

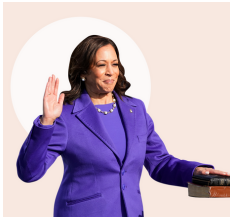
The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.



SPECIAL EDITION - 2021

Inaugural Reflections



It just doesn't get more historical than this! A woman serving as Vice President of the United States who is African-American and Indian, some say South Asian descent as well, AND Jamaican. She's a well-shuffled "deck of cards" pinging all sorts of historical boxes. We are very excited to congratulate and welcome Madame Vice President, Kamala Harris!

We were incredibly inspired and proud of Ms. Amanda Gorman, the youngest national poet laureate in history. She was magnificent and I felt so much pride, one would have thought she was my child. We look forward to Ms. Gorman's continued success and the positive impact she will have. Captain Amanda Hall surprised the world by performing American Sign Language (ASL) when she delivered the Pledge of Allegiance.

Making Herstory

We Lead! She Leads!! These women will continue to be a beacon of light for every little girl in the world.

While we are excited and thankful about these historical milestones, let's not lose focus on the issues at hand and the work that still needs to be accomplished to correct the hot mess the previous administration left our country and the world. Many challenges are ahead for this administration and our country. It will take some time to unravel, take corrective action, and then move towards successful resolutions. We must be diligent in holding this administration's "feet to the fire" to do their job, and the Congress as well. Now is not the time to relax but to advocate! We must insist they do their jobs and do them well with integrity, high moral ethics, and good character.

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"There is nothing more powerful than a group of determined sisters standing up for what is right"
- Kamala Harris

Stacey Abrams, another Shero! She tipped the scales and big-ups to everyone in the state of Georgia for getting out to vote. This is an example of what people can do to positively change the course of any stream within an elected position in this country. This includes the school board to county officials, to state and national positions as well.

Let's continue to remove ineffective politicians from office.

Yes, be excited! Yes, be proud! Yes, celebrate this amazing milestone! HOWEVER, don't be distracted by the celebration. Do not lose sight of the country's issues or those negatively impacting black and brown lives across societal inequities in healthcare to include mental health, housing, employment, education, incarceration, and so on.

Let's continue to collaborate and build our communities. Remember to advocate for those who cannot do so for themselves.

MMSI's motto states, "*We Are the Shoulders of Today for Tomorrow's Future*". Let's ensure there is a future where we are beyond "*just making it*", where there is prosperity, sustainability, empowerment, health equity, and love. Not a future based on hate, jealousy, or greed!


As we lead in 2021 and beyond to empower our girls, our members, our communities, and our families let's all reaffirm MMSI's WE LEAD Pledge AND find ways to incorporate it into our daily lives.

Kim J. Bright
MMSI Co-Founder



MALIK MELODIES SISTERHOOD, INC.

WE LEAD PLEDGE



I PLEDGE TO EMPOWER OUR GIRLS

In the age of fake news, reality TV, and social media, it has become socially acceptable and even cool for people to be mean to one another, to bully to lie, to disrespect, to tear down to fight and to incite violence. This is simply unacceptable.

All of these behaviors are Dis-empowering and keep us from being our best selves. join our CALL TO ACTION to reverse this disturbing trend and pledge to promote positivity, respect, social justice, civic engagement, gender equality, and economic empowerment. "When they go low, we go high."

Build a legacy that rises above negativity
Be the Queen you were meant to be.

I LEAD YOU LEAD WE LEAD

I PLEDGE to EMPOWER myself and others.
I PLEDGE to BE A LEADER for positive change.
I PLEDGE to SPEAK my mind respectfully.
I PLEDGE to ACT rather than complain and do nothing.
I PLEDGE to SUPPORT and be KIND to those around me.
I PLEDGE to BE INCLUSIVE and promote collaboration.
I PLEDGE to STAND UP for those who need help.
I PLEDGE to BE MY BEST SELF in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I PLEDGE to EMBRACE my rich cultural heritage.
I PLEDGE to MAKE A DIFFERENCE whenever I can, wherever I can, BECAUSE I CAN!

