

Allegheny West

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER

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Oct - Nov 2019

Senator Street and DACO Hosted Successful 2nd Annual Philadelphia Cannabis Opportunities Conference

Senator Sharif Street, 3rd District, says he was pleased with the outcome of the second annual Cannabis Conference he hosted recently on the main campus of Temple University in North Philadelphia. He was joined by the Diasporic Alliance for Cannabis Opportunities, (DACO) to host the second annual two-day Cannabis Opportunities Conference September 27th and 28th at Temple University Medical School on North Broad Street. Stakeholders converged to offer a variety of programming relevant to the emerging cannabis industry. The conference included legislative panels examining cannabis policy for the Commonwealth including Adult Use, Decriminalization, Hemp, Banking in Cannabis and criminal record expungement. The event also offered a job fair on day two with vendors and a diverse group of exhibitors and speakers to help educate and empower marginalized communities.

"Our first Cannabis Opportunities Conference brought together experts and many new cannabis learners for our workshops, seminars, speakers and panel discussion. In 2019 we again aimed to create a safe space, starting a dialogue that would help raise awareness of cannabis opportunities for marginalized communities throughout the diaspora and entrepreneurs from the African continent," said Cherron Perry-Thomas, Founder and Director of Social Impact at DACO. "This is important because many of the same issues we see here are happening in countries like Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Jamaica and Canada. You will find the same barriers to entry, the same miseducation,



Pictured here is Senator Sharif Street with Governor Tom Wolf

health and economic disparities, as well as increasing arrest rates. During the conference we highlighted the opportunities and explored how we go from being statistics to benefactors of this plant."

Senator Street added, "In 2018 we engaged with over 700 people from diverse communities to bring education, resources and economic empowerment in the cannabis space. In 2019 we examined Medical Marijuana, crucial in the fight against the Opioid Epidemic, criminal record expungement, Adult Use and Decriminalization and we heard from international and national leaders who are already a part of the cannabis community. We reviewed the economic gains, personal freedoms and opportunities for social justice demand tied to cannabis reform."

Also participating at the conference were Mayor Jim Kenney, Congressman Dwight Evans and PA State Representatives Jordan Harris, Chris Rabb, Joanna McClinton and Movita Johnson Harrell. Secretary of

Pardons for the state of PA, Brandon J. Flood also participated at the event.

Senator Street joined Governor Wolf September 25th as the Governor presented the results of Lieutenant Governor Fetterman's Statewide Cannabis Tour. The tour revealed an overwhelming majority of support for cannabis reform across Pennsylvania. The administration thanked Senator Street for his efforts on cannabis reform and made three calls to action for the General Assembly to put on his desk: Decriminalization of Cannabis (referencing house legislation and Senator Street's bill), Automatic Expungement of low level charges of cannabis possession and Adult Use, fully legalizing cannabis use.

Lieutenant Governor Fetterman moved to further expand the pardons process by encouraging any individual with small possession charges of cannabis to apply for a Pardon, which would be expedited.

Senator Street stated, "I thank Governor Wolf and Lieutenant Governor Fetterman for their leadership in this regard and am grateful for his support of SB233 which would decriminalize the use of cannabis in PA," said Street, "The history of disparate enforcement of our drug laws which drives over-incarceration as well as the barriers to access of housing, education, employment and freedom must be deconstructed. I will work with colleagues introduce legislation to expunge low level cannabis charges which will include a framework of restorative justice."

New Voting Machines To Be Used in Philly Come November 5th

On Tuesday, November 5, 2019, General Election Day in PA, in Philadelphia voters will be using the new and controversial voting machines that were ordered for our city, for the first time. 3,800 new machines will replace the ones the city already owned. The new voting machines have large, computerized touchscreens on which voters tap their choices and also include a paper slip that records each ballot cast. These are the first new voting machines for Philly in almost 20 years. There was a big debate about

the new machines before everything was finalized. The concern was over their security, accessibility and the very process by which they were chosen.

After all the Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election lawmakers in PA decided to make it a law requiring all counties across the state to get new more efficient voting machines up and operating before the 2020 presidential election.

continued on page 5



"DREAMKEEPERS"

The Allegheny West Foundation (AWF) is a community based organization that has served North Philadelphia for almost 50 years (founded 1968). We are re-opening the Panati Recreation Center at 3100 N. 22nd Street (bet. Clearfield & Lippincott). Our mission at **AWF is to provide a safe space, where young people learn, laugh, and can realize their potential.** We serve high school students motivated to be better students and ready to pursue professional passions. Simply put, we are dreamkeepers who believe in the greatest and best ambitions of our young people.

The Panati Recreation Center will host a series of ASP activities including:

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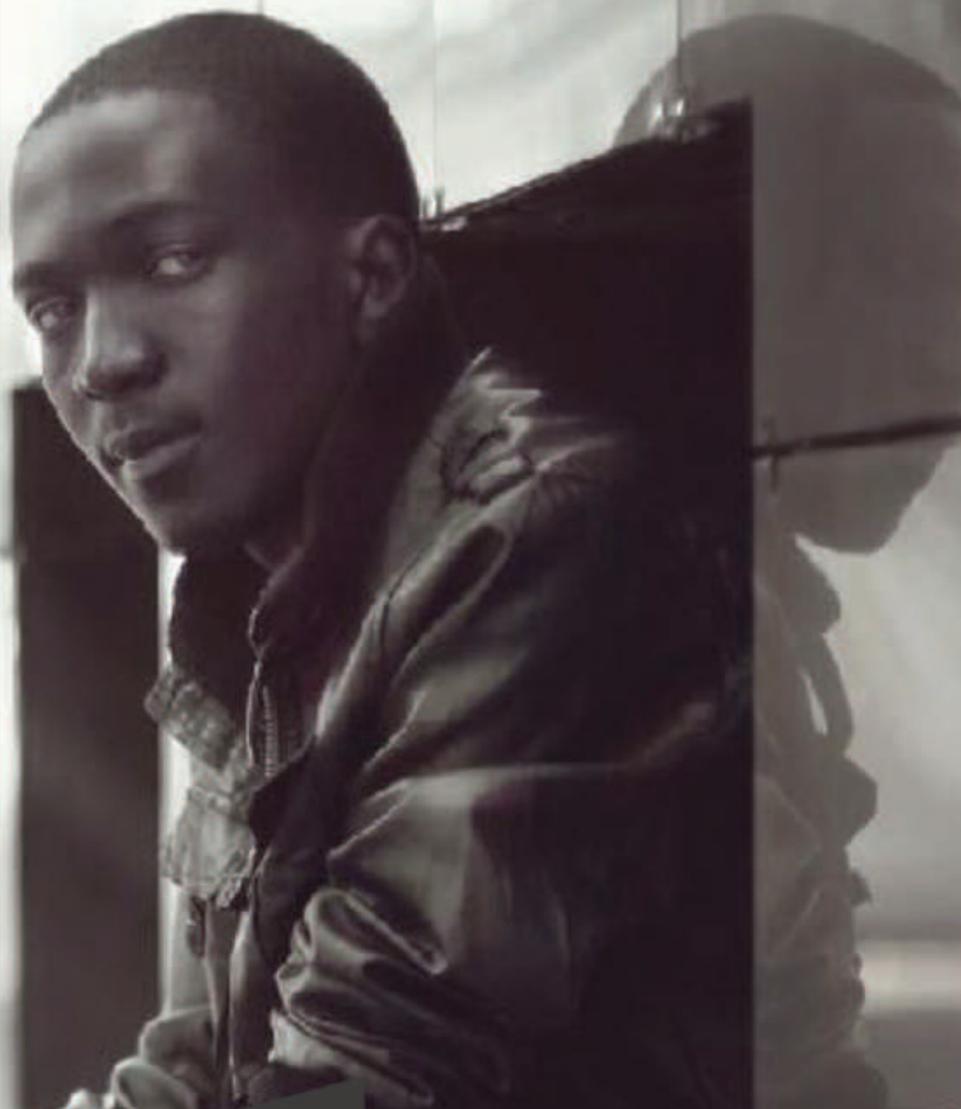
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Education Is The Name Of Our Game

Being a serious stakeholder in North Philadelphia, the Allegheny West Foundation, (AWF) is no stranger to offering an education program targeted towards youth. In fact, this tried and true community not-for-profit has been involved with educating and supporting the youth of our community and beyond for over three decades. Under the leadership of Ronald E. Hinton, Jr., the President of the Allegheny West Foundation, AWF has earned a reputation amongst city officials, community leaders, parents and students, as a "go to" youth after school program.

"Outcomes for any funded or non-funded program should be critical for the operators and beneficiaries of the kinds of services groups provide. For us at Allegheny West, we pride ourselves on the outcomes we are able to report each year, to our funders. If we did not meet with success, the state department of education, our lead funder for our after-school program and others, would not keep entrusting us to mentor and prepare our youth for higher education and training that can lead to great



(Student pictured getting an assignment done for school during Afterschool program at Panati)

careers, said Ron Hinton. He continued, "We are very proud of the work we do with youth and our outcomes at Allegheny West speak for themselves. More than 80% of the youth who participate in our after-school program, after graduating from high school, go on to college. Others enroll in training programs such as barbering, cosmetology, electrical engineering and entrepreneurship."

Jacques Louis, Director of the Allegheny West Foundation Education Program commented, "Currently we operate our afterschool program at two locations. High school students attend our afterschool program at the Panati Recreation Center at 3101 N. 22nd Street and our elementary school students attend the afterschool program we offer at the Peirce Elementary School located at 2300 W. Cambria Street. Our funding comes from the state of Pennsylvania, 21st Century, GCLC. We also get some funding from the Philadelphia Youth Network, (PYN), which is the funder for our summer youth employment program. Essentially, the Allegheny West Foundation Education program operates year-round. The summer program primarily makes it

possible for area youth to have a six-week summer job. However, it's also an education opportunity. Students are learning while working, about what it takes to keep a job, once you have it and what employers expect of you. It's a total win-win situation for our youth. Allegheny West has been involved with positive youth development for over thirty plus years. We are dream keepers. We see ourselves as an integral part of the youth we work with and mentor, having a positive afterschool education experience, in addition to what they learn while in school. We're here to be a supportive, meaningful presence in a young person's life. I am proud to be a part of the leadership team, with Kendra Harris, Director of the elementary level afterschool program for AWF, and Ron Hinton, President."



