

The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020



Greetings!

As we find ourselves in the last quarter of 2020, I can't say I am sad to see this year-end! It has been one of the most challenging and stressful roller coaster rides in recent history. For me, there was a sense of dread from the very beginning...on New Year's Eve in fact, when my dog, startled by fireworks, ran off and was hit by a car. While I don't consider myself superstitious, this incident definitely cast a shadow of unease and foreboding for the year to come. It took some time to shake those negative feelings and return to my regular routine.

Three short months later, we were called to an emergency meeting to prepare for school closure. The date? Friday, March 13th. Again, those apprehensive feelings crept back to the surface as we all learned to deal with the devastating impact of COVID-19. In the midst of the pandemic, came a second wave, in the form of a large-scale call to action for social justice in reaction to the senseless killings of black people across the nation. Whether from COVID or police brutality, "I can't breathe" became the new rally cry, echoing the last words of George Floyd at the hands (or should I say knee) of the police.

Given a political climate that sanctions, or dare I say, encourages, racially motivated aggression, people of color came together in protest because enough is enough. What will it take to change the years of social injustice, systemic racism, and implicit bias upon which this country is built?

Before we could even process that question, we were hit with a tsunami of events that we could never have imagined: Trump's acquittal, Weinstein's conviction, drone strikes, wildfires in Australia, Colorado, and California, missile strikes, lockdowns, devastating hurricanes in Louisiana, and the heartbreaking loss of Kobi & Gigi Bryant, Chadwick Bosman, and civil rights leader, John Lewis. Time and time again, we were left shocked, appalled, hurt, saddened, grief-stricken by the ominous cloud of 2020.

But, we still have one important thing- Love. With the love of family & friends, we formed a virtual huddle to weather the storm. Through phone calls, Zoom, Facetime, or Facebook, we connected. We reminded each other to be strong, to be brave, and most of all to be together. We are strong, smart, and resilient. We took a bitter 2020 and made sweet lemonade. We used this time to slow down, make better choices, get more sleep, call our parents, read a book, take a class, learn a new skill, sing in the shower, dance in your underwear, and share all of that wonderful you-ness with your tribe. That is what hope looks like in the face of adversity. It is a deep, abiding, soul-filling wellspring of love. So, as we move through the year's onslaught of bumps and bruises and put 2020 in the rearview, be sure to drink from this well often, drink deeply, and come back whenever you need more. 2021 will be better simply because we are here, together.

In love and gratitude,

GM Dr. Nathalie Lilavois

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk7LPpY8pXM>

P.S. ...and to 2020, all I have to say is, "Bye, Felicia!"

In This Issue

EB President's Message • P. 1

**Keeping Our Community
Healthy - Men's Health
Women's Health • P. 2**

#GIVING TUESDAY • P. 6

**Puerto Rican Heritage
Month • P. 7**

**WE LEAD
Community Partners • P. 8**

Melody on the Move • P. 10

She is Inspiration • P. 11

**Cyber Security Holiday
Shopping • P. 14**

Upcoming Events • P. 15



We Are Our Brother's Keeper...Focusing on Men's Health

by MGM Kim J. Bright

Among black men, 19% — nearly one in five — will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and 5% of those will die from this disease.



Gentlemen,

Please take the time to focus on and be more attentive to your health. The pandemic has caused a sedentary lifestyle for many which can exacerbate any developing health challenges. Men often ignore their health and illnesses for a variety of reasons.

A subconscious fear of the unknown perhaps, being too busy at work or simple procrastination. Whatever the reason, it's important to be proactive with annual doctor visits and health screenings. How many men have died unnecessarily simply because they wouldn't have a prostate exam? Men of color are already challenged by disparities in healthcare, please don't increase the statistics by ignoring your health. WE NEED YOU and we need you to be healthy.

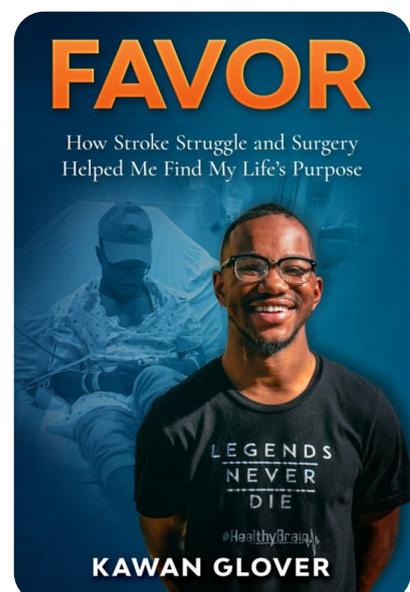
Howard University radio host Harold Fisher shares his story about getting his COVID test results after attending The March On Washington earlier this year. Although his COVID test result was negative, his blood pressure was so high that he was mandated by his doctor to go immediately to the emergency room, which led to a hospital stay. All the while, he felt fine. This experience led Mr. Fisher to dedicate a radio show focusing on men's health. His guests are Dr. Mark Johnson, Chair Department of Community & Family Medicine at Howard University, and Mr. Kawan Glover, author of FAVOR: How Stroke Struggle and Surgery Helped me Find My Life's Purpose. Mr. Glover developed a mass in his brain at the age of 21.

