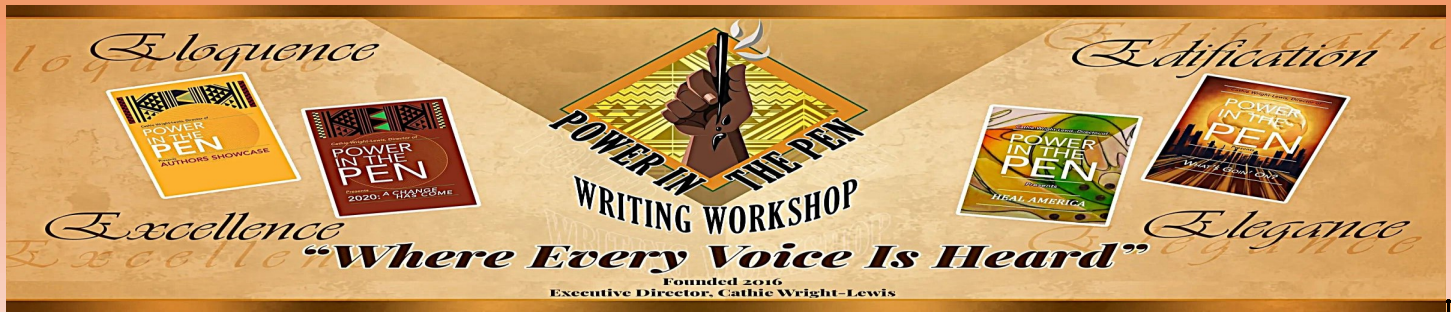


# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 3 | SEPT 2024 | VOLUME 1

POWER IN THE PEN, INC.



## VOTE TUES NOV 5, 2024

### “Do Something”

Vice-President of the United States, Kamala Harris is currently the democratic nominee for the 2024 presidential election. Power in the Pen Writing Workshop, Inc. proudly endorses her candidacy. We understand the social injustices that exist, and we collectively desire a voice that reflects our experiences and our hope for the future. Kamala Harris is an extension of our lives, hopes and dreams. Vice-President Kamala Harris’s stance on women’s health is an important platform that is shared here at PITP WW, Inc. Her vision to protect and serve every citizen: man, woman and child, including those seeking lawful entry into the United States is applauded. Disparities in health often result in disproportionate adverse health events for people of color. Maternal health in America is currently at crisis levels. Black women are three-times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related event than their White counterparts. The Biden Administration along with Vice-President Harris are committed to making sure women retain their reproductive rights and that women receive adequate healthcare services. Poverty, systemic racism, and the lack of adequate services are drivers that often result in morbidity and mortality. According to Collins, S.R., et al. “Gaps in women’s health and care could widen further, especially for women of color and those with low incomes who live in states that have restricted access to reproductive health care” Our votes count toward the sustainability of life, promise and a continued democracy.

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#### SPECIAL EVENTS!

##### 3rd ANNUAL GALA AND FUNDRAISER

October 12, 2024

Glen Terrace

5313 Ave N

Brooklyn, NY 11234

<https://powerinthepenww.org/>

##### Brooklyn Book Festival

16 Court St.,

Brooklyn, New York, NY 11201

PITP Booth #128

##### BRIC Media

B-Score: Unexpected Artistry

Running for my Life

By Chante Graham

Thu, October 3, 2024 | 5:30pm

(see page 14)



## Cathie Wright-Lewis

### Executive Director

**Cathie Wright-Lewis** (born August 30, 1958) is the founder of Power in the Pen WW Inc. The workshop was developed after she retired from a realized career in education. As a high-school English teacher and adjunct college professor at CUNY Medgar Evers College, she endeavored to raise the trajectory of the student's lives by increasing their scholastic ability. Her love of her community along with her love for writing and teaching peaked into a symmetry of community engagement. Cathie Wright-Lewis grew up in the housing projects in Brownsville Brooklyn, and public education consisted of busing to school, a result of the New York City school boycotts in the sixties. The actual Boycott on February 3, 1964 was "one of the largest demonstrations of the Civil Rights Movement". Milton Galamison, of the Brooklyn branch NAACP began a crusade to eradicate de facto segregation. His efforts formed the coalition of parents, teachers and local leaders named the Parents Workshop for Equality in New York City Schools. Cathie Wright-Lewis was a child educated from the social justice protests of the past. She received a public education in the City of New York as a result of a community's desire for equality in education. She continues her work in the same great tradition. She is an author of several books, her first book titled, *Maurya's Seed - Why Hope Lives Behind Project Walls* - an allegorical, Afro-futuristic tale of a family of community activists in Brownsville, Brooklyn circa 1963", this story examines the many layers that life has to offer. As a result of her experiences in the Brooklyn community of Brownsville, Cathie has dedicated her life and passion to educating underserved communities and providing a space for healing through writing, sharing and community. Power in the Pen Writing Workshop is now bi-coastal serving both the east coast and the west coast, while building programs for school-aged children (Power in the Pencil, Workshop). Our hopes and dreams are realized through the foundational support provided by women like Cathie Wright-Lewis, women presented in this special issue, and women in the lives of us all. "Wright-Lewis' vision of the non-profit's framework to run a s a 'collective' maintained with the assistance of all of its members has begun to manifest. Rich with expertise of their own, members offer their talents, skills and professions to ensure the organization's success - to establish safe spaces and offer publishing for unsung voices of African descent.







