

LITTLEBLACKPEARL

T H E B U S I N E S S S O F A R T

BLACK:unplugged

A Word From Dr. Angela Davis

pg. 6

ARTS = SMARTS

LBP and Bascom Celebrate
the 50th Anniversary of the
American Studio Glass
Movement

pg. 11

COMMUNITY GIVING

Northstar Lottery Group
After School Advantage
Computer Lab Donation

pg. 15

OPTIONS

“Outlook” A Beautiful
Collaboration

pg. 24

S P R I N G 2 0 1 2



GOOD LUCK BEING FASHIONABLY LATE.

The partnership between ChicagolandMINI and Little Black Pearl moves as fast as the new MINI Coupe. The new coupe is action packed with 181-horspower engine, this Cooper S two seater leaves no room for anyone to tell you to slow down. In fact, the new Coupe, like Little Black Pearl is driving innovation, into the future. **THE NEW MINI COUPE HOLD ON**



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“Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things unseen”

Every morning when I open my eyes I say “thank you”. I’m usually awakened by the bustling sounds of urban life, excitement and the anxiety of the day to come. My professional life is often carefully planned, my days are predetermined, details of my activities and who I will encounter are highlighted by little black dots on my iphone calendar. In the midst of it all...I continue to pursue my dreams.

We all have great capacity to actively participate in the manifestation of our dreams. Often as small children we were asked...what do you want to be when you grow up?” I believe this question is the first opportunity given our children to shape their vision for their future by dreaming of impending hopes and possibilities. We must go back to the days when we encouraged our children to have dreams and aspirations. Exploring and imagining a path in life designed to bring purpose and joy opens our children’s minds up to the many possibilities that dreaming can provide and confirms the relevance and meaningful purpose of education.

Education is simply the foundation for broadening a child’s world in pursuit of their dreams. The fundamentals of education are the stepping stones necessary to empower our children to become the creative, innovators in the 21st Century. Education must inspire us to “have a



dream”. Many of our children reach a crossroad or impasse that seems insurmountable, but it’s through the lens of hopes and dreams that they are inspired to rise above all odds. Just as every child deserves a quality education...every child deserves right to pursue their dreams.

I recognize that most of the children that have walked through the doors of LBP have faced many of the same hard choices that I had to face on my journey and they often see my success as a symbol of hope and possibility. Let’s all ask our children...“What do you want to be when you grow up?” and then encourage them to dream big dreams again.

Peace and Blessings,

All the best,

Monica Haslip
Founder/Executive Director

IN THE BEGINNING...





Little Black Pearl welcomes the amazing Lizz Wright back for another soul stirring experience. While emphasizing a healthy dose of the rousing hymnody Wright grew up singing in the church (she is, indeed, the daughter of a Georgia pastor). Wright had taken some time off last year to stay close to home and get back in touch with non-musical interests-including graduating from culinary school.

Growing up in the Pentecostal church, Wright wasn't allowed to listen to popular music. Oddly-or maybe serendipitously-the historic night when she really made the leap from her early musical life to her present one involved putting a "secular" spin on a spiritual.

"The funny thing about the transition from only gospel to jazz is that I felt that jazz had a familiar sacredness to it. In all of my adventures in music, I've been drawn in by sparks of the familiar inside of the unfamiliar. For example, when I first heard what people were calling the blues, I was taken aback, because I had heard that sound all my life. That was how the mothers sang in church."

Wright has been the recipient of nonstop critical acclaim and ever-increasing audiences ever since her Verve debut, *Salt*, in 2003. But she's confounded expectations along the way about what should be expected of an artist who's known for topping the jazz charts but is far from most people's idea of a traditional jazz singer. "I don't know how to aim at groups. Songs carry stories that I need to tell, and I

just pick them up and sing. Music has allowed me the opportunity to ask a lot of questions, to open and reconcile lot of things. My life is broad and very open, so my seemingly eclectic choices are also natural."

Wright openly reflects on her motivations. "It's time for me to think about what helps and heals somebody else. And sometimes it's good to sing simple things that people need, besides pieces that are more intriguing or that have great poetry. That's where I found myself this time around. There are a lot of tools in here. Sometimes we have songs to climb up on to get over obstacles." Prepare to get lifted!

FEATURED ARTIST

George Duke was born in San Rafael, California, and reared in Marin City. When he was just four years old, his mother took him to see Duke Ellington in concert. "I don't remember it too well," says George, "but my mother told me I went crazy. I ran around saying 'Get me a piano, get me a piano!'" He began his piano studies at age seven, absorbing the roots of Black music in his local Baptist church. "That's where I first began to play funky. I really learned a lot about music from the church. I saw how music could trigger emotions in a cause-and-effect relationship."

By the age of sixteen, George had played with a number of high school jazz groups. He was heavily influenced by Miles Davis and the soul-jazz sound of Les McCann and Cal Tjader.

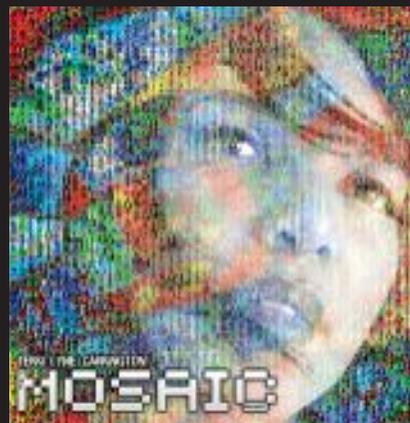
Through the years, along with his own releases and busy producing schedule, George has acted as musical director for numerous artists and television specials, including the Soul Train Music Awards (nine years), NBC's Sunday Night Show and Anita Baker (Duke took Anita and a 14-piece band to Washington D.C. to perform at the Kennedy Center for The Democratic National Committee). During the summer, Duke toured with the Montreux Jazz Festival on Tour in the USA, for which he served as both musical director and a featured artist, along with an all-star cast of musicians and vocalists including Al Jarreau, David Sanborn, Roberta Flack and Joe Sample.