[Click Here to listen to the Podcast](#)

“If you have health insurance,
you are paying for it...

SO USE IT!”

- Harold Fisher



As discussed in Dr. Ledley's article in this issue "Suffering in Silence", Her 10 Top Tips are applicable for Men as well. Take Charge, Live Well and Stay Healthy!

For additional information on Health Screenings for Men 40+ visit:

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007465.htm>

Find out which screenings are recommended for your age group:

In Your
20s

- ✓ Annual physical exam to include blood pressure, height, and weight
- ✓ Vision/dental exams once a year
- ✓ STD testing/HIV screening every two years
- ✓ Testicular cancer screening every year; monthly self-exams
- ✓ Cholesterol testing every five years

In Your
30s

- All of the above and...**
- ✓ Blood tests for diabetes, thyroid disease, liver problems, and anemia
 - ✓ Screening for coronary heart disease once a year

In Your
40s

- All of the above and...**
- ✓ Cardiovascular evaluation every five years
 - ✓ Screening for prostate cancer every year

In Your
50s

- All of the above and...**
- ✓ Annual screening for Type II Diabetes
 - ✓ Vision and hearing exams every year
 - ✓ Screening for depression every year
 - ✓ Screening for lipid disorders annually
 - ✓ Screening for colon cancer with fecal occult test, sigmoidoscopy, or colonoscopy annually

In Your
60s

- All of the above and...**
- ✓ Annual screening for osteoporosis
 - ✓ Continue colorectal screening based upon previous studies and results
 - ✓ Screening for dementia and Alzheimer's annually



Suffering in Silence

GM Dr. AnnMarie Ledley DO, FACOG



A large percentage of my clientele have been females of African-American and or Hispanic descent. On multiple occasions, many of these women expressed that prior physicians did not adequately address their health-related concerns, and or implied their complaints were “nothing.” As a physician and a woman of color, I have also felt “unheard” when my health concerns were not taken seriously, or they were discredited. But as a practicing OB/GYN for over twenty-five years, I know we can only change the tide of racial bias in medicine by doing the following: 1. Promotion of self-education, 2. Changing the legislature to ensure the provision of healthcare equity, 3. Using our voices and votes to speak up. **The bottom line is this; we must never—suffer in silence.**

My firsthand experience with the American healthcare system transpired shortly after I immigrated to the U.S. from Trinidad. I initially went to the doctor because of crippling abdominal pain. The physician dismissed my symptoms as nominal and a way for me to avoid school. However, my mother and I later learned my condition was called dysmenorrhea, a real medical issue that is easily fixable.

During my first year as a medical student, I learned about Preventive Care Examinations. This is when you see your healthcare provider for a screening examination. I equated this in my mind as an annual “tune-up.” I quickly started to tell my immediate family about getting “tuned-up.” I stressed the importance of getting their blood pressure checked, cholesterol evaluated, and specifically for the women, pap smears, and mammograms.

At the age of 48, my mother agreed to get her annual “tune-up,” with the addition of a mammogram. The results came back suspicious for breast cancer. A biopsy later confirmed that diagnosis. My mother chose not to undergo a mastectomy, and instead opted for a lumpectomy. She expressed that she never had a part in her own healthcare decision making because the doctor did not provide her with opportunities for input, neither did he provide additional options.

My mother took her health into her own hands and did her research to find an expert who could provide data on effective, holistic treatments. She found an African-American surgeon who gave her viable options and heard her concerns. She had radiation treatment but later stopped chemotherapy due to its side effects. Additionally, my mother found supported faith and healing through the power of newfound Christian beliefs and community. She even transformed her diet, environment, and mindset, as a path to holistic healing. As a result, my mother has been cancer-free for almost 30 years.

When my mother was diagnosed, the statistics demonstrated that 1 out of 12 women got breast cancer. But today’s statistics reflect that 1 out of 8 women will get breast cancer during their lifetime. The reality is female minorities are more likely to die from breast cancer and their diagnosis occurs usually below the age of 45. There are different guidelines between ACOG (American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology), ACS (American Cancer Society), and USPSTF (US Preventive Task Force). The guidelines that physicians follow depends on their area of specialty.

The CDC reports that African-American women are 40% more likely to die from breast cancer than Caucasian women and female minorities are also more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage or at a younger age. Despite the improvement in death rates for women with breast cancer, there are huge disparities between women of color and their White counterparts.