**POWER IN THE PEN, INC.**

**ISSUE NO 3 | SEPT 2024 | VOLUME 1**

## **IN DIVINE TIME**



**Kamala Harris**

**Vice-President of the United States**

### **Pink Flower Moon**

Against the sky  
Ink blue, no stars  
Moon so big and round  
Like a roti in the sky  
You garnish the heavens

My life has known many moons  
Full and crescent,  
Waning and waxing,  
Super and soft,  
Many moons!

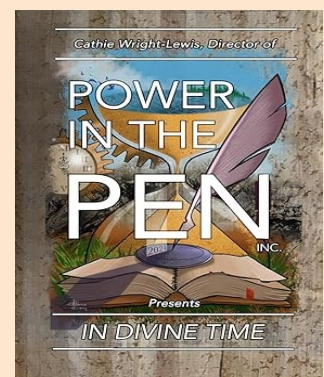
Indians gave moons all kinds of  
names  
Raspberry and Ricing,  
Snow and Strawberry  
Honey and Harvest

Yet I am speechless at your sight  
You startle my eyes  
Moon so big and round  
Like a roti in the sky  
Pink, with just a hint of blush,  
Wow! A once in a blue moon  
kind of thing.

As for the heavens, they declare  
with Moons of Blood,  
That decry the times  
And scream about our times  
And the End Times

But you, my Pink Flower Moon,  
Round as a roti  
Suspended in the sky,  
You gently prod my mind,  
You speak of things  
Which must be done  
In God's Divine Time

Andrea Phillips-Merriman



## ***“Do Something”***

**Kamala Devi Harris** (Born October 20, 1964 ) presently 49<sup>th</sup> Vice President of the United States since 2021 serving with President Joe Biden. She is the first African/Asian American highest ranking female, Democratic, vice president official in U.S. history.

Harris was born in Oakland, California to parents Donald J. Harris of Jamaica and Shyamala Gopalan of India. Kamala and her sister, Maya, along with their parents lived in Illinois and Wisconsin. Shyamala moved her daughters to Montreal, Quebec to continue her studies in medicine after a failed marriage. There is where Kamala was greatly influenced in politics by a group of Shyamala's friends including African American intellectuals and civil rights activists. In 1986, Kamala graduated from Howard University, a historical Black university, majoring in political science and economics. She then went on to study law at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law where she served as president of its chapter of the Black Law Students Association, graduating in 1989 with a Juris Doctor.

Kamala ran for District Attorney of Alameda County in San Francisco, California. As District Attorney, she became Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in 1998, prosecuting homicide, burglary, robbery, and sexual assault cases. She worked diligently on resolving homicides cases, clearing quite a few backlogged cases in the process. She pledged never to seek the death penalty. She created a Hate Crimes Unit focusing on crimes against LGBT, children, and teens in schools. She also created an environmental crimes unit and the San Francisco Reentry Division to help adults rebuild their lives. In 2000, Kamala ran the Family and Children's Services Division at the San Francisco City Hall, representing abused and neglected children. Harris served as an attorney general 2010 and 2014 and then U.S. senator in California from 2017-2021. As a senator she fought for the DREAM Act, healthcare reform, taxation, federal legalization of cannabis, and stricter gun control laws. This is only a short list of Kamala's achievements. She continues to strive and make changes.

