

Cooking with Gabby offers youth healthy alternatives



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Loud Chick is here to give you advice like only she can!



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GLOBALLY READY : STUDYING ABROAD

by Kimani Hamilton

A standard list at the start of a New Year often include eating healthy, achieving a career goal, and making a trip abroad. Yet for the last item on this list: going overseas, African American students make up only 6.1 percent of all U.S. college students who complete an educational experience in another country, according to a 2016-2017 study by the Association of International Educators with the National Association of Foreign Student

LA NATIVE BECOMES TECH GURU



By Nsenga K. Burton

When most people think of the name Idris, they think of world famous actor Idris Elba. There’s another Idris on the block and he has been leading the tech industry since his teen years. Idris Sandu, 21, may one day be a household name with his growing roster of applications making use of his mobile software technology.

In addition to being an innovator, the Los Angeleno is an activist. He discovered his love of tech after being taken from California as a child by his father and abandoned in a small village in his father’s home country of Ghana. Sandu figured out how to get back home to the United States using the first-ever iP-

S.O.L.O. Robotics brings STEAM to inner-city youth

By Angela M. Parker



LOS ANGELES - South Los Angeles Robotics (SOLO) is on a mission to bridge the technology divide between inner-city youth and their more affluent counterparts.

The brainchild of Jennifer Lashley, who got the idea for the organization while taking her daughters to attend robotic classes in more affluent neighborhoods, SOLO was created to ensure that youth of color have the opportunity to engage in STEAM (science, math, English and

mathematics) programs when she was taking her daughters to attend robotics classes in their own communities.

For the past several years Lashley, who is a teacher, has worked to even the playing field for inner-city youths, providing access to technology for kids in underrepresented areas by making sure that they have the resources and training they need to learn basic computer programming, coding, website build-

ing and robotics. She has taught robotics in schools and began hosting booths at various events that has reached thousands of youth throughout the Los Angeles area.

“Society is getting more and more technology forward every second of everyday and our children cannot afford to be left behind,” said Lashley. “From navigating a tablet or needing to interface with a computer for homework, testing, research, etc., we do our kids a dis-

service, and limit their option for the future, if we do not give them the skills they need to compete in an ever changing world.”

Lashley believes that Los Angeles is the perfect place to build a strong technological community youth. She points to the fact that Silicon Valley is the home of 500 tech companies, and youth have the opportunity to connect with huge companies such as Google and Yahoo.

OUR INAGURAL PRINT EDITION!



New Earth offers youth new hope

By Angela N. Parker
Editor and Publisher

For Harry Grammer, founder and president of New Earth, working with system-entangled youth is not just a job, but a calling.

In fact, New Earth has “freed” thousands of homeless, foster and juvenile justice system youth, ages 13-25, through programs that ensure they are formally free of system involvement, regularly housed, employable, educationally advanced and emotionally balanced.

It is a struggle that Grammer knows all too well.

At 16, he was arrested and sentenced to five years of juvenile probation. At 18 he was a teen father struggling to provide for himself and his family. By the time he entered his 20s, however, his life had turned around and he was ready to pay it forward and make life better for youth in his community.

In 2003, he created “Expression Mondays” to allow youth to express themselves through poetry, spoken word and rap, and a year later New Earth was born. Its first signature program, FLOW (Fluent Love of Word), encouraged foster care youth to express themselves through creative writing and student presentations in a peer group setting.

“I understood the role that spoken word and music had in my healing, and making sure that I was able to express myself, and work through my issues, and I knew that it could be the saving grace for these kids,” Grammer said.

In 2004, New Earth introduced FLOW at Camp Gonzales and since then the program has touched the lives of more than 1,800 young people each year in probation camps, group homes, placements and juvenile halls throughout Los Angeles and Orange County.

“When I first started entering

“I understood the role that spoken word and music had in my healing”

the juvenile halls, I realized how hungry these kids were for music,” Grammer said. “Think about it, kids are always listening to music...on their headphones ... on their phones ... and they now find themselves in a place where there is no music and

here we come. It is like bringing water to the desert.”