At a New Years Eve fundraiser, George saluted the Symphonic Jazz Orchestra with his jazz trio at the Bakery. Brian Bromberg was on bass and Terri Lyne Carrington was the drummer.

Black:unplugged is proud and excited to welcome "Sir Duke" back to Little Black Pearl to put some extra funk into our sizzling hot music series!



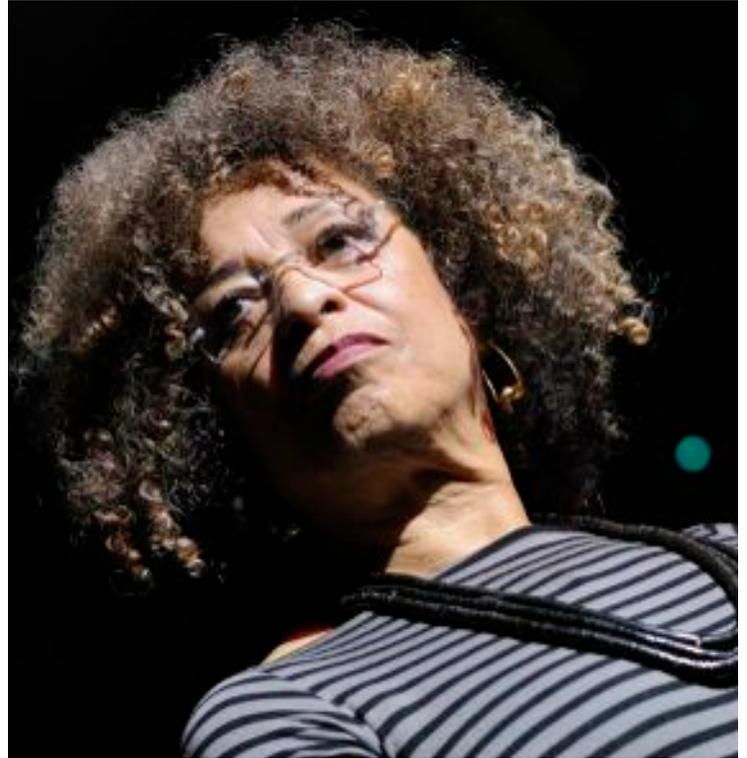
*Congratulations Terri Lyne Carrington! Grammy Award
Winner for " Best Jazz Vocal Album"
terrilynecarrington.com*



A WORD FROM DR. ANGELA DAVIS

Over the years I have heard from various sources about Monica Haslip's Little Black Pearl and her amazing work on art and education on Chicago's Southside, so when Terri Lyne Carrington invited me to participate in the Fundraising Gala last December, I enthusiastically agreed. Of course I knew before long before I arrived in Chicago that this would be an exhilarating evening. I have been avidly following Nona Hendrix's work since her performances with Patti LaBelle; I have loved Dianne Reeves since I first heard her perform in the 1980s; and having mostly heard Tia Fuller's recorded work, I looked forward to hearing her participate in this amazing collaboration, led by the incomparable drummer Terri Lyne Carrington. I had exceedingly high expectations, but they were completely surpassed by the show itself and by the visit as a whole.

The beautiful contemporary venue of Little Black Pearl that has both transformed and preserved a historical site in Chicago is, I think, the most stunning school setting I have ever visited. The students with whom I spoke confirmed my idea that it is impossible to wake up every morning and not experience the magnetic attraction generated by Options Laboratory School. I found the students to be so positively stimulated by their art education that they have learned how to imagine futures that are radically different from the trajectories this society has assigned to them, i.e. poverty and incarceration. I came away from those marvelous moments thinking that Monica Haslip has found the solution. What we need to do now is to figure out how to replicate this strategy for young people in neglected communities not only inside the U.S., but all over the planet as well.



BLACK UNPLUGGED 1



1. Tia Fuller 2. Terri Lyne Carrington 3. Nona Hendryx and Dr. Angela Davis 4. Principal Shalanda Holmes and Arlesia Juran 5. Dr. Angela Davis, Tia Fuller, Monica Haslip, and Dianne Reeves



BLACKX unplugged

Terri Lyne Carrington



MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Nona Hendryx



SERIES HOST

2012 SERIES

March 16, 2012



Lizz Wright



George Duke



June 9, 2012



Lalah
Hathaway



Rashaan
Patterson

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BUSINESS OF ART

NORTHERN TRUST BANK

In honor of Black History Month, Northern Trust Bank exhibited the work of Options Laboratory School and Little Black Pearl students and instructors as well as work from artists represented by Gallery Guichard. The exhibit showcased work at both Northern Trust's main branch at 50 S. LaSalle and their corporate office at 801 S. Canal. The exhibit was sponsored by the Black Business Resource Council and curated by Ellamonique Baccus and Jolanta Pawlak. The theme of the exhibit was portraits and featured drawings, paintings and sculptures of students and celebrities like Barak and Michelle Obama, Dorothy Height, Louis Armstrong and others. Students were excited about the opportunity to display their work publicly and look forward to more opportunities to exhibit their work in the future.