Kamala sought the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020. However, the nomination was secured by Joe Biden, who chose Harris as his running mate. After Joe Biden dropped out of the 2024 race for the White House, he endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris, making her the Democratic Party presidential nominee in the 2024 United States presidential election. At the Democratic National Convention, former President Barack Obama helped kick off her campaign with the slogan "Yes She Can," reiterating the audience's enthusiasm. Harris' career is supported by her husband, Douglas Emhoff; and stepchildren, Cole and Ella, all whom she loves dearly. Her ways to unwind include: a morning spin class, a cup of chamomile tea, reading cookbooks and preparing meals for her family. She states, "Everything else can be crazy. I can be on six planes in one week, and what makes me feel normal is making Sunday-night family dinner. If I'm cooking, I feel I'm in control of my life" (Silman, 2018).

By Donna Allen-Arnold

***“We walk steadily into the future and out of a past of subjective deniability. We are children of the dust ; the element of sight unseen and geological substance, the image of the Almighty” Dr. Gail Stanback***

**Shirley Chisholm** (November 30, 1924 – January 1, 2005) was an American politician and the first African American woman to be elected to the United States Congress. Shirley Chisholm was born in Brooklyn, New York and her parents were of Guyanese and Barbadian descent. Shirley Chisholm was the director of the Friend in Need Nursery in Brownsville Brooklyn. The Power in the Pen Writing Workshop, Inc. proudly serves the Brownsville community and is housed at the Stone Avenue Library, Heritage House at 581 Mother Gaston Blvd and remains dedicated to the spirit of the great Shirley Chisholm and her trailblazing commitment to progress in the Black community. As we celebrate the official Democratic nomination of Kamala Harris, the first Black and Asian American woman to be elected Vice-President of the United States who will now also represent a major party in the United States presidential election, we must pay homage to the interminable pressure Shirley Chisholm placed on the conscience of America. Although time is fleeting, time spent in the realm of possibility consistently creates patterns of succession. Kamala Harris's alma mater, Howard University is a renowned Black university in Washington, D.C., where on April 21, 1969, Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman to be elected to Congress in 1968, delivered a speech, the same Howard University where the now Democratic nominee is a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Shirley Chisholm stated, “While nothing is easy for the black man in America, neither is anything impossible. Like old man river, we are moving along, and we will continue to move resolutely until our goal of unequivocal equality is attained. We must not be docile, we must not be resigned, nor must we be inwardly bitter. We must see our perspective and we cannot sit in someone's shadow waiting for things to reach out and do things for us.”, Shirley Chisholm's Speech at Howard University – April 21, 1969 | Communication Archives of Women's Political (iastate.edu)



After a period, on January 25, 1972, Shirley Chisholm announced her historic run for President of the United States. As we proudly celebrate Vice-President Kamala Harris, we must always remember the work that has been completed that renders the dream possible. We must also never forget that work continues to be a necessity, or the lives sacrificed so that Black people have the right to vote. No, WE WILL NOT GO BACK. After the Civil War ended, it transformed the South, inevitably transforming society and the United States. Although the war had ended, the stench of racism did not dissipate. Instead, states used laws to disenfranchise Black people. These laws included poll tax, unfair test, and BLACK CODES that required freed slaves to sign unfair labor contracts under the risk of being forced to provide free labor. The freedom of Black people is an undeniable struggle in which the votes of the people remain essential. In 1972, the first woman to ever declare a presidential bid backed by a major party is unequivocally, Shirley Chisholm. She announced her candidacy for President of the United States at Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn, and many believed she was crazy. Shirley's slogan was “unbought and unbossed.” She laid the groundwork for the excitement, exhilaration, anticipation, and possibilities of hope that we witness today. It is our duty and privilege to continue her work and vote in the national election and every eligible election henceforth.





## SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

*Ketanji Jackson Brown*



Former First Lady Michelle Obama said it best at the 2024 Democratic National Convention. "Do Something." Those two powerful words galvanized the crowd as she explained that if you don't like how things are going in your life, as individuals, you have the power to do something about it. Mrs. Obama spoke so eloquently at the convention this year as she endorsed the first Black woman Vice President of the United States of America's 246-year history, Kamala Harris in her bid as President. We celebrate women trailblazers in government this year who "did something" and changed the course of history. One of these women, Ketanji Onyika Brown Jackson made history as the first Black woman to serve on the Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. She was appointed by President Joe Biden and confirmed on April 7, 2022. Her nomination marked a pivotal milestone in the country's judicial system. After her Supreme Court nomination was confirmed, she stated:

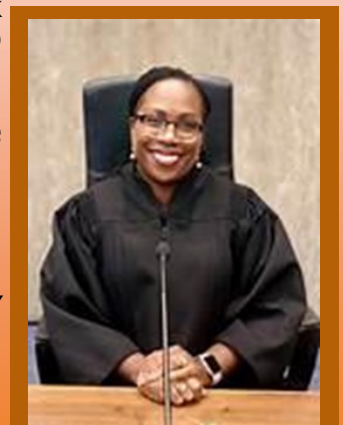
"I am also ever buoyed by the leadership of generations past who helped to light the way. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Justice Thurgood Marshall, and my personal heroine, Judge Constance Baker Motley. They and so many others did the heavy lifting that made this day possible." Judge Constance Baker Motley was the first Black woman to argue a case before the Supreme Court, and in 1966 became the first to serve as a federal judge.