It hasn’t been easy, though.

“For the longest time it was just us seven days a week, eight hours a day in these centers trying to keep these kids spirits up, trying to give these kids hope,” he said.

“At any given day there are 3,000 youth locked up, and statistics from 2009 show that in Los Angeles County there is an 86 percent recidivism rate for these youth. ... And they are being sent back for minor infractions,” Grammer said. “I once met a young man who was given 6 months in jail because one of the stipulations for his probation was that he keep a 2.0 GPA and he fell below that. ... We have got to do better by our kids.”

In addition to FLOW, New Earth offers case management, outdoor excursions, a music studio and vocational education in which youths have the opportunity to receive their high school diploma and online degrees at the New Earth Arts and Leadership Center, opened in 2015.

“We want to make sure that our youth are making a viable, sustainable living wage,” Grammer said.

To ensure this, the organization works to impart youth with

“At any given day there are 3,000 youth locked up, and statistics from 2009 show that in Los Angeles County there is an 86 percent recidivism rate for these youth...”

the soft skills they need to be employable, partnering with Microsoft to teach youth hard digital skills and LA Kitchen and LA Trade Technical College to teach youth culinary and construction skills. The plan is to match participants with jobs as soon as they complete their courses.

Additionally, Grammer, who in recent years has been named a CNN hero and a 2018 Obama Foundation Fellow, has laid the groundwork for the 2019 transformation of Camp Gonzales Youth Detention Center into a state-of-the-art vocational center that will focus on independence and self-sustainability instead of incarceration.

“I feel like I have come full circle,” Grammer said. “To be able to come back to Camp Gonzales where it all started and see that transformed ... it’s an opportunity for us to become a model for the nation.”

Grammer is grateful for all the support that New Earth has received from the community but

admits that his organization needs more help. The organization is currently in a building that they have outgrown and need more funding for general operations and capacity building.

“I have the most amazing people working with me, I just cannot say enough about them, but we need more support for our programs, we need more people to know about the work,” Grammer said. “We are headed towards making a large impact. We see ourselves as a guiding light in the darkness enveloping this nation.”

Raise Your Voice 4 Peace Brings Music, Hope, Awareness and Good Vibes

LOS ANGELES - Domestic violence prevention and intervention program Jenesse Center, Inc. and its youth program Jeneration J presented the first annual Raise Your Voice 4 Peace (RYV4P) teen singing competition at the GRAMMY Museum on Saturday, November 10th.



The event opened with the contestants performing the theme song “Raise Your Voice 4 Peace” with recording artist, producer JildyT, who wrote the song and is one of the sponsors along with Shernoff Family Foundation and Earnster.

The RYV4P panel of expert industry judges included Mir Harris, Time’s Up Manager, Operations and Community Engagement; Young Money Records Recording Artist, Chanel West Coast, currently also on the television shows Love & Hip Hop Hollywood and Ridiculousness; event producer and “Raise Your Voice 4 Peace” songwriter JildyT; Brody Brown, recording artist and 7x GRAMMY Award-winning songwriter and producer; Brandra Ringo, A&R, Warner/Chappell Music and Kat Tat, famed tattoo artist, VH1 reality show star, painter, entrepreneur and humanitarian.

Contestants were judged on musicianship, communication, artistry, audience appeal, marketability and overall presentation by a panel of industry experts.

The first place prize of \$3,000 was awarded to Shaylin Becton age 16 of Burbank, CA. Shaylin attends John Burroughs High School. At the age of 5, she began singing around the house and performing for family. The first time she performed was a tribute to Michael Jackson at her Grandmother’s 50th birthday party, and ever since then, she says she knew performing was what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Her biggest career highlight has been performing as Young Nala in The Lion King on Broadway at the

age of 9. She aspires to write, produce, and perform inspiring music to change the lives of all people around the world.