The fact of the matter is, the examples shared in both my personal experiences as a minority female OB/GYN, and in the data regarding one form of the disease, are merely microcosms of how a significant issue divisively inhibits the inclusion of quality healthcare, equitably. It is, therefore, our responsibility to educate and equip ourselves in regards to our health and the healthcare system as an entity. Together we will decrease late-term diagnosis for terminal diseases and increase our survival rates. Armed with knowledge and the ability to implement actionable steps, we will stop suffering in silence!



DR. LEDLEY'S 10 TOP TIPS TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR "TUNE-UPS":



1. Educate yourself
2. Have an advocate
3. Bring a friend to appointments
4. Ask the doctor if you can record during visits
5. Take notes during and after doctor's visits
6. Ask questions (no matter how foolish they seem)
7. Get a second, third, and or fourth opinion (depending on your comfort level)
8. Create your own support group
9. Make time to take care of yourself (get a massage, take a vacation or staycation, treat yourself to a dance class, an ice-cream cone or an upscale restaurant, etc.)
10. Live thankfully and optimistically!





#GIVINGTUESDAY is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world on December 1, 2020, and every day. It was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good.

On this **#GIVINGTUESDAY** we are requesting your support for **MMSI's Annual Memorial Scholarship** and our Annual **WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girl's Conference**.

Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc. (MMSI), a 501(c)4 non-profit organization was established on December 14, 1978, at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University by 24 conscious and innovative women. Since 1978, MMSI's primary focus has been to develop leaders, install motivation, self-esteem, determination, and a sense of commitment within women who address issues that confront them in the educational and professional environment as well as in the communities where they reside.

The Angela Pauling Memorial Scholarship is dedicated to honoring MMSI Co-Founder who succumbed to cancer in 2010. The scholarship is earmarked for Angela's alma mater, Harry S. Truman High School in the Bronx, NY, and we are excited to continue Angela's legacy with the issuance of our 9th annual scholarship in 2021. [Click Here](#) to learn more about our Angela Pauling Scholars or visit <https://www.malikmelodies.org/angela-pauling-memorial-scholarship>.

In 2018, MMSI launched the [Inaugural WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference](#) (in Queens, NY) to have a more meaningful and far-reaching impact within our communities. Our conference aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges girls face, while also promoting girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. This amazing event provides motivating messages and workshops from women on the challenges they faced and how they pushed past them. The day culminates with the **"Gems Among Us" Awards** presentation, honoring outstanding individuals and organizations for their commitment to uplifting and empowering our girls.

We hosted a successful [2nd Annual 2019 WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference in Brooklyn, NY at the Nelson Mandela School For Social Justice](#). In 2021, we will host the **3rd Annual Conference** and programs to Empower OUR Girls.

We are requesting your **#GIVINGTUESDAY** support for our annual scholarship and these special events. Please help us give back to the community and to expose young ladies and girls to opportunities that can positively enhance their lives.

Please Donate and Join MMSI In Making a Difference!!

DONATE ONLINE by clicking here.

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=AR5KKZZ7WGQJS&source=url

DONATE BY CHECK payable to "Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc." & mail to P.O. Box 260430, Bellerose NY, 11426

DONATE VIA ZELLE to malikmelodies@gmail.com. Please email any related questions or comments to WeLead@malikmelodies.org. Follow Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc. on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for related messages, and Thank You for your donation on **#GIVINGTUESDAY, December 1, 2020**.



Comité Noviembre by GM Lisa Marie Rodriguez

November kicks-off Puerto Rican Heritage Month!!! This year Comité Noviembre (CN) will recognize its 2020 scholarship recipients. The scholarship program was established in 1996 and to date, has awarded 330 scholarships. This year CN received scholarship applications from New York City, Update State New York, Puerto Rico, Ohio, California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. The scholarships center on the following:

The Comité Noviembre Community Service Scholarship
The Richie Perez Scholarship for Peace & Justice
The Josephina Aguado Scholarship for Single Parents
The Ernesto Malave Scholarship for the Arts

We are immensely proud to celebrate one of MMSI's very own, Gracious Melody Lisa Marie Rodriguez who has served as the Scholarship Co-Chairperson for the past ten years!!

For the past 34 years, Comité Noviembre, a non-profit organization has celebrated Puerto Rican Heritage Month in the United States. The charge of Comité Noviembre is to create awareness of our rich culture, language, and heritage and to acknowledge and take ownership of it every day but specifically during November. Because of Comité Noviembre, November is their chosen month to discuss all aspects and issues of our community with respect, objectivity, and pride.

