

The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.
SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021



**MMSI hosted our 3rd annual
WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference**

**Saturday, October 16th, 2021
Via Zoom**

**As we celebrated the United Nations
International Day of the Girl Child
(October 11, 2021)**

In Celebration of the United Nations
International Day of the Girl Child

MALIK MELODIES SISTERHOOD, INC.

In collaboration with CASITA MARIA
PRESENTS

WE LEAD

EMPOWERING OUR GIRLS 3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE



This event will be a fun filled day with Music, Raffles,
Performances, Motivating Messages, Inspirational Speakers,
Award Presentations, and so much more!

**Saturday, October 16, 2021
Noon - 4:00pm**

**FREE
VIRTUAL
EVENT**

REGISTER NOW!

**CASITA
CENTER MARIA
FOR ARTS &
EDUCATION**

Register online at www.malikmelodies.org

In This Issue

WE LEAD Conference
•Pg. 1 - 5

What's New
•Pg. 6

Did You Know? •Pg. 7

Hispanic Heritage Month
•Pg. 8

Celebrating Young
LatinX Activists •Pg. 9

Congratulating Melodies
on their Retirement •Pg. 10

Protecting Your Eyes
•Pgs. 11 & 12

Health Awareness Months
•Pg. 12

MMSI Community Partner:
Joysetta Pearse •Pg. 13

Congratulations to Our
Sisters •Pgs. 14 & 15

Calendar of Events •Pg. 16

The Graces Staff •Pg. 17

Empowerment



Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

In collaboration with: Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education hosted:

**WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls / 3rd Annual Conference
On Saturday, October 16, 2021 from 12 Noon - 4:00pm via Zoom**

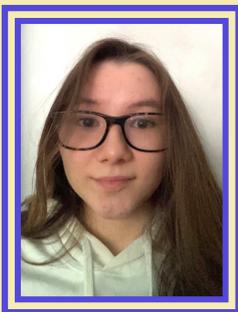
It was a great conference where we learned valuable information about our culture as well as techniques for self growth, entrepreneurship and financial stability.

The virtual entertainment was excellent and inspiring!

Our ASL Interpreters were amazing.

The event featured Our Student Leaders:

Sophia Connellan (12th grade) Raven Taylor (9th grade) Quiamani Tyler (12th grade)



Our Presenters were as follows:

- **Atlantis Browder**, Author & Educator
- **Bibi Chaterpateah**, Founder, Sadhana Studio, Inc.
- **Shoshana A. Brown**, Social Justice Educator & Organizer
- **Brianna Lilac**, Founder & CEO, Lilac's Vibe
- **Alyscia Cunningham**, Author, Filmmaker & Photographer
 - **Girls, Inc.**, Monetary Management
 - **Angel Johnson**, Founder, ICONI
- **Laisha De Leon, Shyann Ferrer & Jadili Small**, Women's Leadership Kahoot

Entertainment:

- **AbunDance Academy of the Arts -and- Singer, DK Dyson**

Click here to view our event journal to read about our participants:

<https://online.fliphtml5.com/qltdk/diak/#p=1>



MMSI Hosted Our 3rd Annual
WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference

Thank you

Saturday, October 16th, 2021

A very special thank you to all the workshop presenters for taking time in your busy schedules to participate in our conference. We are truly grateful for you helping us to Empower Our Girls!

Thank you!!

AbunDance
ACADEMY OF THE ARTS

Alyscia Cunningham

Author, Writer,
Filmmaker,
Photographer



Angel Johnson

Founder,
ICONI



Brianna Lilac

Founder, CEO
Lilac's Vibe



In Celebration of the United Nations
International Day of the Girl Child



Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.
In collaboration with
Casita Maria
presents

WE LEAD
Empowering Our Girls
3rd Annual Conference

10/16/2021

12 Noon - 4:00 pm

Workshops:

- Mind Your Own Business!
Becoming an Entrepreneur
- Embrace Your Inner Warrior
- Beauty Is... *Beyond The Selfie*
- Holding Space For Your Heart
- Money! Money! Money!!
- Self-Empowerment Through
History & Culture
- Leadership Kahoot!

Entertainment:

- DK Dyson
- AbunDance Academy of the Arts



Atlantis Browder

Author &
Educator



Shoshana A. Brown

Social Justice
Educator &
Organizer



Bibi Chaterpateah

Founder,
Sadhana Studio
Inc.