All finalists were treated to swag bags with additional prizes.

The Top 5 finalists were selected from dozens of contestants who submitted a video or audio recording of themselves to the Raise Your Voice 4 Peace contest, singing a song with an empowering message.

The original finalists included Anisa Washington (14, Los Angeles), NisaSimone Thompkins (15, Dallas, TX), Nayah Damasen (13, Burbank, CA), Elyse Williams (17, West Hills, CA) and Shaylin Becton (16, Burbank, CA). Jabez Byrd (14, Los Angeles, CA) was pulled to replace Elyse Williams after she unfortunately withdrew from the competition after learning her dear friend was killed due to the Thousand Oaks shooting.

Dr. Angela Parker, Jenesse’s Director of Trainings and Programs said, “Jenesse Center is always looking for fun and innovative ways to empower youth to embrace healthier relationships,” she says. “What was so exciting about Raise Your Voice for Peace is that it not only epitomized Jenesse’s mission to ensure that the next generation understand what love is, but was an amazing opportunity for youth to showcase their amazing talent at The GRAMMY Museum, one of the premiere venues in Los Angeles. Youth are faced with violence more and more these days. We hope by providing outlets like these, the students will have a space to express themselves, be nurtured and feel safe.”

Actors’ Gang brings social studies lessons to life

CULVER CITY — After studying Mesopotamia for six weeks, Natalie Gualtieri’s sixth grade social studies class stepped out of the classrooms and onto the proverbial stage when the Actors’ Gang visited Culver City Middle School recently.

Four company members from the Actors’ Gang, who work as teaching artists with the group’s Education Department, integrated themselves into the Culver City Middle School unit on Mesopotamia.

As class began, the Actors’ Gang instructors introduced themselves and established some agreements. After leading the students through some tried and true theater warm-up exercises, the Gang launched into the subject matter. “You be the teachers,” they said to the students. “Pretend we know nothing about Mesopotamia. Educate us.”

The students called out four main subjects: The Standard of Ur, The Epic of Gilgamesh, Hammurabi’s Code, Mesopotamian Empires. While those are colorful names on paper, they really came to life when the Actors’ Gang got involved and prompted the students to fill in more details about each subject: “polytheism,” “Superman,” “an eye for an eye,” “early technology.”

After the students clued in the instructors with more details on Mesopotamian history, they broke up into four groups to create living tableaus about each subject. One instructor guided each group to write, cast and rehearse a vignette about their subject — on the spot. Then each group presented their tableau to their fellow classmates, who acted as audience members and critics.

The students who were in the audience made observations about their classmates and the material they were being taught.

“When studying history we forget that they were real people with real emotions,” Adam Jefferis, the Actors’ Gang associate director of education, told the students. “Can you imagine what it was like to live during this time?”

Gualtieri beamed with excitement during the class.

“The kids love it,” she said. “They are just ecstatic. I have one student who really comes to life so much more than in the regular classroom. I bet these students are going to do



“When studying history we forget that they were real people with real emotions.”

well on their tests next week.” Sixth grader Makenzie McCullen praised the experience.

“Working with the Actors’ Gang helped me remember the material, because we were learning it in such a fun and interesting way. This made me feel interested in the story.”

The Actors’ Gang is part of Culver City Unified School District’s Front & Center Theatre Collaborative, which provides theater arts curriculum.

The collaborative is a unique partnership that brings together teaching artists from professional theater groups with local funding partners to create an unparalleled collective impact — the highest concentration of theater arts programming per student in any Los Angeles County school district.

As one of the collaborative’s six arts partners, the Actors’ Gang Education Department provides free after-school programs to all five elementary schools and Culver City Middle School, and in-school programs at Culver City Middle School,

Culver City High School and Culver Park High School.