Comité Noviembre is the only collaboration of its kind in the United States that brings together the collective talents and resources of some the oldest and most prestigious Puerto Rican organizations:

ASPIRA of New York
Estudios Puertorriqueños Hunter College/CUNY
El Museo del Barrio
Eugenio María de Hostos Community College/CUNY
Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, (IPR/HE)
La Casa de la Herencia Cultural Puertorriqueña, Inc.
Fundación Nacional para la Cultura Popular
Justice Committee: NCPRR
Puerto Rican Institute for the Development of the Arts, Inc. (PRIDA)

With the continued network support of past members like Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education, Centro de El Puento, LatinoJustice: PRLDEF; Música de Camara, National Conference of Puerto Rican Women (NACOPRW); and National Institute for Latino Policy, Comité Noviembre has the combined network and outreach potential of over 800,000 people through its member lists and internet capabilities.

Check out their Comité Noviembre's website for upcoming virtual November events.

http://www.comitenoviembre.org_





WE LEAD

Empowering Our Girls

Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

Checking in with our Community Partners

by GM Sharon Harleston

MMSI reached out to see what our community partners have been up to during the pandemic. Here's what they had to say!

Alex Tatis-Cummings



Alex Tatis-Cummings is the founder of Refined Inner Being, LLC. She is also a Mental Health Crusader, RYT-200 HR, Trauma-Informed Educator, Reiki Practitioner, Speaker, Former Podcast Co-host of Me2RadioZone (a Mental Health Podcast), a Facilitator for non-profit org providing Social-Emotional + Mindfulness in NYC Public schools and Florida communities.

Although 2020 has been a challenging year for all of us globally, I am grateful for the blessings that came out of this time. I firmly believe that joy is a powerful act of resistance. At the beginning of 2020, I enrolled back in school to continue my education. My goal is to become a Somatic Therapist. When the pandemic impacted our communities I chose to hold space to support my community experiencing mental health distress, grief, and loneliness by leading weekly zoom calls called Dear Mental Health Crusaders. These calls transformed my community to take action towards the injustices of the world, grieve in a safe space, or simply arrive at self-acceptance to rest and restore their bodies during this time in quarantine. I took my own intention and applied it to my life and rest and restored. As a result, I relocated to Central Florida, had my dream wedding at the beach quarantine style, and have been focused on my well-being and newness of life.



Currently, I am finalizing wellness and healing programming being released at the end of November that consists of Individualized and Group services available virtually. To stay up-to-date for what's next check out my website <https://refinedinnerbeing.com/> or via IG and FB @ refined-or via IG and FB @ refined_innerbeing for upcoming virtual and in-person events, retreats, and programming.

Brian K. Skipper

Greeting all, I am Brian K. Skipper. I'm a NY State licensed massage therapist and an NYS FDNY EMT. Since COVID-19 I've been doing a lot fewer massage treatments after implementing safety protocols for clients and myself. All the while continuing my 22-year career as an FDNY/EMT for the City of New York. I've also been keeping myself busy with online classes refreshing & renewing my academic knowledge in the massage practice that I've been doing for over 11-years. I've increased my focus on healthy eating and physical fitness in light of the global pandemic plaguing our world. I've consequently been giving advice on healthy living to my clients and others as an extension to helping people live their best lives.



Angel King



Checking in with our Community Partners!



Dailisha Eve Rodriguez, Founder of [Hey There Beautiful](https://www.heytherebeautiful.org/) shares what she's been engaged with during the pandemic. "Currently, I am mentoring over 500 youth at Victory Collegiate, Automotive High School, Intermediate School 392, and Kappa V Middle School, empowering them to live their dreams. I will be presenting a workshop at the UFT Parent Conference on November 7, 2020, via zoom. I am hosting Motivational Mondays live on Zoom at 3:00 PM EST. Also, check out my new show [Ubicate](#) live on Facebook Wednesdays at 1:00 PM EST. I am dedicated to continue impacting lives while being in a commitment to seeing communities thriving."

To learn more visit: <https://www.heytherebeautiful.org/>

Angel King, a wearer of many hats is the new President of the Breukelen Resident Community Council (BRCC) a community-based organization located in NYCHA's Breukelen Houses.

The BRCC oversees 1600 apartments which house over 5000 residents. Ms. King alongside her amazing Executive Board has churned the wheels of change within their community during this awful pandemic. They have built a partnership with World Central Kitchen to help provide hot meals three days a week from local restaurants all over Brooklyn and a weekly produce pantry that encourages healthy eating within underserved communities. This program feeds over 300 people per day. The BRCC has also spearheaded a community cleanups initiative and with the support of their Borough President Eric Adams provides the community with their very own mobile testing site to ensure that the community does their part in stopping the spread of COVID-19.

Ms. King is also the CEO of D.R.E.A.M. (Develop Rebuild Educate Accomplish Maintain) providing a remote interactive after-school program called the DREAMcatcher Community Project. This program facilitates awesome projects that support the fundamentals of science and art. Encouraging kids to engage and create virtually. She is also a member of the CEC 19 the 'Community Education Council of District 19 Schools'. This is where she advocates and supports parents within her school district. Working alongside the School Chancellor, District Superintendent, and other DOE staff to create a supportive learning environment for students and their families.