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Pearls On!!

MMSI Celebrates the First Woman Vice President of the United States Kamala Harris!



Happy Inaugural Day! Big up Jamaica, our African ancestry, and South Asia/India! Rocking my pearls today and my Trini colors as a dual citizen of the U.S. and Trinidad and Tobago.

Little known historical fact: Sir Walter Raleigh first brought pitch from the natural [Pitch Lake](#) in Trinidad and Tobago to pave Pennsylvania Avenue in the 1600s. It was the very first time a street was pitched with the substance from the natural "lake" in the town of La Brea, Trinidad. Sir Raleigh discovered the use of the substance after he stopped a leak on his ship with the pitch during a stop there. He then packed his ship with barrels of the pitch to bring to America. Enjoy the festivities Queens!" - Melody Jemma St. Lawrence-Martin

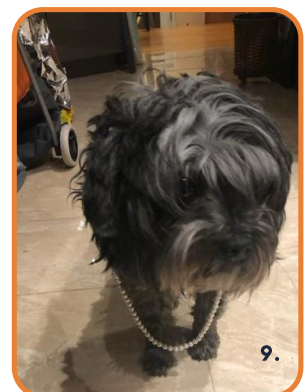
OMG... this historical moment!! Tears of joy. I'm honored & humbled to witness political & cultural history as Kamala Harris has become Vice President of the United States. Thank you for breaking the glass ceiling for women of color & all women! #PinstripesAndPearls #MomsPearls #VPOTUS - GM Anita Wallace

Today was a day filled with inspiration, pride, and hope. For the 1st time in history, we have a Black woman as Vice-President of the United States!! We all know that President Joe Biden and Madame Vice-President Kamala Harris have a lot to do in order to repair our country from the last administration. I pray for the safety of our President and Vice-President and our nation. - GM Sharon Harleston

There is a feeling of light and positivity and hope in the air. Let this be a great start to 2021 and the end of 2020. - Melody Brittany S. Johnson



Princess Piper Is Celebrating Too!



1. Jemma St. Lawrence-Martin
2. Nathalie Lilavois
3. Kim Bright
4. Vanessa Miller
5. Lori Dee Frazier
6. Erenisse Tavares
7. Sharon Harleston
8. Anita Wallace
9. Piper Lilavois



Reflecting On Inaugural Greatness!

By Melody Jillian Gibson



Captain Andrea Hall



The 59th inaugural ceremony focused on being the most inclusive inauguration ceremony in history and Fire Captain Andrea Hall of the South Fulton County Fire Rescue, lead the way with a spoken and signed Pledge of Allegiance. At the inauguration on January 20, she recited the pledge out loud, while simultaneously leading the pledge in American Sign Language. *"This is a first"*, Captain Andrea Hall began her career in 1993 as the first Black woman hired and assigned to a station at the City of Albany Fire Department. In 2004 she was the first Black woman promoted to fire captain at Fulton County Fire Rescue—a position she still holds after 16 years. She recently became the first Black woman to serve as Chief Fire Marshall at the Savannah Fire Department. She was inspired to enter the field by her older sister. Captain Hall represents firefighters and other front-line workers in the state of Georgia and the City of South Fulton. Captain Hall is also the President of the International Federation of Firefighters. According to Hall, *"Being the first, there's a lot of pageantry around it when it's first announced. However, you are becoming the torch-bearer for everybody that's coming behind you. You become the example — for good or bad. Being the first, you know that a lot is riding on your ability to be successful in that role."*

Signing the Pledge of Allegiance was to pay homage to her late father who was deaf and to emphasize to the deaf /hard of hearing community that they remain a strong part of America