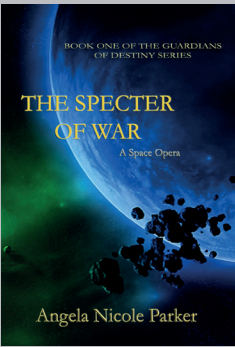
Through this program, The Actors’ Gang works with every sixth grade student at Culver City Middle School, including the Spanish immersion students who are taught in Spanish. Each class receives two visits per year from the Actors’ Gang. So, how did Gualtieri’s class do on their test?

“The kids did a great job!” Gualtieri said. “Better, in general, than the first two units on geography and early man. I do attribute it to the Actors’ Gang, and having the students act out the different concepts and elements of Mesopotamia. They did especially well with Hammurabi’s Code of Laws.

“Almost all students answered the questions on that section of the test correctly. Aside from all this, they did a wonderful job participating with the Actors’ Gang, and were truly inspired.”

The Actors’ Gang will be back in the spring.

Choose your own adventure!
Lose yourself in a book...



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COLUMN: COOKING WITH GABBY OFFERS HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES FOR YOUTH



Each month Cooking with Gabby will spotlight a healthy theme, story or recipe for youth.



Gabby's Tasty Taco Salad
By Gabby & Chef Steve

Cooking with Gabby is dedicated to ending the childhood obesity crisis in America by offering youth and their families healthy alternatives to some of their favorite dishes.

This month, we’re making my Tasty Taco Salad. This twist on your classic layered bean dip recipe is healthy and delicious. I’ve gotten rid of all the unhealthy ingredients like sour cream, refried beans, and over-salted beef.

We start by browning our turkey meat. Be sure to make a hole in the



center of the meat to bring out the flavors. I’m using lean turkey meat and my grandmother’s “secret” taco seasoning (I included it in my recipe below).

Next, we prepare our avocado-yogurt dressing. This is the key ingredient for the dish. Thanks to yogurt the dressing is rich in protein, vitamins and minerals like calcium and

B-12, and probiotics. Probiotics are “good bacteria” that help with digestion among other things.

Then we prepare our layers, I use fresh tomatoes, romaine lettuce, salt free tortilla chips, and low fat cheese. Ok, so are you ready to try it at home? We’ve got the full recipe below. Or, if you are more of a visual person, check out this quick “how-to” video and watch me prepare the recipe in my kitchen!

Serves 6
This healthy twist on layered bean dip is sure to be a hit at any party. I’ve gotten rid of the unhealthy things like sour cream and replaced them with a homemade Avocado & Yogurt dressing!

Prep Time
15 min
Cook Time
15 min
Total Time
30 min

Ingredients
1.1 tablespoon canola oil
2.1 pound 93%-lean ground turkey
3.2 tablespoons chili powder
4.½ teaspoon salt, divided
5.1 avocado, pitted
6.½ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
7.1 ½ cups crumbled unsalted tortilla chips
8.1 cup prepared salsa
9.1 15-ounce can pinto beans, rinsed
10.5 cups thinly sliced romaine lettuce
11.½ cup shredded Mexican cheese

blend
12.1 medium tomato, chopped
Instructions
1.Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add turkey, chili powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt.
2.Cook, stirring and breaking up lumps, until cooked through (about 5 minutes).
3.Next, mash avocado, yogurt and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt in a small bowl with a fork until smooth.
4.Remove turkey from heat and transfer from the pan to a serving bowl.
5.Layer chips, then salsa, then beans and then lettuce over the turkey.
6.Finally, spread the avocado mixture over the lettuce.
7.Top with cheese, then tomato and serve!