Girls Inc.
Money
Mangement

**CASITA
CENTER
FOR ARTS &
EDUCATION**

Thank You For Your Impactful Contributions
to Our 3rd Annual Conference!

ASL Interpreters



We are thankful for to all the sign language interpreters who volunteered their services to ensure our conference is accessible to the Deaf community.



Kathleen D. Taylor



Jessica Ames



Jackie Bruce



Jacinda Damas



Candace Davider



Barbara Hunt



Cheryl Kelly



Rhea Ummi Modeste



Melissa Pacheco



Kia Presley



Miriam Rochford



Toni Rodriguez



MMSI Hosted Our 3rd Annual
WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference

Saturday, October 16th, 2021
Via Zoom



LISA MARIE RODRIGUEZ
2021 WE LEAD CONFERENCE
CHAIR

Lisa Marie Rodriguez is a daughter of the South Bronx repping her Boricua roots. Lisa is a school social worker for the New York City Department of Education. Via the strength perspective, Lisa uses therapeutic methods for social and emotional wellness of outdoor adventure, play therapy, yoga, political & cultural awareness for student empowerment and growth.



*Thank
you*

A very special thanks to our Sisters who served as Committee Members, Co-Hosts, technical support, and social media support.

We absolutely couldn't have done this
without you!

TQIMSTQIY!!!

WHAT'S NEW?!

10 Black Female Photographers

<https://www.xonecole.com/10-female-photographers-putting-on-for-the-culture/?rebellitem=3#rebellitem3>

25 Black-Owned Businesses

<https://www.xonecole.com/black-history-black-owned-businesses/?rebellitem=2#rebellitem2>

La La Anthony Celebrates Afrolatinidad: Black, Latino & Proud

"Whether it's food, music, politics, or literature, Afro-Latinos have played a significant role in shaping Latin American and U.S. culture.

Lala Anthony breaks down everything you've ever wanted to know about Afrolatinidad, celebrating the rich history of the Afro-Latino diaspora while trying to understand why there are so many misconceptions about Black Latino identity."

Netflix: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-yzx5x9JZY&t=3s>

A 17-year-old high school student from Iowa City has developed a surgical tool to detect infection

Daisa Taylor, a 17 year old senior at Iowa City West High School, was recently named a **Regeneron Science Talent Scholar** after developing a concept so simple it's shocking no one had thought of it before. Taylor invented color-changing sutures that can detect infection. Daisy was named among the top 300 scholars this year out of 1,760 students. Taylor entered her project into the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium in March 2020; she quickly realized she was the only Black student present.

"Being in the room knowing stereotypes were flying and to be able to prove them wrong and win first place was phenomenal. My mom and I talk about it all the time. I often find myself in white-dominated spaces. That's one for the books."



Inspiring Barbie Dolls

Mattel has come out with a new line of Barbie Dolls called "Inspiring Women". In the series, they honor **Dr. Maya Angelou, Rosa Parks & Ella Fitzgerald**.

<https://barbie.mattel.com/shop/en-us/ba/inspiring-women-series#facet:&productBeginIndex:0&orderBy:&pageView:grid&minPrice:&maxPrice:&pageSize:&contentPageSize:&>



Did You Know?

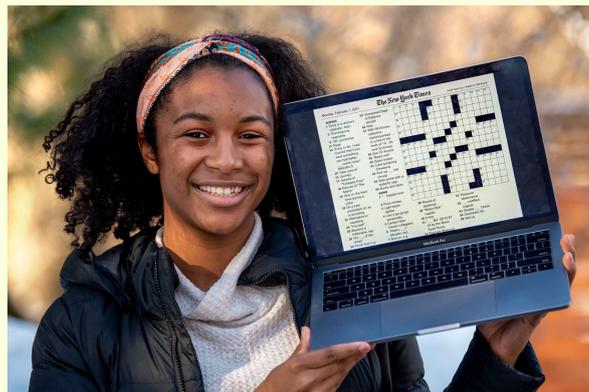
Soleil Saint-Cyr ***A New Jersey teen, becomes a*** ***New York Times Crossword Constructor***

When the pandemic hit, 17 year old crossword fan Soleil Saint-Cyr learned how to construct her own and has created history as the youngest female EVER to create a New York Times Crossword puzzle!

On February 15, 2021, she was interviewed by the TODAY Show!!