Pictured here, Jacques Louis, Director Allegheny West Foundation Education Program



Pictured here is Kendra Harris, Co-Director of the Allegheny West Foundation Education Program

Kendra Harris commented, "Our afterschool program runs the same time-frame that Philadelphia public schools are open each school year. We offer Cohort 8 and Cohort 9. Cohort 8 will be operated 100% out of Panati this year. It is 100% community based as we wanted it to be and we're actually welcoming any high school student from any school across the city to be a party of our program at the Panati Recreation Center. Registration is still open, so we are continuing to enroll students. We turn no one away for our high school model. We are expecting 100 plus students for this year. Last school year we had 100 plus students. For T.M. Pierce Elementary School, we're expecting 100 plus students this school year. Last year we had 80 elementary students enrolled. We are currently still accepting students for both high school students and for elementary age students. Parents or students can come into the Panati Recreation Center and pick up an application for the afterschool program. We're open Mondays - Fridays 2pm-6pm. Cohort 9 at Peirce this year will also welcome students from Saint Martin De Porres this year. "



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Tioga United Wins NAC Grant

Tioga United is the place to go for various community services. Most recently, Tioga United gained a nod of approval from the City of Philadelphia to operate a NAC program, now that Allegheny West Foundation leadership decided not to renew its contract for a NAC grant this year. This is very good news for the community because even though AWF is no longer offering NAC services, the community will not lose out. Services will continue. "Our NAC was officially established in March. We were awarded the contract when Allegheny West decided they wouldn't do it anymore. So we cover the same census track including our area, to provide services.

Elizabeth Stokes, the Tioga United NAC Coordinator commented, "We do housing foreclosure outreach. We do rent rebates for our senior citizens. We also hold quarterly community meetings which are open to the public and generally they take place at the Mercy Family Center at 1939 W. Venango



(Pictured here, Pela McFee, President of Tioga United, Lenore Branum, staff member for Tioga United NAC and Elizabeth Stokes, Tioga United NAC Coordinator. 5 days a week The Tioga United NAC Office at 1539 W. Venango Street)

Street. The next community meeting will be at 6pm on Thursday, September 26th.

Pela said, "Tioga United has been in existence for over 24 years. They are an official 501 C-3 non-profit organization. The mission is to build the Tioga community one step at a time. We want to stay plugged into our community. We want to stay connected

to and be a part of the most cherished events that happen in our community on an annual basis. We always want to see this community grow economically and we're about doing all we can to help keep our community clean, which is a major challenge every day."

Pela added, "We are happy to have been selected to be a NAC site to further uplift and assist people in the heart of our neighborhood who could use a little extra help along the way. We look forward to servicing the community. "

Lenore Branum also works in the Tioga United NAC office and she said she's glad to be there and to also do her part to assist people from the community who call the office, or walk through their doors.

The office is open Mondays-Fridays, 9am-5:30pm and the address is 1539 W. Venango Street, Phila., 19140. The office phone number is 267-639-6912

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New Voting Machines

continued from page 1

Over the summer of 2019, the new machines were unveiled in several communities, giving some would-be voters a shot at seeing how they operate. However the concern is that the general population of dedicated voters in Philadelphia might just get a shock when they enter their polling place come November 5th.

Leaders at Allegheny West Foundation are doing their best to get one of the machines at the Panati Recreation Center before November 5th, so that area residents who want to do a test run on the new machines will have the opportunity to do just that. Be ready. Be prepared. The new voting machines are here and they will be used across the city come November 5th.

Philadelphia City Commissioners voted to approve a new voter-verifiable paper ballot voting system to be implemented in the November 2019 General Election. In April of 2018, the Department of State, in conjunction with Governor Wolf, informed all 67 of Pennsylvania's counties that they must have a voter-verifiable paper record voting system selected no later than December 31, 2019, and preferably in place for use in the November 2019 General Election. With their selection of the Election Systems & Software, LLC

ExpressVote XL the City of Philadelphia has met the Governor's selection deadline.

"Today is a momentous day," said City Commissioner Chair Lisa Deeley. "Today, we voted to give the City's voters a secure and resilient system with an auditable voter-verifiable paper-ballot. We look forward to the next steps which are educating our poll workers and voters. I hope everyone will come out to our public trainings." Vice Chair, Commissioner Al Schmidt echoed her comments saying that "It's critically important that we make voting easier and equally accessible for all Philadelphians while also considering the need for a secure, resilient voting system. Every voter in Philadelphia should be confident that their ballots are cast securely, and their votes are counted accurately, and our new, auditable paper ballot system will help ensure that."

In her remarks before the vote, Commissioner Deeley applauded activists who supported hand-marked paper ballots for their passion and their feedback, which contributed to the process. However, the Commissioners choose to stick with an all machine method of voting because of voters' preference for the current style of voting on full-faced machines, the short timeline to retrain poll workers and voters, and the concerns of disability advocates that

implementing hand-marked paper ballots would treat voters with disabilities unequally by requiring them to use a separate voting system.

CAG Nat. Museum Excursion

The Community Action Group, (CAG) is another of our positive, very active organizations in the Allegheny West area of North Philadelphia. They meet regularly and they make positive things happen in the community. Darece Wiliford is the president. Their meeting dates for the remainder of the year are Tuesday, November 12, 2019 and Tuesday, December 10, 2019. This is our end of year fellowship. Special treats for all who attend!!

All meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at Devereaux United Methodist Church, 26th & Allegheny Avenue, Phila., PA 19132

Community Action Group has a trip planned for Saturday, November 16, 2019 to travel to Washington, D.C. to visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture. There was such a request to repeat their 2016 trip, they decided to go again. All monies for seats are due by October 8, 2019.