Dailisha Rodriguez Hey There Beautiful!

HEY THERE BEAUTIFUL PRESENTS
**MOTIVATIONAL
MONDAYS**
with award winning Empowerment Coach &
TedX Talk Presenter Dailisha Eve Rodriguez

ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE
MONDAYS @ 3:00 PM EST
TEXT MOTIVATE TO 66866 TO SAVE YOUR SEAT

Discover ways to stay on track, focused and inspired to live
the life of your dreams and get what you deserve.

Melody on the Move

GM LaTrella Penny



A daughter of Brooklyn, New York, LaTrella Penny hails from the Thaa Queendom of Adelphi University and graduated in 1988 with a major in Communications and a Minor in African Studies. LaTrella became a member of the Malik Melody family on December 6, 1986, and was honored with the African name Shadiyah Iman meaning The Queen That Is a Singer of Faith. LaTrella stated, “joining the Melodies was one of the best decisions she ever made!” LaTrella describes herself as being very shy and the Melodies’ orientation process helped her to build the confidence and strategies in overcoming her shyness. These Melody lessons guided her and all Melodies into MMSI’s s Holistic Harmonic Philosophy comprised of seven principles of 1) Leadership 2) Empowerment 3) Collaboration 4) Faith 5) Cultural Enrichment and Education 6) Civic and Social Responsibility and 7) Sisterhood.



LaTrella has taken those MMSI life lessons and applied them to her career path of service. LaTrella is currently the Director of Policy, Planning, and Data Analysis with the New York City Department For The Aging (NYC DFTA). LaTrella is responsible for ensuring over seven hundred internal and external contract providers are following NYC DFTA policies. In addition, she oversees the planning and mapping of new programs. LaTrella takes charge ensuring NYC DFTA is also bridging the gap with its NYC Senior population. At work, LaTrella is known as getting things done! If she does not have the answer, she will find someone that can help her get to the right answer. LaTrella describes working with an aging population as an honor and a serious business. Not many seniors have a family member to advocate for their needs. This is a vulnerable population that requires and demands staff members to be loving, caring, and show great empathy to our seniors. LaTrella Penny is truly a Singer of Faith trusted for taking care of our aging population and we salute her!

 *THE QUEEN IN ME SALUTES THE QUEEN IN YOU!* 



SHE IS INSPIRATION!

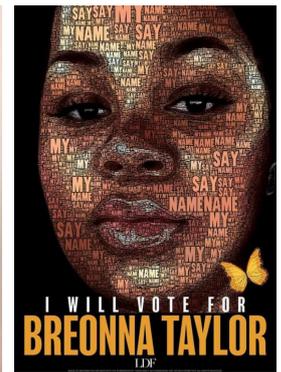


Congrats to our Queen Sister, GM Dr. Nathalie C. Lilavois, Ed.D on being included in the compilation book "[Love Letters to My Girls!](#)

"I am so excited to announce the Book Launch of Love Letters to My Girls compiled by Dr. Cherita Weatherspoon. In it, you'll find my special letter along with those of 100+ other black women to our young women of color. It's a wonderful, inspirational message for all women of color and a celebration of our black and brown girls. If you have young women of color in your life, you need to share these uplifting messages with them. It makes a wonderful gift or a great family reading night. Please use this link: [Love Letters to My Girls](#) to order your copies (and other goodies) in time for the holidays!" - Dr. Nathalie C. Lilavois, Ed.D

Congratulations to our very own Queen Sister,
GM Dr. Lisa Love Whittington, Ed.D

For being chosen as a featured artist and contributor for the NAACP's National "[Vote In Their Honor](#)" Voter Registration Campaign. See Lisa's and the other artist's powerful images by visiting: <https://www.voteintheirhonor.com/posters/breonna-taylor>



Congratulations to our Queen Sister Melody Bibi Chaterpateah who continues to exude positivity and love into our community. As of March 2020, Bibi graduated from the Breathe for Change Spring 2020 program and was awarded her certification as a yoga instructor and wellness champion. Since then, she has continued to apply her training and enhance her skills.

This summer, she established her own business, [Sadhana Studio Inc.](#), and has been partnering with other organizations to build her credibility. She hosted her first "Self-Care Saturday" workshop for college students on May 23rd and her second "Self-Care Saturday" workshop open to everyone, she had two participants outside of the United States, an unexpected reward! In July and August, Bibi partnered with Become Today, Inc. as a wellness instructor for a 6-week program focused on empowering middle and high school girls.

Bibi also has an ongoing partnership with the New York City Department of Education Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (SAPIS) program. So far, she hosted 4 wellness sessions with SAPIS staff across the five boroughs. Her most recent session, "Healing with Nature" received positive praise and more than 230 participants.