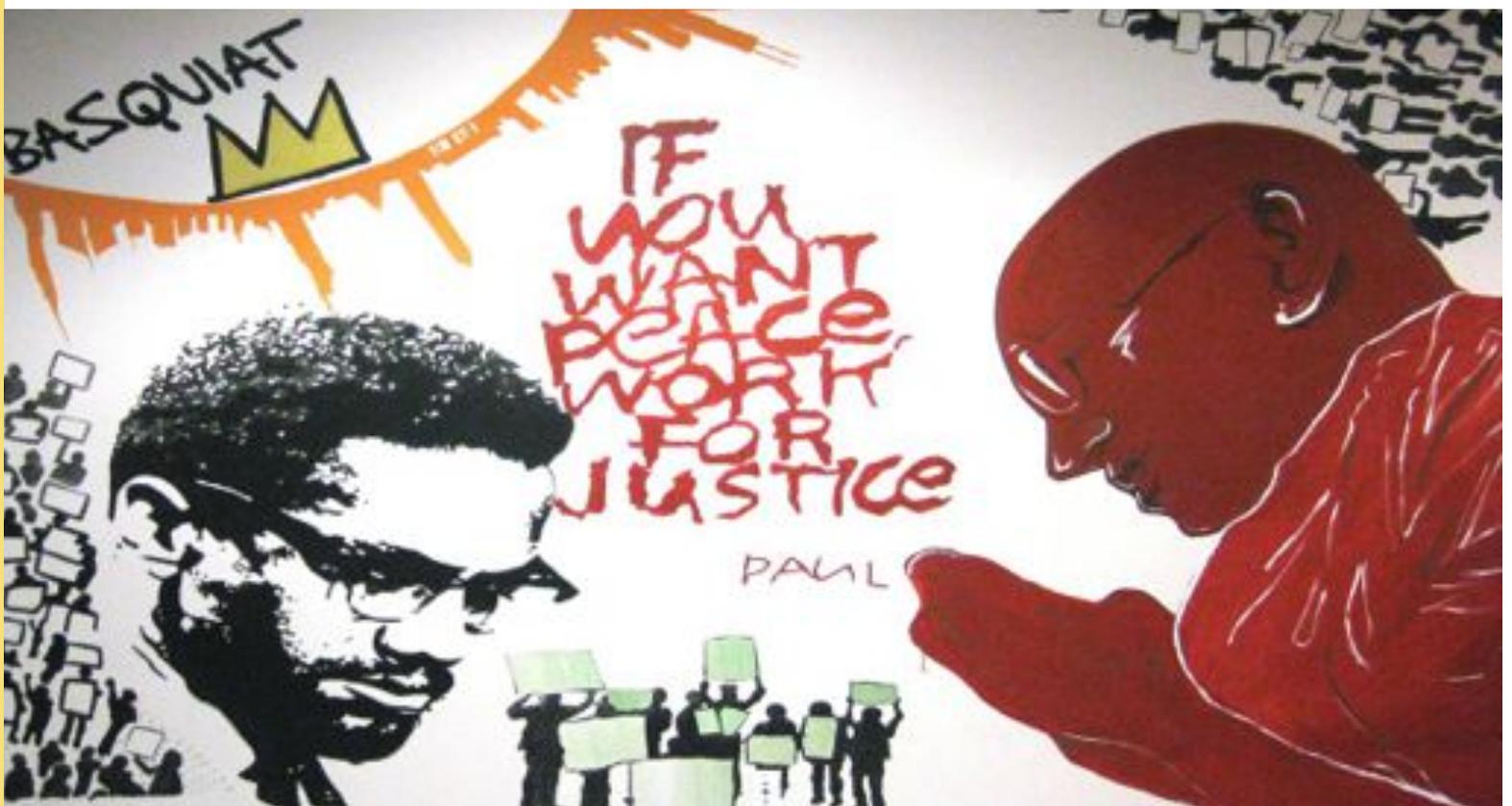
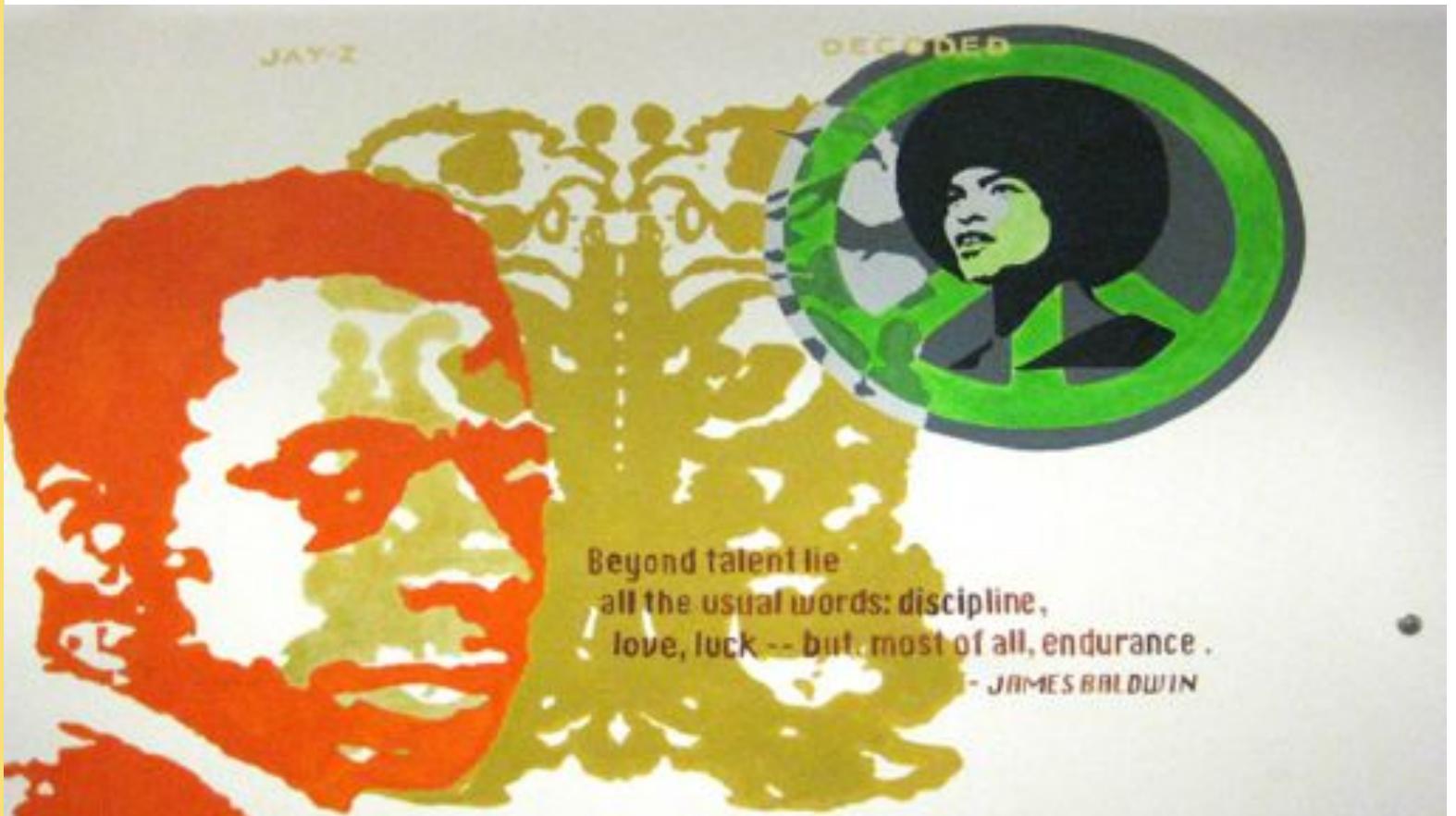
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL MURAL