View her interview here:

<https://www.today.com/video/new-jersey-teen-becomes-new-york-times-crossword-creator-101038661986>



More Interesting Facts...



* **Jazz**, an African–American musical genre was born out of the blues, ragtime and marching bands, and originated in Louisiana during the turn of the 19th century.

* **Dr. Mae Jemison** became the first African American woman to go into space aboard the space shuttle Endeavor in 1992.

* **Alexa Canady** became the first female African-American neurosurgeon in the United States.

* **Cathay William** was the first and only known female Buffalo Soldier during the Civil War.

Since 1968, the United States has observed Hispanic Heritage Month; honoring roughly 60.6 million people in the country.

Celebrated annually from September 15 to October 15, Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the cultures, histories, and influences of those of Spanish, Mexican, Caribbean, and South American descent.



While most heritage months run a typical calendar month (the 1st to the 30th or 31st), Hispanic Heritage Month dates were thoughtfully selected based on the time period when five Latin American countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua) became independent of Spain and the United Kingdom.

This year will mark 202 years!

The theme for this year's celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month is Heritage, Diversity, Integrity, and Honor: The Renewed Hope of America.

It is a time to appreciate and celebrate the colorful cultures, rich histories, and honor the accomplishments and contributions of both Latino and Hispanic Americans that help shaped the United States economy, culture and society.



Latinas Making History

By: Anita Gillespie-Wallace



On April 8, 1993, *Ellen Ochoa* became the first Hispanic woman in the world to go into space. Ochoa traveled on the Discovery shuttle for nine days and conducted research on the Earth's ozone layer. Since then, she has been on three space flights, for a total of 1,000 hours in space! She's also the first Hispanic director, and second female director, of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Maria Elena Salinas holds the title as the longest running female news anchor in U.S. television history with more than 30 years on TV. She is the first Latina to receive a Lifetime Achievement Emmy. Currently Salinas is no longer an anchor for Univision. She is a founder of the "National Association of Hispanic Journalists" and sponsors the "Maria Elena Salinas Scholarship" for college students interested in Spanish news broadcasting.

Julia de Burgos Garcia, was born in 1914. She was a published poet & newspaper writer in Puerto Rico but struggled to gain acceptance & popularity in the United States in the 1930s. Julia's poetry was ahead of its time. She & her poems celebrated civil rights for women & African/Afro-Caribbean writers. She was also a member of the "Puerto Rican Nationalist Party". Julia's contributions have influenced many Latino writers.

Did you know??

The biggest Latina crossover artists performing in both Spanish & English are:

Selena, Rita Moreno, Gloria Estefan, Shakira, Christina Aguilera, Nelly Furtado, Jennifer Lopez & Thalia.

All of these performing powerhouse women have won Grammy Awards, except for Jennifer Lopez.



Celebrating Young LatinX Activists

By: Anita Gillespie-Wallace

Hola mi gente!

Hello my people! For Latin Heritage Month, we would like to recognize some young LatinX Activists.

Here are 3 of the youngest activists making an impact on our communities.

Sophie Cruz, age 10

Immigrant Rights

Check out this little superstar:

Little Sophie **went viral at age 5** when she tried to push through the Pope's security barricade to hand him a letter.

Sophie wanted the Pope to help undocumented people who immigrated to the United States.

That action has led her to become a young powerhouse & a strong voice in the immigrant rights movement. In 2017 at the age of 6 she spoke at the Women's March on Washington!! She has also been able to sit in on Supreme court hearings & has met with President Obama & former Vice President Joe Biden!!

Ashton Mota, age 15

Defending the Transgender Community

Ashton has publicly shared his challenges as a Black and Latinx trans teenager while attending an elite private high school in Massachusetts. That has led Ashton to becoming a **Youth Ambassador for the Human Rights Campaign**.

He was involved with the "Yes on 3" campaign where Massachusetts voters became the first state to vote on protections for transgender people from discrimination.

Luis Hernandez, age 17

Criminal Justice Reform

Over the decades we as adults have all seen & read the stories that Luis had to endure personally. At age 14, Luis watched the false arrest & imprisonment his innocent brother Pedro. Luis fought & won! His brother was released & cleared of all charges.

Luis's fight continued for others & he became an **advocate for criminal justice reform**. He worked with the Justice League of New York City and has served a youth leadership & Engagement Coordinator. Luis also helped to co-found the "Youth Over Guns" organization.