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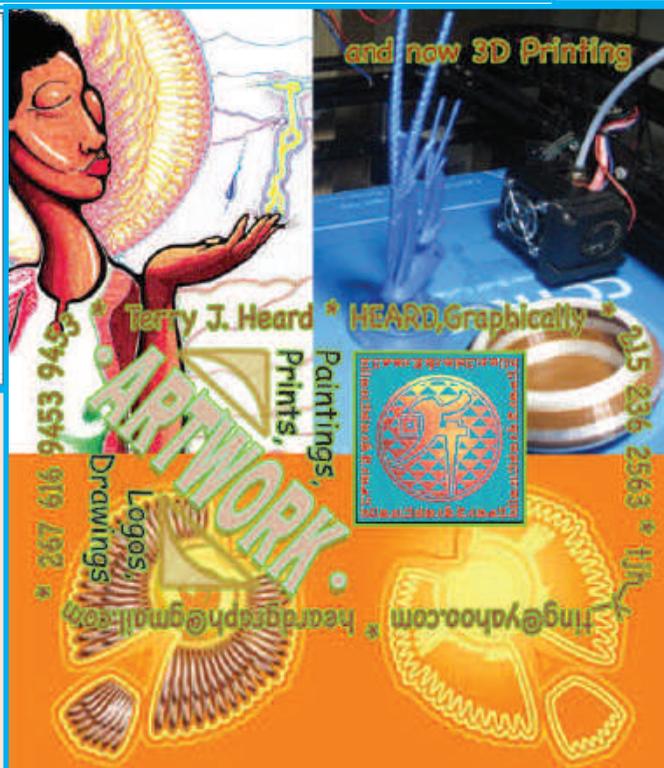
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A Look Back At the AWF Summer Youth Service Project



Pictured here are AWF students who did surveys in the neighborhood and worked on plans for remodeling Panati Rec Center



Pictured here are AWF students and instructors from the Community Design Collaborative who worked on a plan for what the inside of Panati Rec Center could look like, after remodeling



Pictured here are AWF students w/staff and instructors from Community Design Collaborative



Pictured here is an AWF student walking w/Community Design Collaborative Instructor as they walk along N. 22nd Street brainstorming ideas for Panati Rec Center



Pictured here are some of the AWF students assigned to work out of Panati Rec Center over the summer 2019

By Kendra Harris, Director, AWF Elementary Level Afterschool Program & Thera Martin, AW Newspaper Managing Editor

Every year at the beginning of the summer youth jobs program, we meet with teens who largely have one vision: Making money over the summer so they can have spending money or so they can buy some of the things they need as they go back to school in the Fall. Few of them actually think about the fact that they are so lucky to be getting a summer job, even if only for six weeks. None of them think about the fact that thousands of students every year in Philadelphia, wish they had a summer job. Wish they could earn some money, but because they didn't apply soon enough, or because they just didn't know about the opportunity, they miss out.

Luckily for some 260 teens enrolled in the Allegheny West Foundation summer youth jobs program over the summer of 2019, they were at the right place at the right time. They turned in all required information and they were given the opportunity to work at various locations confirmed by staff of the Allegheny West Foundation.

Jacques Louis, Director of the Allegheny West Foundation Education program said, "Some of the students we work with each summer get a special opportunity to participate in what we call our "community service learning project". Students on this track learn about conducting community

surveys to learn what are the major concerns of the community. They do a couple clean-up projects in the community. They also learn about various ways in which one can strengthen the community where they live. Allegheny West has a great working relationship and agreement with the Community Design Collaborative, a center city based non-profit that engages with organizations like ours. They work with youth from the community on special projects. Since the Panati Recreation Center on North 22nd Street is slated for remodeling and a major facelift in 2020, we figured what better time than now, to get fresh ideas from youth about what the new Panati Recreation Center building will look like, inside. The Community Design Collaborative sent us their best and their brightest professional designers and architects to teach the youth how to document design ideas and begin to layout a plan for what a recreation building can look like, inside. Right now the design ideas that our youth came up with, are on display downtown at the main headquarters for the Community Design Collaborative at 1218 Arch Street. They were part of a big presentation there in August, just before the conclusion of the summer youth program. The city of Philadelphia has come up with the money to develop the outside of Panati, and our youth were charged with developing ideas, using architectural processes to design indoor

space. They then applied their own ideas.

Kendra Harris, Director for the AWF Elementary level after school program and summer youth program says the summer of 2019, the program, went well. "We started out with 200 youth, but so many teens were applying for jobs, we went back to the Philadelphia Youth Network, (PYN) and asked for an additional fifty slots for summer jobs. We were approved for that additional fifty. We actually had about two hundred and seventy youth who signed up. We had over sixty job sites, and they ranged from our traditional work site locations such as the office of PA State Senator Sharif Street and the office of City Councilwoman Cindy Bass, several Salvation Army sites and Tioga United Community Development Corporation, (CDC). We enjoyed support once again from some of the business owners along the North 22nd Street Business Corridor including Eric Holt Optical, Jazzy Shears, DUAFE's Natural Hair Care Salon, Lorraine's Boutique, Lorraine's Hair Salon, and a few others. This year for the first time, we were able to pick up thirteen Police Athletic League, (PAL) Centers as work site locations for our youth. We also picked up three churches as work sites for our youth this summer. Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church was one location. We also got From the Heart Church, at 20th and Erie and we picked up Sharon Knights Athletics, (an off-shoot of Sharon Baptist Church in West Philadelphia).

Youth Jobs Program and Community Projects 2019



Here are some of the AWF students 2019 who came in to pick up their paychecks after a busy week working and learning



Here is one of our AWF students doing presentation before adults, about what teens envision the new Panati Rec Center to look like, after remodeling. AWF Education Director Jacque Louis looks on



Here, some of the Allegheny West summer of 2019 Youth Workers cleaning up along a block in N. Phila.)