Little Black Pearl Workshop is one of 23 Community Partners contributing artistically to the new Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, formerly Children's Memorial Hospital. The new state-of-the-art hospital will open at their new location at 225 E. Chicago in June 2012. Artwork and installations at the new hospital will contribute to the hope and healing of critically ill children. Among them a mural by Little Black Pearl in the hallways leading to the 6th floor operating rooms. The mural was developed and painted by artist and art therapist Ellamonique Baccus with apprentices Brijaie Davis, John Allen and Hamza Muhammad. The project was initiated with a review of the design by the Children's Hospital youth board composed of children ages 11-16 who have had extensive personal experiences in the hospital. Their expertise and insights into the trip from pre-operation to surgery helped to shape the final design. It was the intention of the artist that the mural could at least be a beautiful distraction that would alleviate some of the anxiety and fear before surgery. The theme of the mural focuses on butterflies. This is because butterflies are diverse, beautiful, resilient, and able to fly further than most birds even across the ocean. Many of the children that rely on the Children's hospital for their care must be resilient too. The background of the mural incorporates a helix pattern reminiscent of the DNA strands that make each individual unique. In the foreground a boy blows on the petals of a dandelion. Butterflies and dandelion seeds fly full of potential through the mural. Little Black Pearl staff supported the project by painting individual butterflies on the mural. Everyone involved was honored to a part of this important project. On Friday, May 11 and Saturday, May 12, the hospital will offer two community open houses during which anyone can tour the new hospital and experience this and other exciting works of art on display.



A R T

LITTLE BLACK PEARL MURALS



ART = SMARTS

G L A S S R E C Y C L E P R O J E C T
B A S C O M P A R T N E R S H I P



Little Black Pearl and Bascom Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of The American Studio Glass Movement and environmentally friendly art, Tracy Kirchmann, glass artist, aided in the establishment of a glass studio, which is powered by methane from a landfill at the Jackson County Green Energy Park in Dillsboro, NC. Tracy's love of teaching has led her to the After School Program for the Little Black Pearl Glass Lab in Chicago, IL. The students of the Little Black Pearl program represent the first glass studio on the South side of Chicago and through the lineage of Tracy, the students participating in this program are directly connected to Harvey Littleton, founder of Americas studio glass movement. Tracy Kirchmann was fortunate to have Joan Byrd, one of Harvey Littleton's original students, as her mentor. Tracy and her students will be creating works of art from recycled glass wine bottles for this exhibition.

www.thebascom.org The Bascom Art Center

Put your empty wine bottles to good use... Donate to LBP's Glass Recycle Project



HERE

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**SOUTHWEST
AIRLINES**

OFFICAL AIRLINE OF LITTLE BLACK PEARL

MUSIC: RECORD LABEL

WILD BROWN DYRYL BURNETT



The year 2012 provides a statement for our ambitious youth. The music industry has changed dramatically since 2002 and has done a complete 180-degree shift since the year 1992. Yet the constant factor that has and will always remain is our talented youth. I am fortunate to witness preteens and teenage minds fight through internal and external struggles in pursuit to have their voices heard. Rappers and singers consistently combat with the hardships of being a minority boy or girl living on the Southside of Chicago by writing a hook, freestyling to their peers, or just secretly jotting down their frustrations in a personal notebook.

Working as the Music Production Teacher for both Options Laboratory School and Little Black Pearl After School program, I've seen a lot of talent come and go. My aim is to not restrict nor chastise but to evoke hope, a more in-depth perception of life and an understanding of how powerful music is, rather we chose to recognize it or not. During my after-school program, we operate under a music group called S.o.U.L (Straight out of Undying Love) Movement Music. The youth create songs under a theme called Collateral Damage, which speaks on gang/gun violence, discrimination, code of silence, and certain boundaries within 'our' neighborhoods. Songs like "Revelation" and "Slip Away" provide authentic narratives that speak for many youth and even adults. Along with Ms. Pickens and Mr. Muhammad, we are proud to assist our students with their current ideas and future dreams.

One of my Option Laboratory students looked at his newly posted grade in my classroom. The grade did not live up to the young male's potential at all. On his way back to his seat I heard him quietly mumble, "I'm tired of this (insert the rest)." Witnessing his frustration, I pulled him to the side to see what was the problem. With a draining spirit he replied, "I'm tired of trying my hardest and getting nowhere. I just want to give up!" His words resonated to me as being the subconscious theme of our youth that continues to deepen that chip off their shoulders. 2012 not only marks the potential re-election of President Obama, but also signifies the product of the 'babies having babies' generation. The majority of our youth are looking for something to believe in; whether it is music, art, dance, fashion, drugs, gangs, the streets or death. Jet Lag Records is a mock (hopefully just for the time being) record label that is incorporated in my curriculum at OLS that the students created to believe in. It is not just a cool way to spend energy, but it is a small step for some of them to believe in something. The students are working towards producing a mixtape, an album, a blog and an end-of-the-year concert. They are understanding creative and basic ways of drafting a business plan, marketing plan, mission statement, and a buzz for themselves. The goals they have set shows exactly what most of my students are, "talented ambitious youth". The problem is many of them and many adults, often doubt with questions like "will they do it" or "are they talented enough?" My answer and question to you is the same answer I offer to them. "Do you believe?"



Dyryl D. Burnett, M.S.