To read about more of our young activists, please check out this article:

<https://www.dosomething.org/us/articles/young-latinx-activists-you-should-know>

Retirement



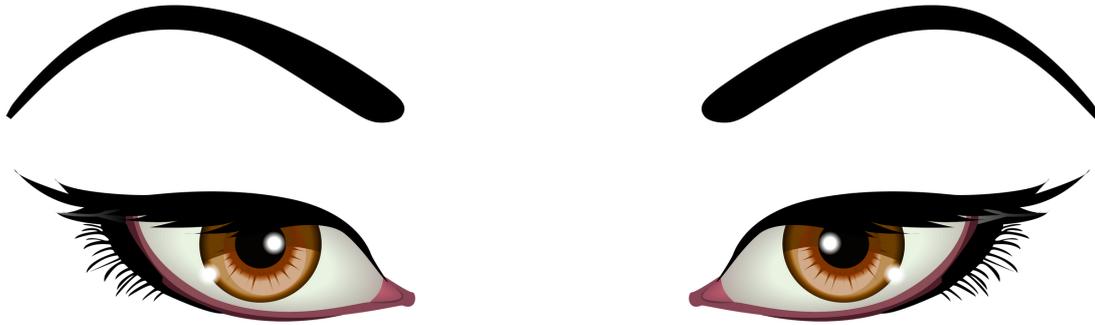
Congratulations MGM, Felicia Peterson on your retirement on July 1, 2021 from Pocantico Hills Central School, Sleepy Hollow Hollow, NY. After 26 years at Pocantico Hills School and 38 years of teaching as a Special Education Teacher Pre-K to Grade 2 in the NY State School System.



Congratulations GM, Dr. Nathalie C. Lilavois on your retirement on July 1, 2021. After 34 years in education as a primary teacher, principal, and elementary curriculum director, Nathalie has decided to focus on her educational consulting business, Zahara Crown, Inc. and supporting her daughter's business, Lilac's Vibe. She has already been approached for two new writing projects, speaking engagements, and educational proposals as well as expanded roles in the non-profit organizations to which she belongs. Nathalie is also a wedding officiant, conducting weddings across Long Island. This past summer Nathalie enjoyed some free time with her yorkipoo, Princess Piper and catching up on a few DIY home projects.

**www.zaharacrown.com - Zahara Crown, Inc.
<https://lilacsvibe.shop> - Lilac's Vibe
Nathalie C. Lilavois, Ed.D.
Zahara Crown, Inc.**





Protect Your Eyes from Blue Light by GM, Sharon Harleston

Since COVID-19, throughout the day and night we have been spending numerous hours on our computers, smartphones, or other digital screens and you probably have noticed some uncomfortable effects from staring at your screen too long. Digital-related eye strain affects people of all ages. If you spend hours a day using digital devices, you might notice your vision blurs, and your eyes feel achy and tired. You may also find your eyes become dry, and will tear or sting. This eye strain is no different from the symptoms you may have when reading, writing, or doing “close work” like sewing for long stretches of time.

What is Blue Light?

It is visible light with shorter wavelengths and more energy than light at the other end of the colour spectrum. The sun is the primary source of blue light, but blue light also comes from: computers, tablets, smartphones, fluorescent lights, LED lights and television screens. These long hours staring at digital screens leads to decreased blinking. Blinking less sometimes causes a series of temporary eye symptoms known as eye strain. The best way to avoid eye strain is to take breaks from the screen frequently.

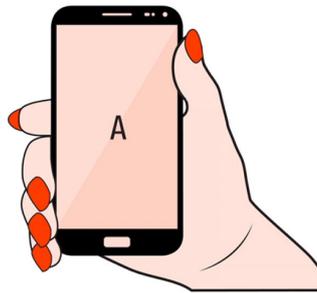
Is Blue Light From Screens Hurting My Eyes?

The amount of light coming from a computer has never been demonstrated to cause any eye disease. A study reprinted by the National Library of Medicine found no measurable UVA or UVB radiation (the most harmful part of light) from computer screens.

There is some evidence that blue light affects the body’s circadian rhythm, our natural wake and sleep cycle. The best way to avoid sleep disruption is to avoid using screens two to three hours before bed. Using “dark” or “night” mode on devices in the evening can help, too.