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was born in Washington, D.C. on September 14, 1970, and was raised in Miami, Florida. Her parents, both public school educators, played a significant role in shaping her professional and academic aspirations. Her father Johnny Brown later became an attorney, and her mother Ellery was a school principal and exposed Ketanji to the importance of public service and education which inspired her path toward law. She wanted to follow in her father's footsteps. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1992 despite her high school guidance counselor's advice to set her sights lower. Ketanji, as a young woman, aspired to serve on the nation's highest court one day. After undergrad she attended Harvard Law School and served as the supervising editor of the Harvard Law Review and became an attorney.

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was appointed by President Obama to serve as a district judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. President Biden elevated her to the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 2021. Her reputation as a thoughtful and fair jurist has earned her respect across the political spectrum. Justice Jackson demonstrated unwavering integrity during her grueling confirmation process, answering challenging questions with grace, transparency, and a steadfast commitment to upholding the Constitution and the principles of justice.

Justice Jackson has written over 600 opinions and been reversed less than twelve times. In Jackson's dissent from the Supreme Court's ruling in *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina*, which limited the use of racial preferences in university admissions, she amplified the relationship between Black Americans and the U.S. government writing, "Our country has never been colorblind," and advocated for associating affirmative action as a corrective marker in reconciliation.

Justice Jackson's personal and professional journey from her work as a former public defender to her current role as Supreme Court Justice reinforces her commitment to justice, particularly for those who have been historically underserved in this country. As a Black woman on the highest court, Justice Jackson brings a crucial perspective to legal debates surrounding civil rights, voting rights, and criminal justice reform. In her role she ensures the legal system remains just and equitable, drawing from her personal experiences to inform her judicial decisions. She decided to "do something" to bring about change to the judicial landscape. She has a unique and empathetic approach to the law and is poised to leave a lasting impact on the legal system. Her tenure enhances the diversity of the court and sets a precedent for future generations. The honorable Justice Jackson also has a new memoir, *Lovely One*, which is now in bookstores. *By Chante Graham*



**"Our children are telling me that they see now, more than ever, that, here in America, anything is possible." Justice Ketanji**

## THE LEGAL EASE OF LADY JUSTICE

**Letitia James** (Born October 18, 1959) is a high-ranking American lawyer serving the people of the great State of New York as the 67<sup>th</sup> Attorney General of New York (NYAG). Letitia James was born in Brooklyn and raised in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn. She attended the City University of New York, Lehman College, in the Bronx and received her Juris Doctor degree from Howard University in Washington D.C., the same HBCU attended by now Vice-President and Democratic nominee Kamala Harris. The road to the NYAG's office was not an easy road traveled as James lost her initial bid for office to Democrat James E. Davis, in the 35<sup>th</sup> Council District in 2001. However, two years later, she would be victorious as the first member of Working Families Party to taste victory, winning office in the New York State as the first third-party candidate elected to the City Council in decades. In 2013, Letitia ran for Public Advocate in a pioneering Democratic primary where she received 36% +which forced a runoff against Daniel Squadron. She was victorious in the runoff and became the Democratic nominee for the Public Advocate position and won the election with over 80% of the vote. In 2018, she won the Democratic primary for Attorney General and defeated Republican Keith Wofford in the General Election to become the first woman, and African American, to be elected Attorney General of New York. Present Day, Letitia James remains a Democrat, and her record demonstrates her fiery love of the law, in addition to a belief in social justice.



**Letitia James**

New York State  
Attorney General



**Fani Tiafa Willis**

Fulton County, GA  
District Attorney

**Fani Tiafa Willis** (born October 27, 1971) is the District Attorney for Fulton County, Georgia. Willis is a trailblazer as she is the first woman to hold the office. Her work as district attorney has resulted in a number of high-level indictments in conspiracy and racketeering emanating from the 2020 presidential election in Georgia. Willis was born in Inglewood, California, and moved to Washington D.C. when she was a young child. Her father, a criminal defense attorney John C. Floyd III, was very instrumental in her life. She attended Regina High School, in Maryland and graduated cum laude in 1993 from Howard University in Washington D.C. She later attended Emory University School of Law, in Atlanta. Fani T. Willis is up for re-election against a Republican this November. Her election website states that "she has restored integrity and effectiveness to the office." Her current battles to restore the people's faith in our election system and to hold onto our democracy and our democratic values have gained her the respect of a nation.