FUNDER PROFILE



In 2010, W.K. Kellogg launched the America Healing initiative, to support programs that promote racial healing and address racial inequity, with the goal to ensure that all children in America have an equitable and promising future.

Why is this critical to improving the health, well-being, education and financial security of vulnerable children and families? Children of color are over-represented among the 29 million low-income children and families in this country, particularly among families living in areas of concentrated poverty. They are less likely to attend high-quality schools, live healthy lives, and eat nutritious food. This five-year, \$75 million initiative called America Healing is focused on bringing healing to divided communities and bridging racial gaps in the areas of education, health, juvenile justice, economic success, the media, and other areas. This work focuses on issues at the core of structural racism—those policies and practices that continue to create barriers for children of color—while at the same time is aligned with the foundation's primary program areas of Education and Learning; Food, Health and Well-being; and Family Economic Security.

"If we don't do this work now, we'll burden many generations out," said Dr. Gail Christopher to an audience of nearly 400 people in her keynote address for the Joint Center's Place Matters National Conference, held in Washington, DC. Place Matters is an initiative of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies—which seeks to address the community-level conditions that lead to racial and ethnic health inequities.

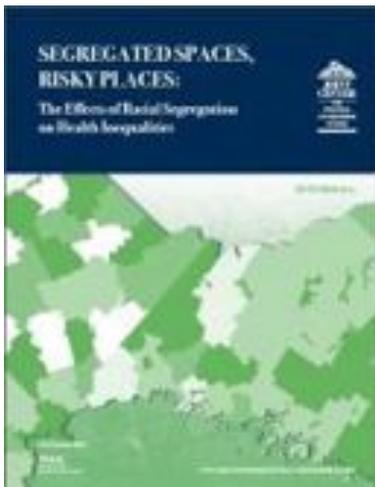
Dr. Christopher underscored that our nation's historical and present reality of racial segregation—which in many of our metropolitan areas remains a pervasive part of daily life—impacts the health and well-being of people of color. With segregation of people comes the segregation of resources, which means for people of color a lack of access to quality schools, healthcare and nutritious food.

Dr. Christopher explained that in order to overcome racial divides, we must begin to have these conversations, and understand the emotions and the healing needed to move forward. This need for "healing" is at the core of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's America Healing effort to assure that we remove the barriers to success for all children, so they may grow up in strong and healthy communities.



DR. GAIL CHRISTOPHER

RESEARCH



Segregated Spaces, Risky Places: The Effects of Racial Segregation on Health Inequalities

Thomas A. LaVeist, Ph.D.
Darrell Gaskin, Ph.D.
Antonio J. Trujillo, Ph.D.
September 2011

This study looks at the relationship between the level of segregation in metro areas in the U.S. and the health of the people who live in these communities. Metro areas with the highest levels of segregation have the largest health inequities (e.g., people of color will live far shorter lives than whites).



A Partner With Communities Where Children Come First

COMMUNITY GIVEN

NORTHSTAR LOTTERY GROUP

After School Advantage Computer Lab Donation



As a corporate citizen, Northstar is committed to education and recently donated an After School Advantage Computer Lab at Little Black Pearl. The Northstar Lottery Group's After School Advantage Program is a community education initiative which provides non-profit community agencies and public schools with state-of-the-art computer labs. These computer centers are designed to provide inner-city children ages 5-15 with a meaningful, yet fun, learning experience during the critical after school hours in a safe environment. This initiative is meant to bridge the digital divide and provide students with the necessary tools to be successful in school and achieve their life goals.

As the private manager of the Illinois Lottery, Northstar Lottery Group is delivering innovative strategies and cutting-edge technology to make the Illinois Lottery one of the top-performing in the world.



Northstar
Lottery Group
Responsibly Delivering Growth

PASSPORT CARRIERS



Passport Carriers is a not-for-profit organization that ensures students are physically and psychologically prepared for travel by using the passport as the catalyst to gaining global competency and self understanding. Passport Carriers has partnered with Little Black Pearl, Theaster Gates and Rebuild Foundation to create an opportunity for five (5) LBP/Options Lab students to travel to Germany this summer to participate in Documenta 13, a 100 day art festival.



NETWORK CAFÉ LIVE!

DIGITAL MEDIA MEETS COMMUNITY CAFÉ



LBP has become a part of the Chicago Learning Network (CLN); funded by the MacArthur Foundation. CLN is a network of cultural, community based and higher education institutions that serve Chicago's youth population through various education programs, particularly technology based programs. As a grantee of the MacArthur Foundation, Little Black Pearl (LBP) has transformed our public café into a technology haven for youth. LBP has created the "Network Café", a creative digital media destination where teens ages 13—19 can create, display and exchange ideas about fine, digital and multimedia art. The Network Café addresses the need for quality, educational and socially stimulating venues for youth to engage in hands-on training; developing skills in technology, digital media and visual arts.

The Network Café, facilitated by young adult mentors, offers various artistic demonstrations and workshops designed for hands on learning. The Café will serve as a hip space for public events for youth including music jams, DJ Station, visual arts workshops, health sessions and college fairs. The café will be available to the general public and other Hive Network members. Little Black Pear also looks forward to having Best Buy as a Network Café partner. Best Buy will provide Geek Squad and Employee Volunteer programs to enhance the visual arts and digital media learning experience.



CALENDAR

Power 92 Personality Meet & Greet
Gallery I
3/31 1p-4p

Chatto's Natural Hair Classes
3/28, 4/25, 5/30 last Wednesday of each
month 6:30p-9p

Members Only: Sketch & Sip
Gallery I & II
4/20

F.O.C.U.S. Fridays
Café
4/6 6p-9p

Spring and Summer Fashion Debut Fashion
Soiree by Kakes of Chicago
Atrium
4/7 6-10p

L.A. Beckwith book of Poetry Debut "Black
Swan before Swine"
4/14 1p-5p

One Night Only Poet Slam
Gallery I
4/19 8-12p

IMAN's Spring Food Gathering Event,
Atrium & Gallery I
4/21 7p-11p

Contemporary Arts Council Reception
Gallery I & II
6/1, 6p-10p

BGLH Natural Hair Meet Up
Atrium & Gallery
10a-6p 4/29

NETWORK CAFÉ LIVE!