EYE CARE TIPS

Staring at small text can make you squint and put your face closer to a screen, leading to fatigue and headaches, among other issues – so boost text size and color contrast to make things easier to read.



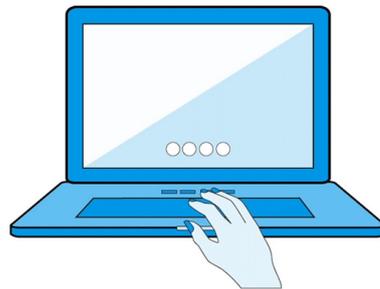
BLINK

When we stare at screens, we forget to blink, which dries out our eyes. It's hard to remember, but trying to make sure you keep blinking can help. Eyedrops are another simple and useful way to keep eyes from getting too dry.



ADJUST BRIGHTNESS

Screen glare can cause eye strain and headaches. Adjust your brightness to avoid reflections on your screen or consider getting an anti-glare film.



THE 20-20-20 RULE

After 20 minutes of work, take 20 seconds to look at something 20 feet away. Your eyes have muscles that help them move and focus on different objects, but if we stare at a screen the same distance away for hours at a time, those muscles have a hard time adjusting once we move again.



Health Reminders & Health Awareness Months

By Anita Gillespie-Wallace

We all need a push sometimes to be more proactive about our health. The current health awareness months are:

September:

- *National Ovarian and Prostate Cancer Awareness
- *National Childhood Obesity Awareness

October:

- *National Breast Cancer Awareness



Ladies and Gentlemen, if you have not done so yet, please make your doctor's appointments for a physical & to follow up on your **ovarian, prostate & breast** health. In most cities you can easily find FREE cancer screening options to make sure you're healthy.



Our Kids: We althy too. It's amazing how many children are currently obese. Even though the winter months are coming & we'll be indoors more, there are plenty of activities our kids can do at home to stay active to combat obesity. You can easily find exercise solutions via interactive computer games & dance challenges on social media. Of course, our kid's diets are a key component in this matter. If your child is obese or if that's a potential concern; please follow up with your pediatrician and/or nutritionist to create the best & most interesting meal plans to get on the right track.

***We remember the life and accomplishments of:
MMSI's Community Partner
Joysetta Pearse, Director of Nassau County's
Black History Museum***

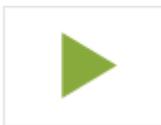
By: GM Sharon Harleston



Joysetta Pearse possessed a keen intellect that drove her to investigate the "hidden" contributions of Black Americans, and to educate others about them in her role as director of Nassau County Black Museum

To read more about Mrs. Pearse, click these links:

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/obituaries/joysetta-pearse-museum-dead-1.50279295>

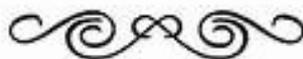


THE LONG ISLAND HISTORY PROJECT

Episode 136: Joysetta Pearse and the Afri...

Jan/Feb 2017 Issue of the Graces

https://4390e887-3571-4e9e-9bf4-015ee5b4e3f8.filesusr.com/ugd/218351_14d8aba81efd4018a820899ac8d641cd.pdf

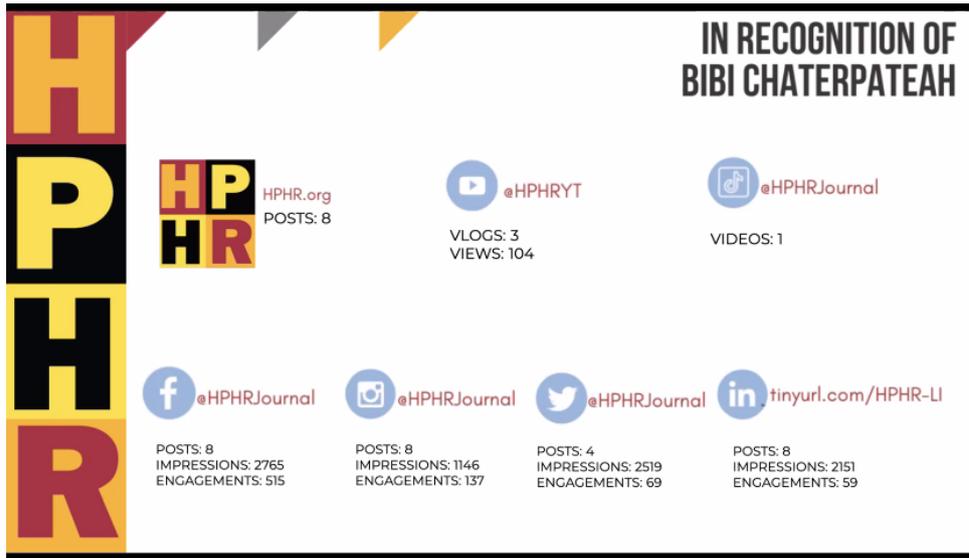


Congratulations

Congratulations to our Melody Sister, **Bibi Chaterpateah on her accomplishments!**