## THE LEGAL EASE OF LADY JUSTICE

**Stacey Abrams** (born December 9, 1973) Who is Stacey Abrams? Stacey Abrams is truly one of the most prominent African American female politicians in the United States of America, born in Madison, Wisconsin. This is a state that, at one point, had no Blacks, until 1839 when James Morrison, a slaver, bought one to live there.

Stacey's parents moved the family to Gulfport, Mississippi in 1977 when Stacey's mother, Carolyn, became a librarian at the William Carey College. At the age of four, Stacey and her siblings would go to work with mom, sit on the floor and quietly read. They all loved reading and Stacey's favorite book was The World Book Encyclopedia. Stacey's dad Robert did his best to take care of his family by taking on odd jobs. He worked during the day cutting down tree limbs for his neighbors, cleaning out parking lots, and, at night, working in the shipyards.

Stacey's parents' rules for their children were that they go to church, school, and take care of each other. As Stacey grew in age, she loved speaking in churches and participating in spelling bees. Stacey graduated from Avondale High School in Atlanta, Georgia as valedictorian in 1991. She later went on in 1992 to join protesters in removing the Confederate battle flag symbol from the Georgia state flag. Both of Stacey's parents participated in the civil rights movement; Stacey's mother was kicked off buses when she tried to sit up front and her father, Robert was beaten and jailed for his participation. Carolyn and Robert raised their six children with a 'you-can-be anything' mantra and advocated for civic engagement. Stacey worked hard to bring about political change and for that alone she should be honored.

Stacey's years of political office were effectively spent in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2007-2017. She held the position of minority leader as a Democrat. In 2018 she became the first African American woman in a United States gubernatorial race backed by a major party. Stacey Abrams is an author, and two of her books, *Our Time is Now* and *Lead from the Outside*, were featured on the New York Times best sellers list. In April 2023 Stacey Abrams was named the inaugural Ronald W. Walters Endowed Chair for Race and Black Politics at Howard University with a starting date of September 2023. Fast forward to fall 2024, Stacey has another race to run, and that race is getting people out and organized to vote. Stacey Abrams helped turn her state blue and we are sure that she will do it again. Organizing is key in building a world where we all can feel free, protected, and be what and who we want to be. God created this world not man! Diane Jefferson-Ortiz



**Stacey Abrams**



**Tanya Sue Chutkan**

U.S. District Judge

U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

**Tanya Sue Chutkan** (born July 5, 1962). Judge Tanya Sue Chutkan is a notable jurist appointed to the United States District Court in the District of Columbia, known as Washington, D.C., in 2014. Judge Chutkan is of Caribbean descent, born in Jamaica. She completed her undergraduate degree with a BA in economics, and later graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. After completing her law degree, she spent three years in private practice before practicing trial law for the District of Columbia Public Defender Service. She is well versed on contract litigation and corporate law and served as faculty at Harvard Law School. After a lengthy process that included a Presidential nomination from then President Barack Obama on December 19, 2013, her judicial post was confirmed on June 5, 2014, following a 95-0 vote in the Senate. The high-profile cases that Judge Tanya Sue Chutkan presides over have resulted in her being the target of doxing and swatting forms of harassment. Nothing has deterred her from performing her professional duties. She remains steadfast in her duties as judge, avoiding impropriety and the appearance of impropriety. She is a true trailblazing national treasure.



## POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN A CREATIVE LENS

**Gwendolyn L. Ifill** September 29, 1955 – November 14, 2016) was a political analyst, journalist, author, and first African American woman to host a national news program. She was born in Jamaica, Queens, New York. She is a hometown hero with five living siblings. Her father, an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) minister who emigrated from Panama was of Barbadian descent like her mother. Gwendolyn Ifill was the host of the original program, Washington Week in Review which ran from 1967 to 2005 now known as Washington Week with The Atlantic from 1999 until 2013. Gwen Ifill was a big part of history that began with the U.S. Senate hearings in 1973 with the "Robert McNeil Report" which debuted on WNET Channel 13. Lehrer reported from Washington, D.C. and soon after the program was called the "MacNeil/Lehrer