Sadhana Studio Inc. - Instagram: @sadhanastudioinc
Email: sadhanastudioinc@gmail.com



SELF CARE *Saturday*

MAY 30, 2020
2-3PM
OPEN SESSION

Hosted by Bibi Chaterpateah, B4C Wellness Champion

This session is open to all! Invite your family, friends, neighbors, and yes, even your pets!

- ♥ 1-hour wellness workshop
- ♥ customized self care toolkit
- ♥ community healing

Register on [Eventbrite](#)



SADHANA STUDIO INC

Celebrating Melody Authors: Katherine Hutchinson-Hayes & Tracey Henry-Burton

by GM Anita Wallace



"Dr. Katherine"



Tracey Henry-Burton

Gracious Melody, Katherine Hutchinson-Hayes, aka "Dr. Katherine" has served in elementary school education as a teacher & principal for 10 years. She received her BA in English & an MA in Elementary Education from Adelphi University. She also has a Doctorate of Education and Supervision from Arizona State University.

Presently Dr. Katherine is an author as well as a counselor & motivational leader for women. Some of Katherine's work as a freelance writer has appeared in magazines such as Prom Guide, Church Weekly, and Glendale Magazine. She has also received awards for her writing in New York & Arizona.

Most recently Katherine wrote an article on Gracious Melody, Tracey Henry-Burton who is a NEW author of a children's book titled, "The Day COVID-19 Changed Our Schools" it is a children's story explaining COVID-19 and returning to school-distance learning. It's a beautiful book with beautiful illustrations of children of color, explaining the challenges of the Coronavirus to children. You can purchase the book via an online download.

When Katherine asked why Tracey wrote this book she said, "Anything I write is for children. I am inspired by real life. My COVID book was written from my angst about students returning to school and them being afraid of what was going on in the world. I wanted to find a way to inform them in a child-friendly way. The next idea that screams at me during the silent hours of the night is a children's book explaining the murder of George Floyd. It's a work in progress."

Tracey has a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education from C.W. Post/Long Island University and a Masters in Elementary Education from City University. Tracey has been an elementary school educator for 31 years in both New York and Georgia.

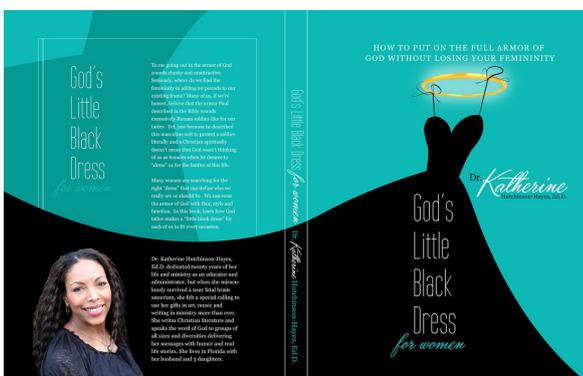
To read the full interview between Katherine & Tracey, click this link:

<https://drkatherinehayes.com/blogs/news/tonaccidental-author-an-interview-with-tracey-burton>

Use this link to read Tracey's book via digital download:

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Childrens-Story-Explaining-Covid-19-and-Returning-to-School-Distance-Learning-5727633>

To read more about Dr. Katherine and her book, "God's Little Black Dress For Women: How to Put on the Whole Armor of God Without Losing Your Femininity", use this link: <https://drkatherinehayes.com/>





Strand Theater Company & Two Strikes Theatre Collective proudly present



strand-theater.org

facebook.com/
tstc.baltimore

BROWN
SUGAR
BAKE-
OFF

A BLACK WOMXN
VIRTUAL
PLAY FESTIVAL

October 17
2020



Congrats to GM Dr. Lisa Love Whittington, Ed.D, a featured playwright in the Brown Sugar Bake-off!!

Our Sister Lisa's creativity is boundless!!

In a collective effort to impact social change, the Strand Theater Company and Two Strikes Theatre Collective joined forces to produce a virtual playwriting festival, focused on the voices of Black womxn.

Inspired by Paula Vogel's Bake-Offs, the Brown Sugar Bake-Off is an artistic response to the worldwide outcry against systemic racism. Though Black Lives Matter was founded by three Black womxn, the movement (much like liberation movements before it) has historically erased and undervalued Black womxn.

On October 17, 2020, there was a virtual presentation, comprising 10 original 10-minute plays selected by a collective panel of readers out of 42 submissions by Black womxn playwrights from 12 states. Live interactive Q&A with the playwrights followed the performances.