Bibi started a new position as a medical scribe for Summit Health CityMD, an urgent care located throughout New Jersey and New York. We wish her all the best in her new position working on the frontlines!

On August 26, Bibi graduated from the Harvard Public Health Review Fellowship! Be sure to check out her blogs on: harvardpublichealthreview.org

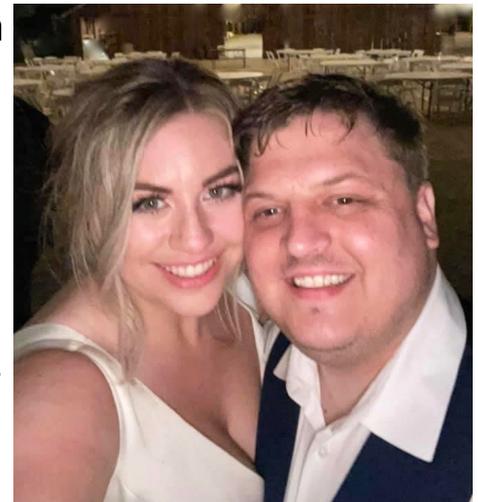


We also congratulate Bibi on her acceptance as a Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Fellow for the MCH section of the American Public Health Association (APHA). She was also chosen as 1 of the 30 recipients (out of 100 applicants) for the APHA Student Assembly Scholarship to attend the annual APHA meeting in October.

GM, Melissa Charles and Ted Rene were married on July 30th. Wishing you both a lifetime of love and happiness!!



GM, Jhenna Zepeda and Josh Gregoire were married on October 9th. May the years ahead be filled with love and joy.



Congratulations



Congratulations to **Gracious Melody, Stacey Leveille-Casseus** on the birth of her second child; baby girl Ayanna, born on Sept 6th. Congratulations to the proud parents Stacey & Achly !!

Congratulations to **Gracious Melody, Lisa Love Whittington** on her new business venture. Our artist sister has recently launched her wallpaper line called Lili WhittWhitt Designs. Check out her designs under Lili WhittWhitt on the Wall Pops website:

https://www.wallpops.com/lili-whittwhitt-designs-by-lisa-whittington?utm_source=Wordpress&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=LisaLove



Congratulations to **Gracious Melody, Nathalie Lilavois** who is a contributing author with Monique Denton-Davis for their "Sisters Inspiring Sisters" virtual book launch. The virtual book launch is part of the "Sisters Inspiring Sisters Virtual Summit" at 7:00pm, EST on November 17th and 18th.

The event will feature powerhouse women in various industries, sharing their expertise to empower women of color with life's challenges.

Feel free to register for the event via: bit.ly/sisbooklaunch

VIRTUAL BOOK Launch

CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR
DR. NATHALIE LILAVOIS

NOV 17TH-18TH 2021

PRESENTED BY:
MONIQUE DENTON-DAVIS

bit.ly/sisbooklaunch

Calendar of Events



MAKING STRIDES Against Breast Cancer®

Making Strides of Long Island
Sunday, October 17 at 7:30am
JONES BEACH STATE PARK-FIELD 5
1 Ocean Parkway, Wantagh, NY