Report" on PBS. McNeil left in 1995 and Lehrer in 2011. A few years later, Ifill began hosting the PBS NewsHour in 2013 until her death on November 14, 2016. The PBS NewsHour is an important contributor to public affairs in the United States. Gwen Ifill along with Judy Woodruff were promoted to co-anchor in addition to managing editors. They were the first female team in the history of broadcasting news. Americans were given the privilege to watch Gwendolyn Ifill along with Judy Woodruff moderate the presidential primary debate between former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders on April 14, 2016. Her life's accomplishments impact present day history. We are notably on the cusp of receiving the fruits of the collective labor of Gwendolyn Ifill and other Black women who

have adorned their talents and amplified their voices to legitimize a women's role in society, and as leaders of the free world. Her colleagues describe her legacy as immeasurable, a rare and beautiful statement of a trailblazing Black woman in the media.



**Gwendolyn L. Ifill**  
Senior Correspondent



**Donna L. Brazile**  
Political Strategist

**Donna Lease Brazile** (born December 15, 1959) is a well-known political strategist and a member of the democratic party who has served as the acting Chair of the Democratic National Committee in 2011 and 2016. Her tenor as a news commentator has spanned several major networks and she currently is a political contributor on ABC news. Her accomplishments as a political strategist include her work with several presidential candidates that include Jesse Jackson, a national civil rights treasure who made a serious run for president in 1984, the late 42<sup>nd</sup> vice-president Walter Mondale, and the late Geraldine Ferraro, the first Italian American woman to run on a major party national ticket in 1984. Donna Brazile has been a mainstay in the political realm and a voice that resonates

with the American people.

Her work with the democratic party has been at times controversial as she was publicly cited for a gaffe or two; the Hilary Clinton leaked emails provided ammunition for her foes, yet she remained unapologetic for advancing her political strategy. There is no denying her service to this country and to this moment in history. It is with great certitude that we appreciate the magnitude of her contributions to the democratic values of this great nation. Her loyalty to this country is espoused in the following statement "Look, I'm a woman, so I like Hillary. I'm black; I like Obama. But I'm also grumpy, so I like John McCain".

## POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN A CREATIVE LENS

**Joy-Ann M. Lomena-Reid** (born December 8, 1968) is an American progressive journalist and commentator with her own show known as the “ReidOut” which began in 2020 in the middle of Covid19 and a tumultuous election on MSNBC. The very popular show covers national and international politics. Her previous shows include “The Reid Report” and “AM Joy” which aired from 2016-2020. Joy Reid was born in Brooklyn, New York and her father is an African from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Her mother is originally from Guyana and is a college professor and nutritionist. Her parents divorced, and her father moved back to the Congo leaving the mother to raise the children in Denver, Colorado until her death from breast cancer. At the age of 17, Joy moved back to Flatbush Brooklyn to live with her aunt. She is a Harvard graduate and openly discusses how affirmative action worked for her. She states that her acceptance into Harvard came about when a recruiter flew to Denver to hold a pre-interview with her at a local restaurant. She exclaims “I was pulled in—affirmatively.” She describes the affirmative action process as being one that gives qualified students the opportunity to attend the university. She goes on to point out that Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson and Justice Clarence Thomas both gained entrance into Ivy League Schools through affirmative action; but on the other hand, there are unqualified students who have gained access to Ivy League Schools through donations and/or legacy admissions. Where is the fairness in accepting those students?



**Joy Reid**

*Television Host, the “ReidOut”*



**Ida B. Wells**

**Progressive Journalist**

**Ida B. Wells** (born July 16, 1862—March 25, 1931) was a trailblazing American investigative journalist responsible for leading an anti-lynching campaign in late 1800’s. Ida B. Wells was a founder of the National Associate for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She was born into slavery and was emancipated because of the Civil War. The song “Strange Fruit” originally written in 1937 by Abel Meeropol, made famous by Billie Holiday, describes the dark and profound sadness of lynching of African Americans in the South that inspired Ida B. Wells’ contribution to social justice. In 1892 a mob lynched three of her friends. As a result, her editorial crusade emerged. Her notoriety stems from the pivotal part she played in the progressive movement as the original documentarian of the lynchings of African Americans.

“Freedmen’s Schools were created after the abolition of slavery in the United States to educate freedmen.” During the Reconstruction period after the American Civil War, the federal government under

the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, established by Congress, aided nearly 4 million freed African Americans as they assimilated into being freedmen from slavery.