Festival Finalists:

"[Black in the Box](#)" by Lisa Whittington (Powder Springs, GA)

"Each One, Teach One" by Naelis Ervin (Waldorf, MD)

"Georgia Rose" by Onyekachi Iwu (Garfield, NJ)

"How to Make Banana Pudding" by Faye McCray (Columbia, MD)

"My Voice" by Celeste Campbell (Stone Mountain, GA)

"Solving for Y" by Robin Turner (Norcross, GA)

"Tea Spilling" by Victoria Palmer (Washington, DC)

"Texturism: a Manageable Lie" by Lauren Davis (Sparks, MD)

"The Middle Pillar" by Boneza Valdez Hanchock (Woodbridge, VA)

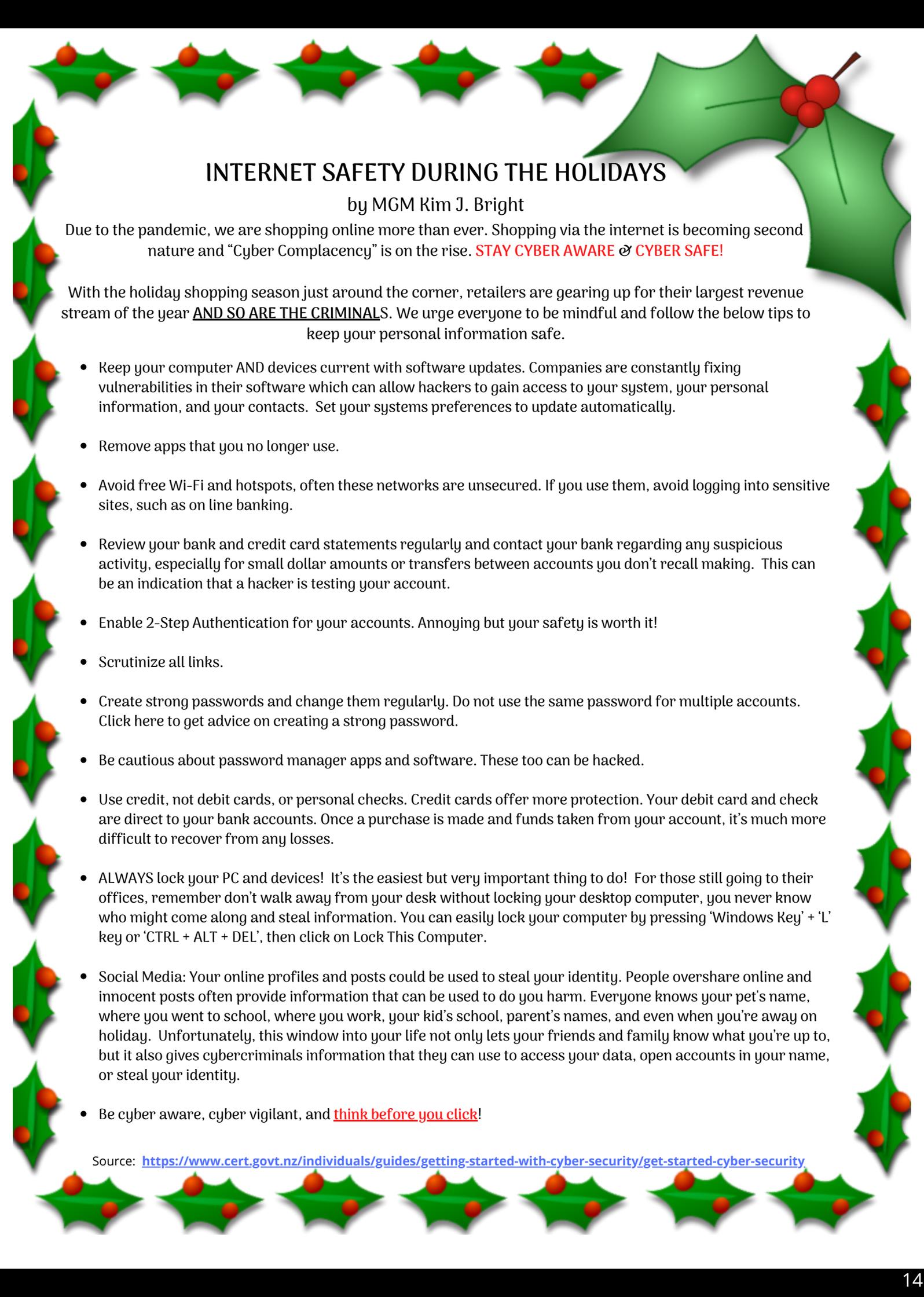
"Waste of a Good Wig" by Lisa Hill-Corley (Fairfax, VA)

Congrats to all the fantastic playwrights! Click [HERE](#) to view our Sister's play "Black In the Box"



To view all of the plays click [HERE](#).

Directors: Tristeza Duncan, Aladrian C. Wetzel, Des'ree Brown, Christen Cromwell, and Shayla Simmons



INTERNET SAFETY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

by MGM Kim J. Bright

Due to the pandemic, we are shopping online more than ever. Shopping via the internet is becoming second nature and “Cyber Complacency” is on the rise. **STAY CYBER AWARE & CYBER SAFE!**

With the holiday shopping season just around the corner, retailers are gearing up for their largest revenue stream of the year **AND SO ARE THE CRIMINALS**. We urge everyone to be mindful and follow the below tips to keep your personal information safe.