Here is one of our summer 2019 Youth Workers assigned to work at the Kelly Real Estate Office



(Photo of 4 of the teens who worked at Allegheny West Foundation Community Store, Timeeka Tompkins, Anya Ings, Aamir Seaton and Janiya Dillard)

Our Youth Speak

My time at Tastykake Thrift Outlet, (the Allegheny West Community Thrift Store is the new name, but everyone from the neighborhood still just calls the store "The TastyKake Thrift Outlet), has been good. I say that because I learned a lot over the six weeks I got to work there. The only thing I would have liked to learn is, how to use the cash register. Time ran about before I was able to get that training. Other than the fact that I was the only boy assigned to work at a certain time of day every day, I managed to get through. The 4 girls I worked with were like my sisters and we got along well. But to tell the truth, I was glad to see it, when some other teen guys were assigned to also work in the same time framer as me, so I didn't feel as much alone. There are two other boys here and I'm not doing most of the heavy lifting. Also cleaning 22nd is very dirty and our goal when we go out there it is to make an effort and to make it look different from when we went out there.

I am so thankful for the opportunity the Allegheny West Foundation gave me this summer. Working at the Tastykake Thrift Store has taught me many things including leadership and responsibility. Even though some days at the store were slow and sometimes we had to do boring activities, I never wanted to stay home from work. I also had the joy of giving back to my community. I learned how to take my time with things and not rush into it. Overall it was a wonderful learning experience and I would be glad to do it again next year

By **Aamir Seaton** with contributing support by **Janiya Dillard** (Summer Youth Workers)

While working at the Tastykake thrift outlet store I learned a lot. Honestly before I came to the Allegheny West Foundation Community Store for my summer job, I already knew I needed to work on my people skills. I'm just a very quiet, to myself kind of person. But when you work in a store where people come in to buy milk and snacks and stuff, you gotta speak. At first though, when people would walk through the door, I didn't greet them or anything until Malik, my immediate supervisor got with me. He said, "You got to work on that,. You can't be letting customers walk into the store and not say hello or welcome, or something. " I noticed that if I wanted people to come to a store I worked at I had to show respect to them, welcome them, act like I wanted them to be there. I was cool after a few days training, working in the community store and greeting customers, stocking shelves and learning how to operate the cash register and count money fast. All that was fine.

I thought for sure I'd survive my summer job. Then came the day when Malik told us we had to go up on N. 22nd Street along the business corridor which runs from 22nd and W. Lehigh down to 22nd and W. Allegheny. Do street clean-up work? Me? Plus it was hot as heck outside? I did not want to do that assignment. When I learned that a small team of us teens had to clean N. 22nd Street with our supervisor watching over us and directing us, my first thought was , I wanted to quit at first. But after I got an attitude adjustment, I rethought my feelings. Finally I came to the conclusion, "If we don't do it now, like right now, then who will?" Why live somewhere that is not clean and not make any effort to clean up.

By **Anya Ings** with contributing support by **Timeeka Tompkins** (Summer Youth Workers)

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Congressman Dwight Evans



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City Councilwoman Cindy Bass



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PA State Senator Vincent Hughes



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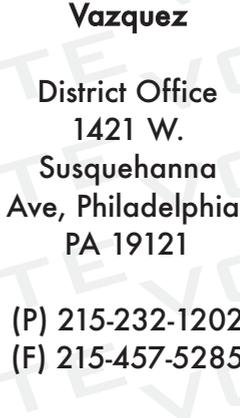
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(F) 215-685-0290

39th Police District Report To The People



39th Police District, 2201 W HUNTING PARK AVE. (215) 686-3390/(215) 686-3391

Saturday, September 21, 2019, the 39th Police District did a repeat of an event that seems to be a big hit with the community. They did a **“Line Dancing for Peace”** event outside, right there at 2201 W. Hunting Park Avenue at the 39th Police District headquarters. **Community Relations Officer Joseph Lukaitis** stated, I think the Captain thought I was crazy when I first came to him with this idea we cooked up, but he supported the concept and we've been pleased with the results. Saturday, September 28th, the 39th Police District held another free food giveaway. This event was supported by the Police/Clergy of the 39th Police District and by the 39th Police District PDAC. Participants had to bring ID with them and bring paper bags or other grocery bags. 39th Police District **Captain Anthony Ginaldi** has announced a PSA-2 meeting will take place at the same location, **October 24th at 7pm** and the Captain will hold a **Town Hall meeting October 28th at 6pm** at the 39th Police

District Headquarters.

Also, the Philadelphia Police Department is hiring police officer recruits. **“Be the Difference”**. The starting salary is **\$54,856** a year. Requirements are as follows: Must have a high school diploma or equivalent. Must be a minimum of 22 years of age by date of employment. To receive veteran, education or police explorer preference points, documentation must be uploaded at the time of application or mailed to: P.O. Box 58698, Phila. 19102. Must apply online at **www.JOINPHILLYPD.com**. For more information, call **215-683-COPS (2677)**.

The main phone number for the 39th Police District is **215-686-3390**. The email address is **police.co_39@phila.gov**.

If you see something wrong that could mean life or death, say something! Call 911!

**Calling All Future
Junior Police Explorers Cadets**

by Sydia Taylor

If any young adults ages 14-20 are interested in being a **Police Officer** then check out the **Police Explorer Cadet Program**. Some information you should know about the **Police Cadet Program** is you need to do an application for the program.

Then you have to go to two interviews for the program. Another important thing you need to know is to be prepared for the rigorous physical training.

The final important information you need to know is it's a \$25.00 registration and insurance fee. You also have to pay \$350.00 for the uniform.

To get all the information you need to know about the **Police Cadet Program** then go to the website at **http://www.ppdexplorers.org/** and if you want to call them here is there number if you have any more questions or comments then call **215-685-816**.



