

The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.



Self-Discovery and Celebration

"Always remember the past for therein lies the future: if forgotten, we are destined to repeat it."

~Proverb from the Akan Tribe

The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum

Gracious Melody Dr. Lisa Whittington's campaign to take high school students from Benjamin E. Mays High School in southwest Atlanta to Washington, DC has been met by MMSI.

MMSI proudly sponsored 45 students from Benjamin E. Mays High School to The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum.

GM Dr. Lisa Whittington states, *"This is bigger than a field trip...this is an iconic event that will change their lives forever. This is the last year of the most famous and influential U.S. President of our generation."*

Lisa shares with us student photos and testimony on the cultural and social/emotional impact of this journey.



SPECIAL EDITION JANUARY 2017

The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum

Student Reflections

The Graces Staff

- Kim J. Bright
- Nathalie Lilavois, Ed.D.
- Lisa Marie Rodriguez
- Anita Wallace

Executive Board

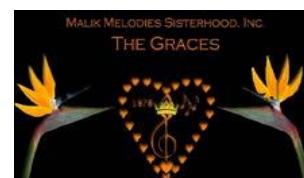
- Kim J. Bright, Co-Founder
- Nathalie Lilavois, President
- Sharon Harleston, V.P.
- Anita Wallace, Secretary
- Lisa Kirkland-Sutherland
- Mary Richardson
- Lisa Marie Rodriguez

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March 29, 2016 · Baltimore, MD

"Can I tell y'all about a really engaging and moving experience my students just had? My God. We went into the Great Blacks in Wax Museum in Baltimore and all 45 of my kids were deeply engaged looking at the exhibit listening to the tour guide. As I walked around monitoring the students, I noticed one girl in the corner -an 11th grader. I could tell something was going on...she had tears swelling up and was trying to hide it and be strong. I put my hand on her shoulder and asked, 'What's wrong?'

'I can't believe all this happened to Black people! Why don't they teach us this in school?'

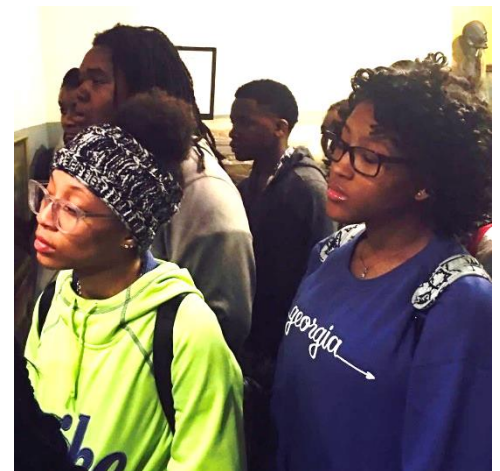
I just held her... she held me back. It was that teachable moment where the embrace between Black teacher and Black student did all the talking. As I'm taking care of her a moment later here comes one of my freshmen girls... 'Dr. Whittington I need a moment to go outside.' I looked at her, she looked upset. Something told me to give her a hug... I did and she broke. I delivered her a hug and whispered wisdom in her ears as she cried. She shook her head to let me know she understood. We held hands and went back to the exhibit. I won't forget the way we squeezed each other's hand. Earlier I had to watch two boys display dignified anger as we went through the exhibit. They were much different at first refusing to go in, but something told me they would be alright. Instinct was right. They eased in and started looking and taking pictures and engaging.

I want to thank the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc, and Kim Bright for graciously sponsoring my students to engage in this exhibit. We would not have been able to have this experience without you."

~posted by Dr. Lisa Whittington



Identify with the victims and martyrs, and never forget them. But do not get bitter or despondent over what they endured.



Victoria Adeyemi
11th Grade

And now I can say we've
been given a chance to
treasure ourselves
Nothing can even come
close to measure how that
makes me feel
You've given me an
unbelievable sense of
pride...



Shanderica Martin

Before I got there I thought
that our people were just
enslaved. What I didn't know
is that if it weren't for my
people America wouldn't be
the great country it is today.

So ***thank you*** Malik Melodies,
because I can never fully convey
how much you've done for me!!!



Makiya Jackson/ 11th Grade

Through slave ships and sunrises
From Africa to Atlanta
I read of writers and risk-takers
From Liberia to Louisiana...



Kyra Stoute / 11th Grade

Now, no man shall have us deceived,
Not even ourselves
Because we believe
And we will achieve and be ever
grateful...