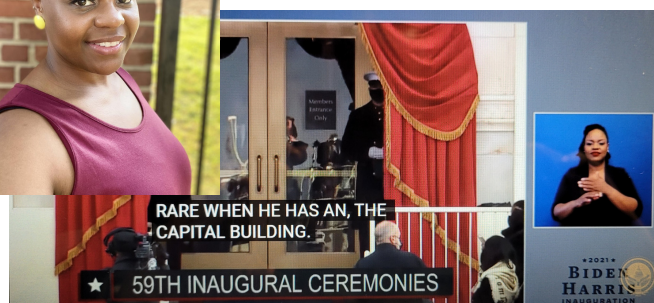
As we spent the day celebrating the change in government on Wednesday, January 20, 2021, we were introduced to a new generation of Black elegance and creativity through spoken word.

Congrats to the Inaugural Deaf Interpreters!

Erin Sanders-Sigmon
Deaf-Interpreter (Vermont)



April Jackson
Deaf Interpreter (Washington, DC)



Celebrating Inaugural Greatness!

Amanda Gorman, Poet Laureate

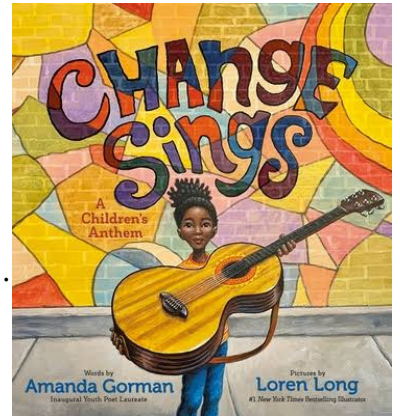


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Amanda Gorman a graduate of Harvard University, a poet, an author, model but most of all, someone of color stood on the podium and read an original poem for President Joseph Biden, and the world at his swearing-in ceremony. In her poem, the title "The Hill We Climb" she stresses the need for unity in America to heal.

Amanda grew up in Santa Monica with her mother a teacher and sister. As she tells her story, her mom is a huge influence on her life as well as her love of poetry from an early age. She loved public speaking at an early age, however, overcoming a speech impediment has been part of her journey to success as a performer.

She has many future aspirations, they include a presidential run in 2036. Her pending aspiration is author, which will be realized, September 2021 with the debut of her children book, "Change Sings" the book represents children as change-makers of history and one more to come.



Keep shining your light Amanda we are inspired and live by your words.



Celebrating Inaugural Greatness!



Kaitlyn Saunders - Skates To Inspire Young Girls

By: Melody Bibi Chaterpateah

It is with no doubt that this year's inauguration was different, yet highly anticipated. It can be considered, amongst many, to be one of the most, if not, the most historic inauguration our country has witnessed. The day was filled with empowering stories from Queens of all walks of life. From our Aunty Madam Vice President Kamala Harris to our showstoppers, Lady Gaga & Jennifer Lopez, to our powerhouse voices Andrea Hall & Amanda Gorman. Amongst the many Queens adorned in their crowns is young figure skater, Kaitlyn Saunders.

Kaitlyn, known as @the.skate.kid on Instagram, is a superstar inspiring and influencing the world with her skating videos. Kaitlyn performed her own skating routine to Andra Day's Rise Up as part of President Biden's virtual parade on Inauguration Day. She originally choreographed the routine and performed it at the Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, DC. This was a remarkable accomplishment not only for Kaitlyn but for young girls like her who strive to be seen as they are without judgment. Kaitlyn is dedicated to increasing diversity and awareness for young girls of color like herself, especially in the figure skating world.

In one of her interviews, Kaitlyn stated she wanted the message to be when she skated at the Black Lives Matter Plaza for people to know that "we can make things better together". Even more remarkable, Kaitlyn continues to spread her infectious joy, positivity, and light to other young girls as she has been invited to speak to 3rd-5th grade girls for Beyond the Classroom Inc. To learn more about Kaitlyn's journey, check out her [Instagram @the.skate.kid](https://www.instagram.com/the.skate.kid).



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