State Rep. Rosita Youngblood in Center City

Rep. Rosita Youngblood Announces Major Grant for Allegheny West Foundation

center have been an integral part of the Allegheny West community. It provides families and neighbors opportunities to gather, interact and enjoy the outdoors," Youngblood said. "I thank Governor Wolf for his commitment in allocating this grant to improve and benefit the community for years to come."

The project will construct a larger, one-story recreation center that will provide an adequate number of restrooms, house future community programs, and be more cost-effective over time. The project is estimated to cost just over \$2 million.

In 2014, the Panati Playground was closed for 10 months for renovations that included a spray park, more lighting, surveillance cameras, a repaved basketball

court, new playground equipment, a walking path, and an outdoor exercise area. The park reopened in July 2015.

The Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program is a commonwealth grant program administered by the Office of the Budget for the acquisition and construction of regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational and historical improvement projects.

Ron Hinton, President of the Allegheny West Foundation, (AWF), the members of the Board of Directors of AWF and the community says Thank you Rep. Rosita C. Youngblood. Also special thanks to PA State Senator Sharif Street for his support in securing grant to help rebuild Panati Recreation Center.

State Rep. Rosita Youngblood announced great news for the Allegheny West Foundation recently. This nonprofit organization was been awarded a \$1 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant to help fund the construction of a new recreation center at Panati Playground along the North 22nd Street Commercial Corridor.

"The playground and current recreation

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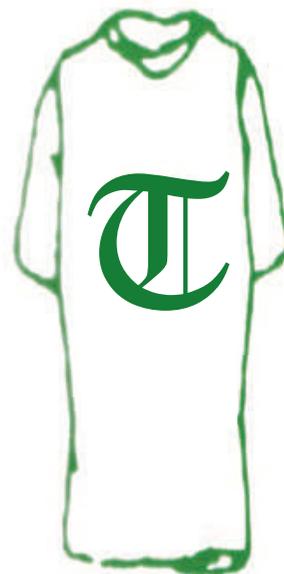
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Happy 20th Anniversary To Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music



(Pictured here some of the students who have attended the Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music, (GEGISOM), along with the President, Joyce Drayton

By Thera Martin

"I remember back in the day when my parents demanded that my sister and I take up a musical instrument for study. In many African American homes in the 1950's and 1960's, that was the rule.

Somewhere along the way in the 1970's that concept stopped. My musical instrument of choice was guitar and my sister's musical instrument of choice was piano. Neither of us ever got to be great players of the instruments we chose, but it was about adding some 'culture' to our lives, as our parents used to explain it to

us.

I'd like to think if my sister and I had had the opportunity to attend a music school like The Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music, (GEGISOM), perhaps we would have learned to play better and hung in their longer with our music studies, Joyce Drayton recalled. Today Joyce Drayton is the president and CEO of The Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music and very proud of it, as they mark their 20th anniversary this year.

Joyce Drayton has many fond memories of her mother and how she was the beacon of musical light for the family. "Dedication and steadfastness characterize the life and legacy of my mother, Georgia Elise Gregory. Those attributes manifested themselves in her love and appreciation of sacred music. My mother was a self-taught musician. She shared her gift from God with members of her family and church and community. Her dedication to the music of the saints dates back to her childhood in Jeffries, Virginia where she learned to play hymns at church. After moving to Philadelphia, she attended William Penn High School and went on

to attend Virginia Union College. For more than 40 years my mother directed the Sunday School Choir of Nazarene Baptist Church and involved over 800 children in this ministry of music. She exposed her audiences to various forms of church music including anthems, spiritual hymns and gospel. Some of her students were motivated to become choir members accomplished church musicians and choir directors. Amongst those inspired by her enthusiasm and passion was me, her daughter. You know the saying, "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree."

"I'm proud to say that I've served as the Minister of Music for Nazarene Baptist Church for over sixty-two years and I've continued the work my mother started through the Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music"

Today GEGISOM has a diversified curriculum that represents all genres of music styles to serve students who enroll for music or performing arts instruction.

In July of 2009, GEGISOM celebrated 10
Continued on page 15

InnovAge Organization Good for Low-Income Seniors In Our Community

By Thera Martin

What a breath of fresh air for senior citizens who live in certain zip codes in PA. Help has arrived through an organization called InnovAge, "Life On Your Terms". InnovAge Life is an alternative to nursing facilities that helps our elderly age independently and it provides almost all medical care and social support services a seasoned citizen could ask for.

The good news is, that there's an InnovAge Life Center located at 1940 W. Allegheny Avenue. Prior to InnovAge being there, New Courtland Life Center was there. InnovAge is larger than New Courtland with even more to offer the elderly in our low income communities.

Veronica Lyons, RN, MA, Center Director at the Allegheny Avenue location stated, "InnovAge is an all-inclusive program for seniors. I like to summarize it by saying we soup to nuts. In Pennsylvania, we're called life. We're really a PACE program. Life is an acronym that stands for "Living Independent for Elders and we're called life in Pennsylvania because there's a PACE prescription drug program. PACE is an acronym also. Program for all inclusive care for elders. We provide services to participants, (seniors), 55 and older and there is also an

income requirement. We look at Medicare and Medicaid and dual eligible participants and we try to provide the care all under one umbrella. When I say soup to nuts, we have social workers, nurse practitioners, physicians, nurses that see participants in the clinic as well as in their homes. We have home health aide services. We have CNA's that work with participants in the adult day care center. Seniors who are registered participants can come for socialization as well as getting their medical care here too. They can see the dentist, the audiologist, the podiatrist psychiatrists, psychologist,. We like to have everything we can have, under one umbrella and to coordinate the care. Our goal is to help seniors stay as independent as possible, live in the community, if they want to. Nobody says I want to go live at a nursing home. We want to help seniors thrive where they are with our support and the support of their families and loved ones."