ARTISTS

TRACY MICHELE KIRCHMANN

Tracy Kirchmann was born and raised in Chicago. Currently she runs the glass studio at the Little Black Pearl Arts Center the first glass studio on Chicago's South Side. Ms. Kirchmann teaches art and glass sculpture classes to high school students at both Options Lab and in the LBP afterschool program. In addition to teaching, she is also developing a glass production team comprised of Options Lab high school students to create job opportunities and teach young people about arts business.

THE ARTSIAN



Ms. Kirchmann completed her MFA in Sculpture from Western Carolina University in December of 2010, and graduated with honors. As a graduate student, she served as a graduate assistant at the Jackson County Green Energy Park. At the Green Energy Park Tracy helped design and build the green glass studio, which is powered by the methane from the park's landfill. In 2009, Ms. Kirchmann taught the first university glass sculpture class to run on land fill gas, through Western Carolina University. She also helped to develop and implement programming to teach inexpensive, public glass classes in the surrounding community. These classes are designed to increase awareness of alternative energy, promote glass as an art material, and to build community. In 2009 Ms. Kirchmann also built a landfill gas foundry at the Jackson County Green Energy Park with Baltimore sculptor, Christian Benefiel. Benefiel and Kirchmann co-taught a foundry workshop to WCU students, in conjunction with the inaugural pour. This metal pour was the first instance of the use of land fill gas, to fuel an art foundry in the world.

Teaching and community mentoring are fundamental facets of her life and have had a dramatic impact on her work and perspective. Community service and community organizing have been a huge part of her work at Jackson County Green Energy Park as well as at the Little Black Pearl. She believes in the ability of art to unify communities, solidify local identity, and as an essential attribute of human culture. Her work in the field of alternative energy came as a necessity, in her pursuit of the creation of her glass and metal sculpture. As a result of her research and development, she has been asked to speak at a number of national and international arts conferences. She is dedicated to furthering the study of alternative energy in the preservation of all fire arts. She is committed to her arts community and has served as the International Student Representative on the Board of Directors for the International Glass Art Society. She continues to work with numerous arts non-profit organizations and educational institutions using art as a fundamental way to enhance the public quality of life.

Ms. Kirchmann has received numerous scholarships and awards for her sculpture. In 2009 Ms. Kirchmann received an Honorable Mention in the International Sculpture Center's International Award for Excellence in Student Sculpture Competition. Her work can be found in numerous public and private collections. Most recently Ms. Kirchmann was honored by a commission from North Carolina Governor, Bev Perdue. This sculpture will soon be on permanent display at the Western Residence of the Governor in Asheville North Carolina.

Originally determined to be a singer, multi-talented, 21-year-old artist In-Zo has made his mark among locals in Chicago by showcasing his unconventional outlook on music. In-Zo's music is not only auditory—but visual. It is safe to say as a singer, rapper, producer, and graphic artist that In-Zo was born to share his creativity with the world. He particularly wishes to hone his music production skills to ensure that his mark is more than set in stone after he's gone. Referring to his genre as "non-classifiable", it's apparent that In-Zo wishes to clear his own path in the music industry instead of walking someone else's. Beginning his journey in a grammar school dedicated to developing the artistic abilities of its students, an idea was planted in his mind—an idea of excellence.

Inspired by Pharrell, Timbaland, and Kanye West, who is also a multifaceted native of Chicago, In-Zo wants to be all that they are and then some. He has no definition of success. To him, it will always be unattainable. He will always be on the grind, even when he has reached the pinnacle of what others believe to be success. To In-Zo, his music means more than just expressing himself; it means being able to take care of his family. He believes that even if there are a million guys working on a project, then there still is no sleeping for him until the job is done.

Where will In-Zo be in 5 years? According to him, he will be an untamable entity in the industry, and in 10 years he'll be untouchable—period. His drive and determination has led him to believe that music is his sole calling. For him, there is no other option. His creativity is bursting at the seams, and, if given the chance or financial support, In-Zo would market his talents. He believes that spreading the word about all of his capabilities is a certain way to make sure he achieves his ultimate goal—for people to see the world through his eyes.

IN-ZO

THE NEW MASTER OF CEREMONIES



SAM'S CORNER



Samuel Carroll

For Those Who Bite Their Fingernails

They ask if you are nervous
And you might be
Or you may be
absentminded and your extremities
just placeholders for your thoughts
You don't answer.

They ask if you bite your cuticles
too.
Well, you're not one to leave a job
unfinished
So you answer, finger in mouth,
yes.

They tell you how bad of a habit
you practice
How the tips of your hands have
skin where nail should be
And now seem rounded at the
ends
How no one should have soft
Where hard is more accepted.

You answer, finger in mouth,
Life is more flaccid than you think.
You chew, not to break or rip, but
to grind into the shape you desire.
You find it comical that a keratin
coating
Or lack thereof disconcerts them
so