- Keep your computer AND devices current with software updates. Companies are constantly fixing vulnerabilities in their software which can allow hackers to gain access to your system, your personal information, and your contacts. Set your systems preferences to update automatically.
- Remove apps that you no longer use.
- Avoid free Wi-Fi and hotspots, often these networks are unsecured. If you use them, avoid logging into sensitive sites, such as on line banking.
- Review your bank and credit card statements regularly and contact your bank regarding any suspicious activity, especially for small dollar amounts or transfers between accounts you don't recall making. This can be an indication that a hacker is testing your account.
- Enable 2-Step Authentication for your accounts. Annoying but your safety is worth it!
- Scrutinize all links.
- Create strong passwords and change them regularly. Do not use the same password for multiple accounts. [Click here to get advice on creating a strong password.](#)
- Be cautious about password manager apps and software. These too can be hacked.
- Use credit, not debit cards, or personal checks. Credit cards offer more protection. Your debit card and check are direct to your bank accounts. Once a purchase is made and funds taken from your account, it's much more difficult to recover from any losses.
- ALWAYS lock your PC and devices! It's the easiest but very important thing to do! For those still going to their offices, remember don't walk away from your desk without locking your desktop computer, you never know who might come along and steal information. You can easily lock your computer by pressing 'Windows Key' + 'L' key or 'CTRL + ALT + DEL', then click on Lock This Computer.
- Social Media: Your online profiles and posts could be used to steal your identity. People overshare online and innocent posts often provide information that can be used to do you harm. Everyone knows your pet's name, where you went to school, where you work, your kid's school, parent's names, and even when you're away on holiday. Unfortunately, this window into your life not only lets your friends and family know what you're up to, but it also gives cybercriminals information that they can use to access your data, open accounts in your name, or steal your identity.
- Be cyber aware, cyber vigilant, and **[think before you click!](#)**

Source: <https://www.cert.govt.nz/individuals/guides/getting-started-with-cyber-security/get-started-cyber-security>

Upcoming Events- November & December

On Saturday, November 21, 2020, TEDxDeerPark will host its first virtual TEDxDeerParkWomen event! Our theme is FEARLESS. Our event will host a network of dynamic speakers who exemplify fearlessness in the face of the challenges we face. JOIN US!

www.tedxdeerpark.com

Promo link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUOppHGnWnl>



Circle of Sisters is virtual this year! November 20-21, 2020. We have been celebrating Black women for 17-years with our annual event that gathers more than 20,000 Sisters together. This year is even more special as we bring together these women and allies across the nation!

Attend from your phone or computer, create your profile, and access three R&B and Gospel concerts, 15+ celebrity panels and workshops, community networking, plus shop 100 Black and women-owned businesses before Black Friday!

Will we see you there, Sis?

GET TICKETS:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wbls-circle-of-sisters-2020-tickets-114294987384?aff=websitehomepage>

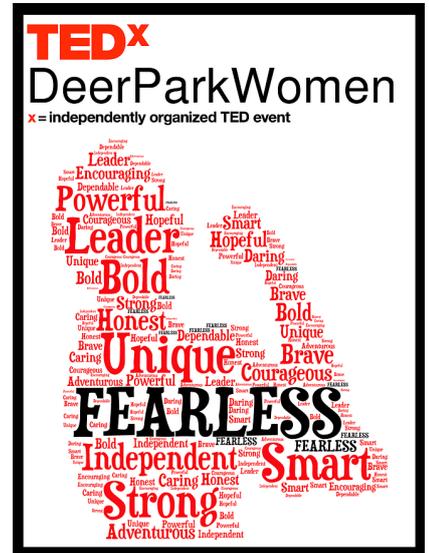


Step Afrika!'s Magical Musical Holiday Step Show -
FREE ADMISSION - December 16, 2020 - 7:30 pm/et

Let's celebrate the holidays together! Please register here: [Step Afrika!](http://StepAfrika!) and we will set up a watch party for MMSI, focusing on Sisterhood & Cultural Enrichment, on December 16 at 7:30 pm/et to watch the virtual performance. our Challenge: Between now and December 16th, contact a Melody and get her to register to attend!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stepafrika1994>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StepAfrikaInfo/videos>



CIRCLE OF
SISTERS

PRESENTED BY 

NOVEMBER 20-21, 2020



The Graces



The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020

Happy Holidays

and Abundant Blessings!

FROM THE REGAL SISTERS OF THE
MALIK MELODIES
SISTERHOOD, INC.



*Thank you for your continued support of
The Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.*

*We wish you good health, prosperity,
happiness, and peace in the New Year!*

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