To help make it easy for seniors to get to InnovAge Life, the organization provides transportation to and from their centers, according to Veronica Lyons. Lyons also shared that when seniors are a part of the InnovAge program, they're medications are provided to



them at no cost.

"We provide all this care at no cost to our participants who qualify. With medications, people often have to decide do I eat, or do I get my prescriptions filled? We provide those services for our participants and we deliver their medications to them at their homes, just in an effort to make their quality of life better. We want them to live their lives however they want to, in their homes. It's a good program."

For the senior citizens who are overwhelmed with old houses in need of too many expensive repairs, InnovAge has an answer for that too. They have counselors who work with seniors in that situation to assist them in applying for special programs created by the city that offer assistance to low-income

Continued on page 15

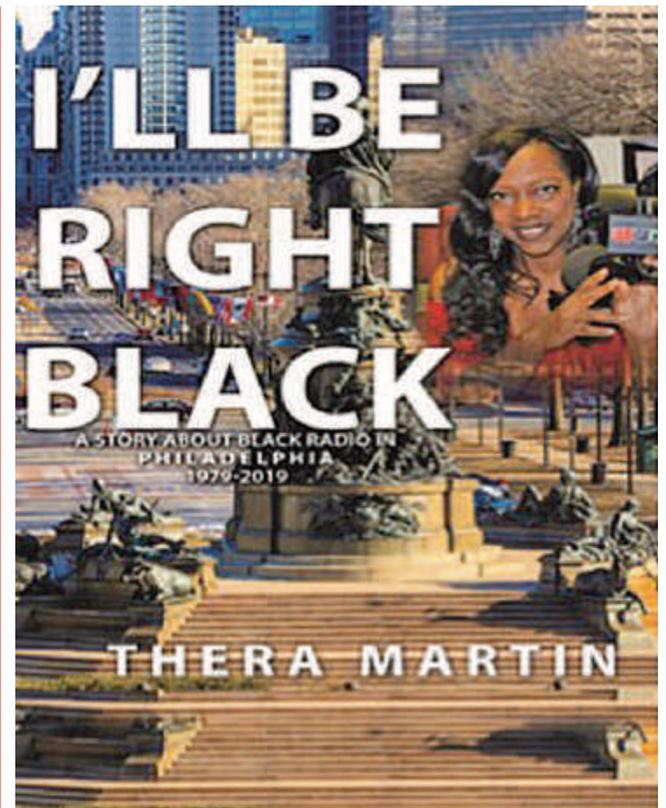
Councilwoman Cindy Bass Says Tour of Cristo Rey School Was Impressive

Councilwoman Cindy Bass stated, "The Cristo Rey School is a fantastic example of what I think a good school should be. This school just opened this Fall in my district and is located at 1717 W. Allegheny Avenue. It's a private, Catholic School, however it's free. Parents have to apply for their child to attend this school. You have to be low income and a resident of Philadelphia. The students who are enrolled at the school, which serves students in ninth grade through 12th grade, get job opportunities while attending Cristo Rey. Once they graduate, they're offered jobs from the various sites where they've worked. For example, I have a friend whose child is enrolled at Cristo Rey. This young lady has been an intern at Comcast for the last two or three years. They love her and she's doing a great job there. There's no doubt in my mind that when she graduates, they will hire her. Not only is the young lady getting a great

opportunity, she's also helping to diversify a corporation that can use more diversity. One of the things I learned when I did the tour at Cristo Rey a few weeks back, is that one hundred percent of their students who graduate from Cristo Rey are accepted into colleges and universities. Fifty percent of those graduates get a free ride right off the bat because of academic performance. The other fifty percent, they work hard and find the money to be able to get them enrolled in college. It's a private school, but it's like a public school because it doesn't cost parents anything. You have to qualify and apply. It is not funded by the School District of Philadelphia. It's funded from private corporations."

According to the Cristo Rey web site this new building came with a forty million dollar price tag. The school has one hundred thousand square feet of space, set on seven

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Coming Soon

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Congressman Evans Says Trump Forced House's Hand on Impeachment

Philadelphia congressman has supported impeaching Trump since 2017

Congressman Dwight Evans (PA-03) welcomed the growing support for opening the recent formal impeachment inquiry of President Trump.

"Starting a formal impeachment inquiry is necessary because we have to stop the damage Trump has been doing to our government, to our Constitution, to our democracy. Washington Post columnist Eugene Robinson gave a good overview of this recently," Evans said.

"To add to Eugene Robinson's points, both President Truman and legendary Speaker Sam Rayburn used to say, 'A jackass can kick a barn down, but it takes a carpenter to build one.' The work of rebuilding must start with cleansing the Oval Office.

"An allegation of trying to use the power of the presidency against another country, in the context of withholding funds that Congress approved, to create dirt on a political opponent - this is incredibly serious and must be investigated.

"Let's be clear: I have been for impeachment since 2017 - as more and more members have come to see, Trump's actions have forced our hand. It is our duty. A president must be held to a high standard. The soul of America is at stake.

"Impeachment is not a cause for celebration - it is too serious for anyone from either party to

fall back on the usual party politics. No one should be above the law. The House, the Senate and the White House ALL have a duty to work for the citizens. It's not supposed to be the other way around.