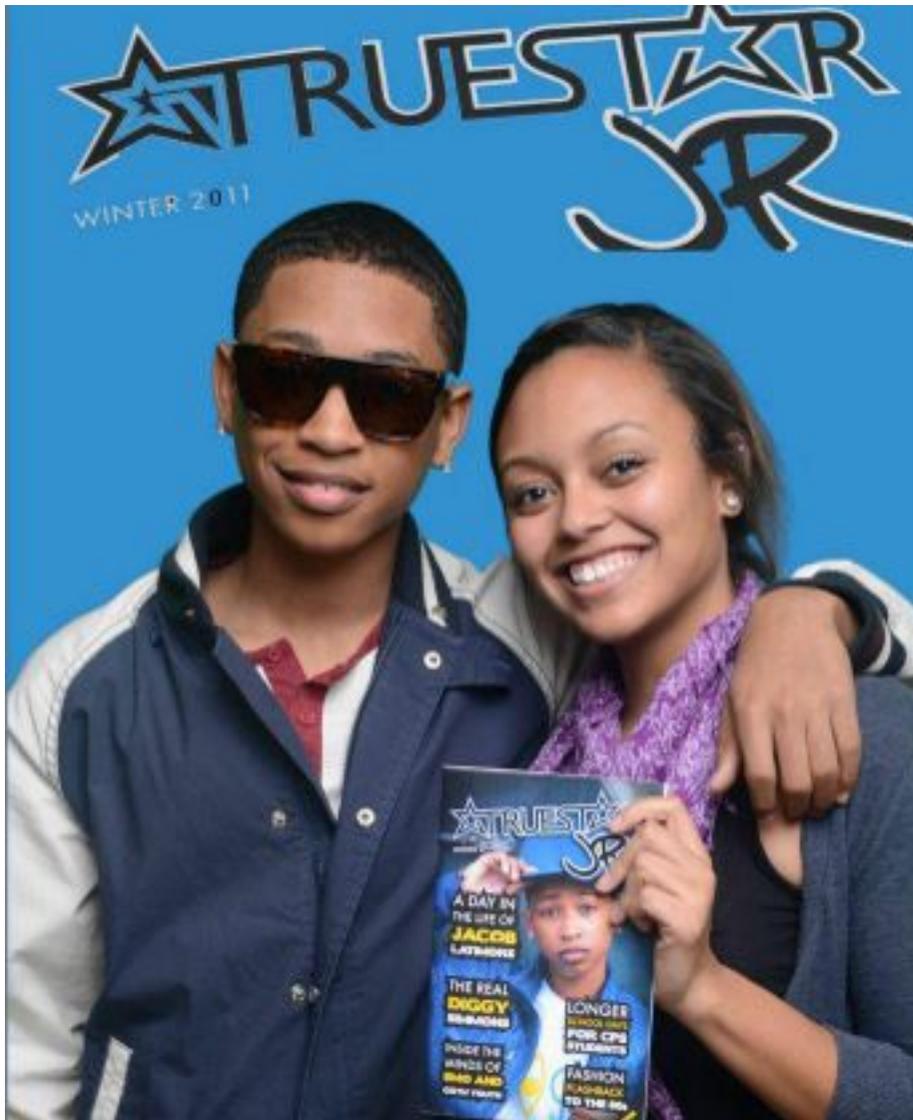
They walk away.
You bite too deep.



*“AN EVENT
PLANNER’S
DREAM”*

*Host your next special event at Little
Black Pearl. Please contact the Special
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by email at spacerental@blackpearl.org*

SPECIAL EVENTS



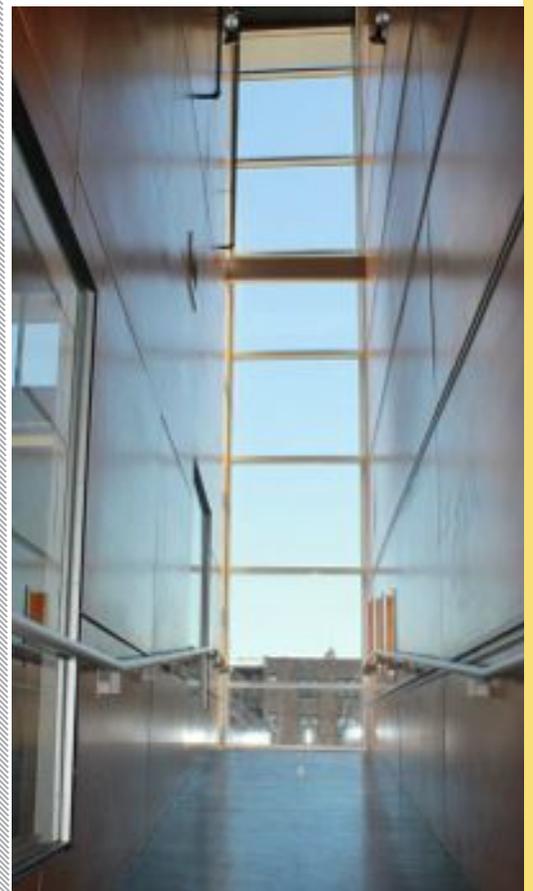
TEEN SENSATION JACOB LATIMORE AT LITTLE BLACK PEARL

True Star Jr. magazine's Winter 2011 issue release party and holiday fundraiser was hosted by RCA recording artist Jacob Latimore at Little Black Pearl.



IN THE DETAIL

Inside the art center located on 47th Street and Greenwood Avenue in Chicago, is a mixture of unique architectural intergration and modern style. The viewer can see connections between old and new on the east façade of the building facing an abandoned lot. The hallway inside leads visitors to a view through a linear glaze skylight. In most buildings what is normally another deadend hallway, this space projects the onlooker into the sky. The impressive wood wall panel creates a sense of safety and beauty, leading directly into an ascending curtain wall.



OPTIONS

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER



Celebrating Options! We are in the home stretch of the first year and we have a lot to celebrate. We opened our doors in September of 2011 and our students have shown tremendous growth in 7 short months! WE celebrate our students making the honor roll! WE celebrate our students coming to school! WE celebrate our students advocating for themselves! WE celebrate students planning for their future! WE celebrate our student's contributions to the ARTS! YOUR continued support will allow us to provide more OPTIONS for students who now have a promising future because of Options Laboratory School!

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT



Kristina Pedroni is a graduate of Western Illinois University. She comes from a long lineage of teachers; her mother is teacher in Calumet City, her grandfather was a principal at Lemont High School, and her great great grandparents established the first one room school house in their farming community. Teaching has always been a passion of Kristina's; she believes that if she sets high expectations for her students, they will always find a way to rise to the challenge. Kristina tries on a daily basis to transcend her love of literature to her Options Laboratory School students whether it's giving them real world use for language or bringing in her latest book shopping spree treasures. When she is not trying to instill lifelong literacy skills in the classroom, she is mentoring students and helping them work through their real world concerns.



I conquered fear,
I blazed a trail,
I raised the standard because
I had Options

got options?