Ida B. Wells was an educator and was educated at Rust University, a freedman’s school in Mississippi. She began teaching at the early age of 14 and taught in Memphis, Tennessee. She attended Fisk University, a university now with a 150-year history that began in 1865, six months after the Civil War. After writing some newspaper articles critical of the educational system for AA children, her teaching contract was not renewed. However, her social justice initiatives remain part of our history and culture.

## Profound—My Transforming Visit at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

By Hyacinth Black

How profound was it to get a taste of the past, emotions tugging at my heart as I saw the chains my ancestors were bound by. Taught to be ashamed of our heritage scales of ignorance fell from my eyes while I absorbed the construct of the slave ship, middle passage.

The exploitation of humanity human cargo reduced to property, the act of this atrocity made a knot in my stomach because how could I imagine the hurt, embarrassment, and shame they embodied in those moments?

Transatlantic slave trade everlasting effects still felt by human greed sitting in White House's, while the masses suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, false indoctrination, and broken families still in existence. The cries of babies being ripped from the bosom of a mother that screeching cry reached my heart, and I am not a mother. How should I feel after this enlightened experience? pissed yes, I am, how can I be the same after seeing the dehumanizing travesties against my people, I'm not. America is the land of the free the home of the brave but built off the backs of slaves and sweat. Dynasties and empires still remain, and they live off the blood and tears of an entire nation, I Continue to question myself as my mind expands this is not my home, is it? Africans fought in every war such as the Spanish American war and Korean War, this information was hidden from me but like John Hope Franklin said, "we have to tell the unvarnished truth". This special place reveals years of pain and secrets unfolded before me, with triumphs attached that made me smile; like the black Wall Street of Tulsa Oklahoma, which is no more because they were a threat to capitalism; and Fredrick Douglass a social reformer, abolitionist, and writer who taught himself to read, taught other slaves as well, and advocated for women's rights. The flooding of triumphs continue but are we really free?

Profound, Profound this word is just one to describe the plethora of emotions I felt at this special place, more knowledge to be discovered, knowing that I will no longer live in ignorance of my past. A past rich in wisdom and knowledge which my ancestors were the originators of my eyes see pass the lies I was fed and taught in cookie cutter institutions. Epiphany, Epiphany, no longer will I be bamboozled by what the high places want me to see.







## In Divine Time Showcase

The “In Divine Time” Showcase at the Brownsville Heritage House was a huge success. We were very grateful for the support received from the audience and fellow members



African American Fair, 2024,  
Fort Greene Brooklyn

## “IN DIVINE TIME”

Annual Showcase @ Brownsville Heritage House (April 20, 2024)



[Powerinthepenww.org](http://Powerinthepenww.org)

## THE POWER IN THE PEN WRITER'S SQUARE

*Power in the Pen writers are creators of literary works that support free thinking*



**Diane**

**Jefferson-Ortiz** is the Ambassador of Power in the Pen. She is an empathetic writer dedicated to truth. Her writing is influenced by familial experiences. Her heartfelt, sincere, and genuine compassion for the children of our community is praiseworthy.

### Let's Turn This Shit Around

The book focuses on the importance of having deep and necessary conversations with your children. As soon as you feel that he/she can understand the subject at hand. I believe in this day and age, when a child asks a question, it should be answered and not saved until tomorrow. As a child, tomorrow never came for some of my questions, and that was very scary because I tell the true story of a young lady that was molested as a child and it was not only a traumatic incident for her, it also affected everyone, then and it still does until this day.



**Sankofa B. Soleil** dominates and demonstrates artistic expression as a multi-faceted talented artist. Her music and writing are inquisitive and emotionally stirring. Her capacity to draw her audience into a room with a view is exquisite, offering a zestful flavor of colorful taste and reckless abandonment. She blissfully rejects arbitrary social norms that usually offer little room for growth, fallacy, and/or acceptance. She piques our interest and true morality with her honest ownership of past transgressions that have shaped her reality, and what has emerged is an utter champion.

### Excerpt for Sankofa

Meet me at the place where time and space intersect. What is one on earth without the other? Who am I without you? Where am I if not here? Meet me where I am, and I will meet you where you are.



**Katonya Trent** is a published member of Power in the Pen Writing Workshop, Inc. Her book is a memoir that chronicles the traumatic birthing experience of her premature son, King; unexpectedly alone, afraid and oblivious to the outcome. Having a child in the NICU is one of the most stressful experiences, and most parents are unassuming, yet understanding the promise of faith and hope. Her experience has shaped her life journey forever.