"Beginning a formal impeachment investigation is about protecting the Constitution that was written and signed nearly 250 years ago in Philadelphia.

"The Democratic majority in the House can investigate and legislate at the same time - we've already been doing both for over eight months now. We can address challenges such as infrastructure, health care, education, gun violence & poverty, regardless of who is in the Oval Office. The Senate can too."

In other news from Congressmen Dwight Evans, he and Ron Estes (R-Kansas) introduced bipartisan legislation this week to address a critical shortage of certified nursing assistants (CNAs). Evans and Estes serve together on the influential House Ways and Means Committee, which oversees much of the U.S. health care system.

Their Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act (H.R. 4468) would allow nursing homes that have been forced to suspend in-house CNA education programs after receiving a certain level of penalties to resume those programs once

quality standards are met.

Evans said, "This common-sense legislation would help nursing homes to fix problems that are identified, which would be a win for everyone affected - the patients, their families and the nursing homes. It's important to work across party lines on points of agreement so we can make progress for the people we represent."

Estes said, "The Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act will help address critical shortages of CNAs, especially in rural areas, by allowing nursing homes to resume CNA education programs faster. This bipartisan legislation ensures nursing homes continue to meet high standards without losing staffing levels that are needed for quality care."

In-house CNA education at nursing homes is often free to the CNA candidate, allowing students to avoid the burden of paying for an education program at a local community college or school which may or may not exist in their geographic area. This helps meet the need for CNAs while allowing nursing homes to build their own pipelines of skilled nursing staff.

Under current law, nursing homes that receive a threshold number of penalties for deficiencies in quality have a two-year mandatory suspension placed on in-house CNA

Continued on page 15

THE ALLEGHENY WEST FOUNDATION & T.M. PEIRCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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@ T.M. Peirce Elementary School
2300 W. Cambria Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19132
Principal Anthony Gordon

For more information about this After School Program, contact Coordinator: **Kendra Harris**
T. 267-325-4626

Gregory School of Music

Continued from page 12

years of providing music training and education serving over 2000 youth and 350 adults and employment for over 85 instructors.

In July of 2016, Joyce Drayton, her husband Stan, their board of directors, staff, and students observed their 15th anniversary .

GEGISOM is a non-profit, faith-based, charitable, performing arts institution. They were established to provide a safe, creative, facility, where at-risk inner city youth can experience social, cognitive, and cultural

development through music and the performing arts in the under-served community of North Philadelphia. Further, the music school was established to provide a venue where adults can be trained in music and music careers and to provide quality music education and training to schools and organizations in the community through their GEGISOM Young Scholars Program.

What do they teach at GEGISOM? They teach individual and group music training. Dance instruction on and off site, Piano, organ, keyboard, guitar, percussion, violin, voice, hand

bell classes, drama classes on and off site, music tech classes on and off site and more.

The 20th anniversary for The Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music took place July 13, 2019 and was observed at the Hilton Hotel on City Avenue with a major celebration.

If you want to support this African American owned and operated music school, call the school at 215-430-0435 to purchase tickets, or email the school at gegisom@aol.com for more details.

InnovAge Organization Good for Low-Income Seniors

Continued from page 12

homeowners who are senior citizens. They also share information on affordable senior housing they can move to, once owning a home because too much to handle anymore.

InnovAge Life moved to 1940 W. Allegheny Avenue about a year ago, (August 2018) and to be clear, the services have not been a major

change from New Courtland Life, to InnovAge Life. The services are still very much the same.

Veronica Lyons commented, "The idea is to get what PACE does for elders on a national platform. There's so many seniors that don't know about PACE or Life and they're missing out on a lot of opportunities— things that could help improve their quality of life. The idea is that if we

can get this on a national platform and have people know, we can service more elders. That's what's needed".

To learn more about the InnovAge Life Program, you can call 267-335-1500 or log onto their web site at www.myinnovage.com

Congressman Evans Speaks

Continued from page 13

certification programs. In 2017 alone, 277 skilled nursing facilities had a suspension of their training program due to this statutory mandate, and nearly 2,900 were unable to start such a program in 2017 due to this requirement. This penalty can be imposed for a single deficiency that may not have included harm to a resident or an episode that does not reflect systemic problems.

The Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act would allow suspensions on in-house CNA education to be rescinded once deficiencies are assessed and found to be remedied, while allowing for additional oversight of facilities not exceeding the original two years.

Evans represents the 3rd Congressional District, which includes Northwest and West Philadelphia and parts of North, South, Southwest and Center City Philadelphia.

Councilwoman Cindy Bass

Continued from page 13

acres of land in the Allegheny West neighborhood of North Philadelphia. It's a private Catholic High School for low-income students, which combines work study and academics. This new campus, which has incorporated a more than century old former tricycle factory at the site, has allowed the school to expand from 490 students to 600 in grades ninth through twelfth grades.

Learn about working in broadcast communications, the excitement, the challenges, the commitment to reach success in the industry from Radio Veteran Thera Martin. For book signing event date and other details, log on at www.theramartin.com

VOTE

General Election Day is Tuesday, November 5th

Polls open at 7am.

Close at 8pm

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Be ready to go to the Voting Polls on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 for General Election Day!

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Voting Polls Open at 7am-8pm. Voters in line by 8pm must be allowed to vote.

Be reminded, The City of Philadelphia will be using brand new voting machines November 5th!

Report issues or problems encountered at the polling place to the Philadelphia County Board of Elections at **215-686-1590** or call the District Attorney's Office at **215-686-9641**.

Review election procedures and voting machine instructions before Election Day at philadelphiovotes.com



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