Art + Education = Options
optionslab.org

OPTIONS

LAVERNE'S STORY



“Outlook”

The day of the conviction there was stares that surrounded the room. It was as if they were ready to see a jury convict a guilty victim. A debate occurred that would get my rear end chewed up because of some great knowledge I've obtained over the years. I was stigmatized by my peers, slightly traumatized by my fears, yet I was still eager to speak. I dared to speak of optimism, hopes and dreams...saying to myself, I wish my words could imprint upon someone that doesn't have a voice to speak. Slowly I began to utter words that made no sense. I just wanted to get somewhere far into a different mind, wondering if I could still endure the pain and turmoil. It wasn't the intensity or the depth of the argument, it was just the outlook. What appeared to be so complex was so easy. I was destined to exceed.

Questions begin to flourish, hitting my being and striking my mind. It was like throwing darts at a dartboard...some sticking and others falling to the ground. Despite what others might have thought my integrity was on the line. We are young and we can determine our future with the present. I know how you feel, your yearning for prosperity, but yet we release negativity.

The room was silent. Faces were becoming clear...faces of the young and old, fierce and timid. My choice of words was chosen by my perception of life and my outlook. I was bound by a society that could shape me with the words they used and they were deceitful lies brought on by the nay sayer's and doubters. They needed a new outlook strengthened by words of power, justice and truth. I dare you to find an inspiration.



Writer - Laverne Smith

Artist - Mike Davis

OPTIONS

TESTIFY!

Hello my name is Anika Gipson, my son Martez Gibson is in the 11th grade. This is his first year at Options Laboratory School. I am so very pleased with his academics thus far. My son has done a complete 180-degree turnaround since he has been at Options Laboratory School. He has turned from a D/F student who came from Simeon Vocational School to an A/B student. As a parent, I want the best for my child like any normal parent would. I sent him to a school where I thought was the best fit for him, unfortunately it wasn't. He struggled throughout his second and third year of being there. I knew that our time was ticking to where would we had to make a choice on what other alternatives that we had so that Martez could graduate with his senior year class.

But then I found out about Options Laboratory School. I couldn't have made a better choice by sending him to Options Laboratory School. Martez has been an A/B student since he attended this new school. He is now more excited about school, he wakes up eager to go to school and he is always on time. At his previous school he felt lost, as if his teachers were not concerned about his education. At Options he has a smaller class setting and he is able to have a one on one relationship with his teachers, his principal Mrs. Holmes, Ms. Juran, Ms. Monica, Dean Carter, Mr. Rashad, Ms. Jackson, and Mr. Burnett. Martez is now more focused and have more of a sense of direction as far as his future and his life goals.

As a parent the staff is very helpful to me because I am aware of everything that is going on in my son's school and in his actual classroom. They keep me updated on his progress and the ways that I can help to make his educational experience better. I even have another 16-year old son that I want to attend this school as well; I'm just waiting for the right moment to pursue this. I believe that you don't have to be a high risk student to attend this school. I think this type of school is for any child that needs a smaller class setting and a staff that is concerned about the students' education. This is really a great "option" for good children who believe in themselves and believe they can achieve their goals.

Respectfully Yours,
Anika Gibson-Gipson



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BEST BUY



Best Buy believes the real community connection is through our more than 150,000 employees. Each year employees donate their time to local organizations in a variety of ways. Employees serve meals to the homeless, raise funds participating in walks, build homes, clean parks and mentor children.

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COMMUNITY CORNER

Imagine yourself walking to your vehicle after a long day of shopping. Tired, all you want to do is just get home and kick your shoes off. Out of nowhere a 4-door vehicle with funky designs on it parks in the middle of the parking lot. As crowds gather to check out this quirky SUV, out jumps three teenagers; paint brushes in hand. You wonder to yourself, “Am I dreaming?”. No, you are just experiencing the “pop up” art experience, a new initiative between MINI USA and Little Black Pearl (LBP). This program was designed to provide MINI USA and LBP a creative partnership which supports student success, the arts and economic development in a unique and exciting way. Components of this groundbreaking partnership include a monthly vehicle wrap design student competition, “pop-up” art experiences and workforce development opportunities for students.

MINI USA has generously agreed to provide Options Laboratory School (OLS) students with a 2012 MINI COOPER COUNTRYMAN. Each month student artists will participate in a “design of the month” competition. This component will allow selected winners the opportunity to have the MINI COUNTRYMAN wrapped in their own creative design, morphing the vehicle into a 3-D marketing tool highlighting the partnership.

The “pop up” art experience is more than a neighborhood excursion; it is designed to allow OLS students the opportunity to interact with the greater Chicagoland area. Students along with an artist mentor will set up and display their work at various locations throughout Chicago, creating dialogue with their fellow Chicagoans regarding the impact OLS and LBP programs have on these young leaders. City residents will be able to participate in an on-the-spot art class, led by students. This dynamic arts program allows students to enhance their artistic skills, while learning to appreciate and value their interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Designing a funky vehicle wrap, or teaching a “pop up” art class in Chinatown are great experiences for any young adult, but being afforded the opportunity to enhance one’s standard of living is something about which most high school students dream. The partnership’s ultimate goal is to provide students with viable employment opportunities, once they have graduated, which has evolved into the student apprenticeship program. This one-of-a-kind program will allow a team of students the opportunity to truly take “ownership” of their MINI. With guidance from MINI vehicle technicians, students will assist in the maintenance and upkeep of the donated vehicle, creating a unique pathway to a quality life and professional experience with the MINI brand.

From a larger perspective, the MINI USA and LBP partnership provides students with access to resources normally unheard of for their community. Through symmetry of ideas, the program will enhance the “student experience”, and assist in their growth as artists, future leaders and community residents committed to the overall sustainability of their communities.



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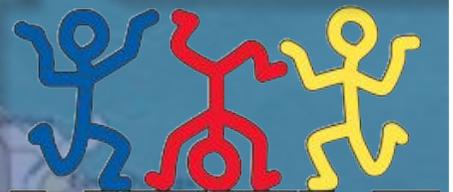
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**LITTLE
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PEARL**
the business of art

NEXT



COMING SOON
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