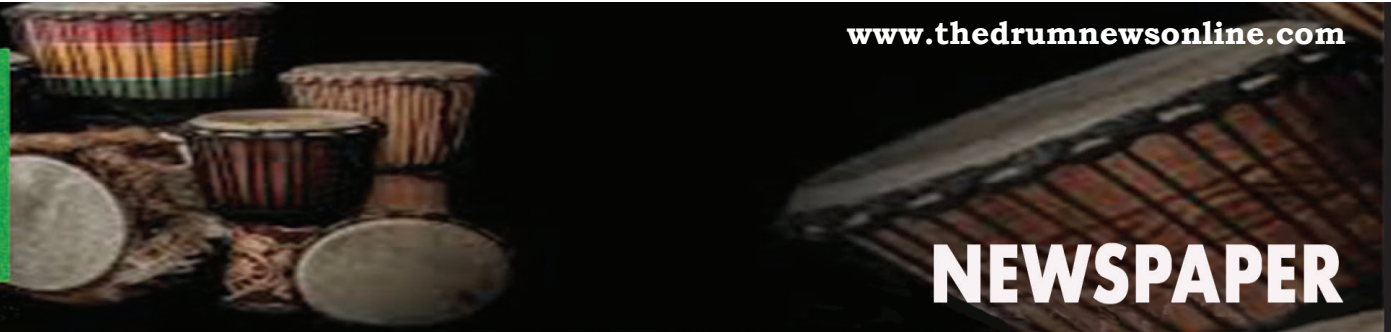
There are some 250 black-owned newspapers in the U.S. today, according to Danny Bakewell, chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA).62 Bakewell believes that black-owned newspapers rank high as a trusted source of news among African-Americans. "All stakeholders come to the black press when they want to get their message out to this community," Bakewell explained.

(<https://www.fcc.gov/osp/inc-report/INoC-23-Diversity.pdf>)

***Providing Positive African American News to Berks County, PA***

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## The Power of Men Having Fellowship

By Rosa J. Parra, Founder of Palo Magazine  
palomagazine.com



Ebony McNeil

Ebony McNeil, born and bred in Reading, always knew there was an impact he could have on others, but couldn't quite conceptualize how. He naturally inherited this desire to help others from his father, one of the founders of the Iron Men and Community Outreach Coordinator for both EOC (later becoming BCAP) as well as CATS, Reading's branch of the Black Panthers.

Ebony realized that the power of men having fellowship was highly influential in how men matured and made decisions, whether for good or bad. He realized that a lot of society's issues were stemming from men not assuming the role that God meant for them in their homes, church,



Rosa J. Parra

and community. It was understood that in order to be their best, these men also had to be in fellowship with other men striving towards the same goal. There needed to be a movement so that men realized they weren't alone and didn't have to feel different when they wanted to experience growth.

After spending a few years of wondering "why me" and "would anyone listen," Ebony decided to do something about it. In 2021 Ebony stepped out on faith and created The Forge, a non-profit organization, dedicated to "Enhancing Manhood from the Inside Out." The Forge bases its mission on 3 symbiotic pillars of Positive Imagery, Quality Fellowship, and Service. These pillars work together to increase awareness, grow membership and build a stronger army in order to serve the community.

The Forge has built itself on 2 foundational programs. The Professional Men's Clothing Exchange, the Forge collects business attire from the community and through

organizations like BCAP, BCPS and RACC donate to men who are entering a phase in their life where this type of attire is necessary. The Forge also holds the Forge Forum on the 4th Wednesday of every month at O'Pake Institute. A closed space for men, to share and reflect on their own choices, perspectives and how they can use these experiences and the wisdom shared from others to be better men going forward. Forums discuss fatherhood, the male ego, conflict resolution, and being a better husband.

The Forge's board of men are devoted to helping use their life experiences to help others. They have made quite an impact through the programs listed above as well as other community events such as Covid vaccination sites, donations to women's shelters, and the Father/Son Brunch Seminar.

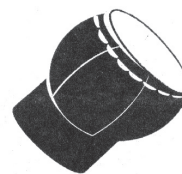
The Forge has had an impactful two years and credits its success to the community's understanding and support of the mission. The future for The Forge contains more of the same, but also a mentorship program, Young Athletes Symposium, and a curriculum designed for young men. The impending impact of this organization is evident. Prepare to be Forged.

### Answers to *Do You Know*

1. Dr. Ian Smith is a prolific author, physician, and television personality, and his identical twin brother, Dana Smith, is the very successful fashion designer of the NFL New York Giants' GMEN jersey.
2. Lorraine Hansberry wrote *A Raisin in the Sun*, for which she was only the fifth woman to receive the New York Drama Critics Award for the Best Play in 1959.
3. In 1950, Bessie Reese (now Bessie Crenshaw) was first African American to graduate from Kutztown State Teachers College (now Kutztown University).
4. The late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, as a lawyer, successfully argued more than 20 cases (the most famous of which was the Landmark *Brown V. the Board of Education of Topeka, KS*) before the Supreme Court of the US.
5. George Foreman
6. The late Toni Morrison was awarded the Pulitzer for her novel, *Beloved*.
7. Jean Baptiste Point DuSable was the Haitian born first permanent settler in Chicago.
8. Dr. Marla Frederick
9. Thurgood Marshall and Langston Hughes
10. Richard Johnson is the author of *They ALL Stand Fair: A Social History of Bethel AME Church*.

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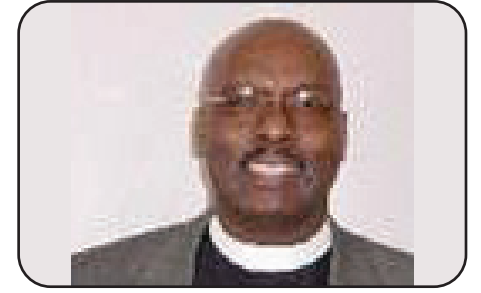
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Sunday Worship: 11:30 am



Bishop Brookins

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130 W. Buttonwood Street, Reading, PA 19601  
610.374.0790  
Pastor: Bishop Robert E. Brookins

Sunday Service Times:

Early Morning Worship: 8:00 am  
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:15 am  
(Holy Communion every 1st Sunday)



ISLAMIC CENTER OF READING

18 S. Noble St, Reading, PA 19611  
610.478.1338

Service Times:

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Pastor Bell

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Reverend Dr. Alick

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Pastor: Reverend Dr. Bruce Alick

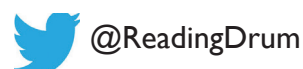
Service Times:

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.  
Bible Study: Tuesday - 11 a.m. and Wednesday - 5:30 p.m.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

Thank your pastor this month and always!

*Praying is to the Soul  
what breathing is to the Body*



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