### 22 And 6

### Born on 11/26

After I became comfortable holding King, I tried to encourage Kareem to hold him, but he was not comfortable doing it. I had to learn that I couldn't force that on him. He was just not there yet. I stopped asking and/or suggesting. Kareem let me know that he wanted to hold his son, but he was afraid of hurting him because he was so small and fragile.





*Cathie Wright Lewis, led the Sista Circle at Rockaway*



## Strawberry Moon

You are the eternal divine feminine.

True self mastery is when the woman no longer uses the man, her pain, her family, her story the world as a crutch she clings to her own Divinity knowing she is her Divine Mate and co-creator with The Most High

With this revelation everything she does will be in divine order and her life will move with grace and ease. She can then accept her entire being and birth a nation in her seat of creation.

Chante Graham



BRIC

### B-Scene: Unexpected Artistry

Running For My Life by Chanté Graham  
Thu, October 3, 2024 | 5:30 PM  
BRIC House

<https://bricartsmedia.org/event/b-scene-unexpected-artistry/>



# POWER IN THE PEN, INC.

## ACHIEVEMENTS



**Daphne Denis** is the President of the Board of Directors of Power in the Pen, Writing Workshop, Inc. and is an active contributor, writer and creative artist. We are proud to announce and congratulate her on completing her doctoral studies in education. She shares the following titled: Beyond Expectations. "As a special needs student, I faced various academic challenges throughout my school years. Despite these difficulties, I felt compelled to overcome the labels and expectations imposed on me by society and my family. I believe that my brain was wired differently for a purpose, and I am determined to use my experiences to inspire others with similar stories. My journey to obtain a doctorate in Education, specializing in Special Education, was not about seeking recognition or superiority. Instead, it is the beginning of a movement to show Black children with special needs that they can achieve beyond societal expectations. I have been through some incredibly tough times, such as losing loved ones to COVID-19, recovering from two major hip surgeries, relocating to a different county, and coping with the emotional stress of family legal issues. I remain committed to advocating for these children and celebrating their unique gifts and talents.

**Margo McKenzie** is the vice-president of the Board of Directors of the Power in the Pen Writing Workshop, Inc. We want to congratulate and acknowledge the publication of her book titled Psalms to Write By: Reflections, Prompts, Strategies. The book is a 31-day guide inspired by the book of Psalms that helps strengthen writing skills while spiritually uplifting the reader. Margo McKenzie is a retired NYC Public High School teacher/administrator. She is a faith writer who shares her walk with Jesus Christ. Her professionalism is only matched by her willingness to help others through her gifts. She is a trained English teacher, and studied at Fairleigh Dickinson University where she completed a master's in fine arts degree as a Mitch and Lynn Baumeister Scholarship recipient. She proceeded to strengthen her faith writing and studied theopoetics; an inspirational art that uses words and thoughts that compel the spirit into dialogue and worship. Margo also received her certification in editing from the University of Chicago. Margo is the founder of The Gift of Words, an inspirational website that recognizes the power of words and the important part words play in our lives. Margo is an incredible wordologist, a person specializing in the gift of words. She continues her expert editing for the Power in the Pen Writing Workshop, Inc. As editor, she has completed work on the current anthology, In Divine Time, in addition to our quarterly newsletter and other major projects. We are grateful to have her expertise on board.



# Lift Every Voice and Sing

By James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing,  
'Til earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on 'til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers died.  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
'Til now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who has by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

Dorothy Burnham



Toni Morrison



Black Panthers



Dana "Queen Latifah" Owens



Barbara Jordan



Michelle Obama



Audre Lord



Celia Cruz



Unita Blackwell



Nina Simone



Jane Bolin



Victoria Santa Cruz



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

#### July

Daphne Denis  
George Kennedy  
Ansel Pittcarin

#### August

Chante Graham  
Donna Allen-Arnold  
Zainad Abdul-Zahir  
Rosemary Clark  
Miriam Robertson  
Carolyn Pilgrim  
Cathie Wright-Lewis

#### September

Huda Knott  
Erick Fischer  
Auset Zechariah  
Katheann Woodroffe  
Caroline Miller

### Board Members

**Cathie Wright-Lewis -  
Founder/Executive Director**

**Daphne Denis - President**

**Margo McKenzie - Vice President**

**Diane Ortiz-Jefferson -Ambassador**

**Chante Graham - Treasurer**

**Gail Stanback - Secretary**

### Membership Fees

The annual membership fee is \$25 due January 2025. Please pay using PayPal or QR Code below:



**This is a Great Moment in the  
History of the  
United States of America  
We ask that everyone participate  
In the  
U.S. Presidential Election  
Tuesday, November 5, 2024**



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