The Black Wax Textbook**By: Makiya Jackson / 11th Grade**

Down hallways of history
 From A to Z
 My mind is amazed by
 Sculptures that look like me

Writings on the walls
 About the great, great things
 Done by our black rulers
 Historians, kings and queens

I flip a page as
 I turned into the next room
 As I see my people's
 Greatness and gloom

Through slave ships and sunrises
 From Africa to Atlanta
 I read of writers and risk-takers
 From Liberia to Louisiana

So thank you, Malik Melodies

For helping direct my eyes to look
 Into the brilliantness I will soon become
 In the Black Wax Textbook

**The Wax****by Kyra Stoute / 11th grade**

The wax have filled the cracks
 of our institutionalized ignorance;
 Institutionalized by a group of tasteless men;
 Men who did not want to see us achieve

The wax is an impression of footprints
 Marching us youth into our history
 and accomplishments and also leading
 us to the promises within us
 Hidden in plain sight but
 because now we see the light,
 we can visualize
 All the possibilities;
 See we knew we were great
 but now we can believe

The wax was so beautiful and diverse;
 It came in all the hues of the Earth

But
 It was black just like us
 But
 It was great
 But
 It was meaningful,
 And It told us
 what really happened
 and It took us
 travelling through the tragedies and
 catastrophes
 and the victories and majesties

Now, no man shall have us deceived,
 Not even ourselves
 Because we believe

And we will achieve and be ever grateful**May God Bless Malik Melodies**

Built Pride
By Victoria Adeyemi/ 11th Grade

When visiting the blacks wax museum
My brain was filled to the max with knowledge
The building was truly unique, as it features statues that
are one of a kind
And it literally blew my mind to be able to witness factual
truth of our story
As it has been contorted and defaced throughout history
We went from being depressed to repressed to oppressed
And now I can say we've been given a chance to treasure
ourselves
Nothing can even come close to measure how that makes
me feel
You've given me an unbelievable sense of pride

So thank you Malik Melodies,
because I can never fully convey how much you've done
for me.



The Testimony of Mr. Lynch
By Devyon Johnson / 12th Grade: The Blacks in Wax Museum

Mr. Lynch...Do you solemnly swear that you will tell the truth, the whole truth;
And nothing but the truth?

I Swear

Tell me about the things you've observed over the last 100 years.

Well, for years I've asked the question—Why? I've seen thousands of Black people stripped of their lives due to the hatred embedded in others. All they ever wanted was to be equal and feel that they had the same opportunities as others. I've seen white men break into the homes of the random Black families and snatch the older males. I've seen these Black men hang from tree branches. I've felt those Black men struggling to breathe, trying with all that they had to catch a taste of air. I've seen these Black men hanging from thick ropes looking down in disappointment and confusion while white men look up at them in amusement
And satisfaction.

Hanging Black men for fun and hanging their Black wives for not betraying their own families. I've watched pregnant Black women hanging from the ropes of hatred and anger as their unborn Black children are cut out of their stomachs and replaced with cats. I've watched the homes of Black families burn down in the background
as Blacks hung from trees.

White men in their work clothes, white men in their hoods and robes, white men on foot, white men on horses, white women and children all gathered to see
Blacks hanging from trees

And bridges like it was an entertaining sight to see.

White men, women and children coming together in harmony
To watch the suffering of "those damn Blacks that don't belong here."

Blacks hanging from the tree branches looking down at the world

For what it really is

Broken and confused

White men teaching their children to hate niggers

White women accusing Blacks of the most outrageous things

Taking pictures with hanging Blacks like a trophy;

Something they wanted to remember for the rest of their lives.

Racism being glorified in America as if it is the way of life.

Old family traditions still being practiced. But they want nothing more than to make America great again. Wait. My apologies. Make America hate again. Make America hate more
than it's ever hated before.

I've watched a race hurt for years and years with no way to escape the mistreatment from whites. After years of watching and seeing these things, my question still stands unanswered.

Why?



My Experience In Washington D.C. By: Shanderica Martin

One of the things I enjoyed when I was in Washington was going to the Blacks in Wax museum. The people there looked so realistic that it felt like their eyes were following me everywhere I went. Before I went in that museum I knew nothing about some of the struggles and torture our people had faced but now I am more enlightened than before. For example I had no idea what really happened to Emmett Till or that he had an open casket funeral.

Another thing I really enjoyed was going to the many different museums but particularly the Smithsonian. I got to touch fossils, eat amazing food, and see the Hope Diamond. I was infatuated with the mummy exhibit because they were in good condition. There jewels were gorgeous and like nothing I'd ever seen before. There diamonds, topaz, and opals. They were just heart melting.

While in D.C. I met one of our sponsors. Her name was Miss Kim Bright. She was a loud and very exciting woman who had a warm vibe coming from her. She even allowed me to take pictures with her along with another student. Miss Kim gave out a book called Egypt on The Potomac which gave information about who originally built the famous monument, the white house, etc. .(slaves). The Egypt on The Potomac even showed us where to find the items, which Dr. Whittington made into a scavenger hunt for a prize.

Before I got there I thought that our people were just enslaved. What I didn't know is that if it weren't for my people America wouldn't be the great country it is today. So for this life changing experience...

THANK YOU MALIK MELODIES XOXO...



MGM Kim Bright educates Benjamin E Mays students about how the Nile Valley influenced the design of Washington, DC and presented a copy of [*Egypt on the Potomac*](#) by Anthony T. Browder to each student and staff which documents a detailed accounting of the efforts of America's Masonic Founding Fathers to re-create the symbolism and philosophy of Egypt in their new capital.



MGM Kim Bright poses with students
& staff from Benjamin E. Mays HS.