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?pg=entry&fr_id=100837



Making Strides of Central Park
Sunday, October 17 at 7:30am

CENTRAL PARK - BANDSHELL
West 66th St & Central Park West
Manhattan, NY

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?pg=entry&fr_id=100804

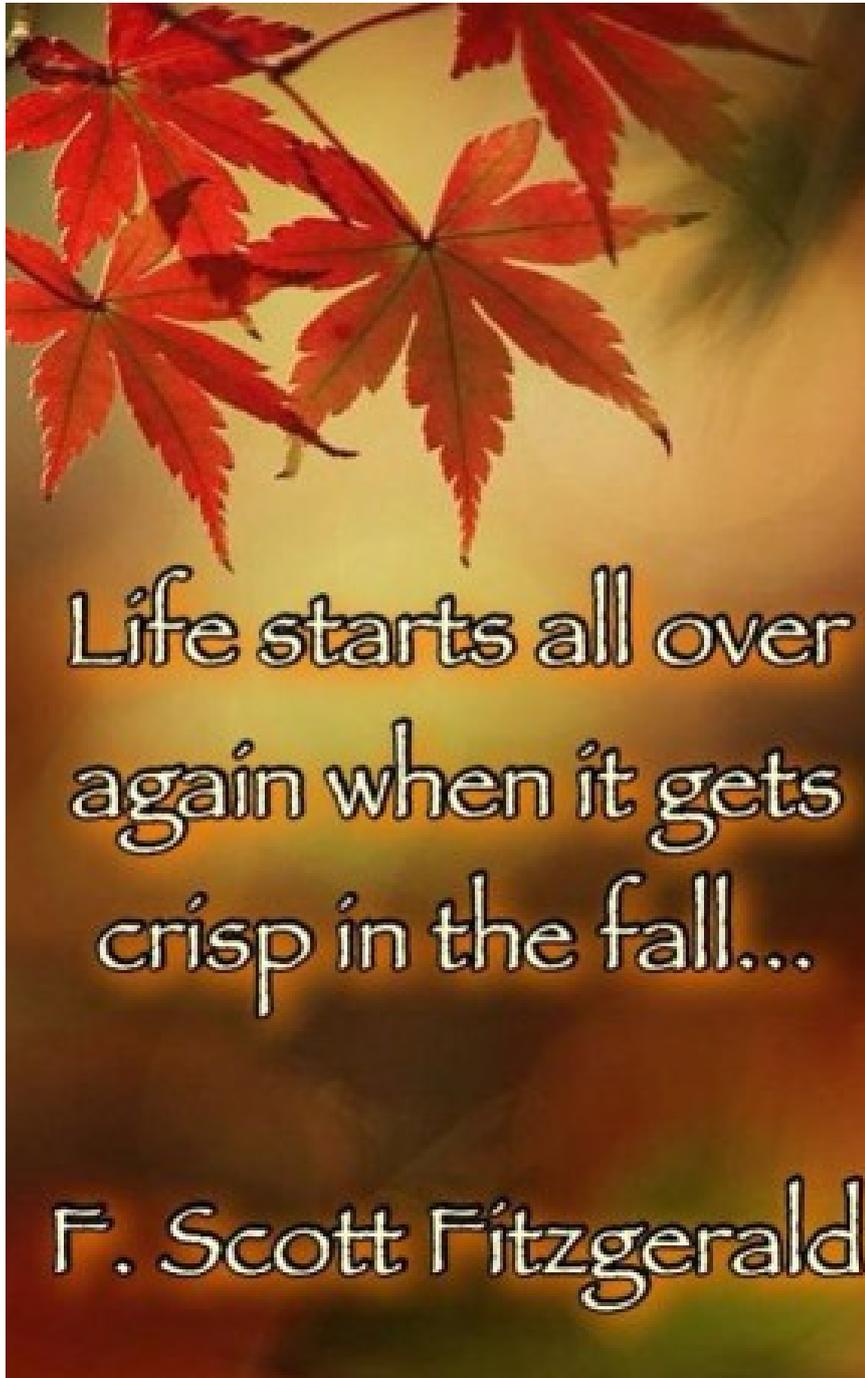
For the nearest walk in your location and to donate visit
[Find Event](#)

The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021



MMSI MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Executive Board – 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8:00 pm
Professional Branch – 3rd Tuesday at 8:00 pm
The Graces Newsletter Staff – Last Wednesday at 8:00 pm

The Graces Staff

Kim J. Bright
Bibi Chaterpateah
Jillian Gibson
Sharon Harleston
Lisa Rodriguez
Anita Gillespie-Wallace

Executive Board

Kim J. Bright, Co-Founder
Nathalie Lilavois, President
Sharon Harleston, Vice President
Mary Richardson, Parliamentarian
Lisa Rodriguez
Anita Gillespie-Wallace

Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

P.O. Box 260430
Bellerose, NY 11426

P.O. Box 92944
Washington, DC 20090

malikmelodies@gmail.com
www.malikmelodies.org