Notes
1.Nutrition information per serving
2.Calories 383 | Carbohydrates 29 grams(g)
3.Fat 20 grams(g) | Protein 25 grams(g)
4.Sodium 630 milligrams(mg) | Sugar 0 grams (g)

Learn more about Cooking with Gabby at cookingwithgabby.org

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- One United Bank - 3683 Crenshaw Blvd.
- Washington Irving Branch - L.A. Public Library - 4117 W. Washington Blvd.
- Baldwin Hills Branch -L.A. Public Library -2906 S. La Brea Ave.
- Angeles Mesa Branch - Los Angeles Public Library - 2700 W. 52nd St.
- Hyde Park Branch -Los Angeles Public Library - 2205 W. Florence Ave.
- Inglewood Public Library - 101 W. Manchester Blvd.
- Central Public Library - 630 W. 5th Street
- Exposition Park - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Library -3900 S. Western Ave.
- Jefferson - Vassie D. Wright Memorial Branch Library - 2211 W. Jefferson Boulevard
- Lewis Metropolitan CME Church - 4900 S. Western Ave.
- Inglewood City Hall
- Dulan’s On Crenshaw, 4859 Crenshaw Blvd.
- Ackee Bamboo Jamaican Cuisine -4305 Degnan Blvd.
- Simply Wholesome Health Food Store and Restaurant - 4508 W. Slauson Ave.

#New Year’s goals:

1

Secure an accountability partner.

2

Focus on your supporters.

3

Breakdown goals into smaller steps.

4

Celebrate small wins.

5

Be patient with yourself.

6

Keep track of your progress .

COMMENTARY: Reflections on Safe Places for 2019

By Kelly Raye

It’s 2019, time to reflect on the many twists and turns we found ourselves in that caused us much discouragement. At the end of each year, we declare we are leaving the people behind who hurt us and discarding everything



and discarding everything that brings us pain and no longer serves us. Did you know that inwardly, our Source uses the pain in our hearts to hSafe elp us find safe places to heal?

Safe places help us to reprove ourselves without the help from others.

Peace, healing and refuge are all things we need in order to forgive, to keep going and to be free. So. it’s not a matter of leaving people behind. You can’t discard of anyone if you’re not totally free. The emotional and physical challenges you experience represent the changing seasons in life that all of us find ourselves in.

As the year winds down, circum stances that were most discouraging tend to float right to the top of your memory and hang around for a while. With honest introspection, you will learn you are resilient, and you will make it past the pain with tremendous strength. Reflections, not resolutions, force us to review our thoughts and our actions and make improvements. When we feel safe, we are more comfortable dismantling the wall we built around ourselves. We are ready to be open and acceptable of our faults. We can disrupt our own progression when we fail to affirm and accept our own shortcomings, mistakes and failures. Safe places help us to reprove ourselves without help from others. Find a “safe place” to reflect, get the year behind you, realign and focus. The goal of a new year’s resolution is to stop doing the thing you have always done. The power to evolve happens thoughtfully, with time, and with lots of self-work.

Globally ready: Black Students Need to Study Abroad Cont. from Pg. 1

The main deterrent for African American students is that the rising cost of attending college leaves little funds left over for enhanced educational experiences.

Study abroad advocates and educators hope that a new Congress in 2019 will recognize the importance of having a diverse workforce that has been exposed to international study.

They expect to continue the efforts of a bipartisan group of lawmakers in Congress who introduced H.R. 4379, the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act, in November 2017. The legislation, supported by Senators Richard Durbin, D-Ill, and Roger Wicker, R-Miss. in the Senate, and Representatives Cheri Bustos, D-Ill and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla. would support challenge grants that encourage college and universities to enhance opportunities for study abroad.

“If we try to find more funding out there, I think our numbers will increase,” said Karen Lee, the associate director for the Center for Intercultural and International Programs at Xavier University of Louisiana.

“A lot of students want to go, but when you look at your funds and have to pay for your airfare, that holds a lot of students back from going,” Lee said.

Providing cost effective opportunities for African American students is one strategy to change the numbers, but international education advisers also work to help Black students navigate cultural differences abroad.

“Sometimes traveling as a black student, we run into racism or just see things from a different perspective,” said Nia Laing, a senior, sociology major, at Xavier. “For example, going to West Africa can have such a deeper meaning for us because we are the descendants of slaves from that region,” Laing said.

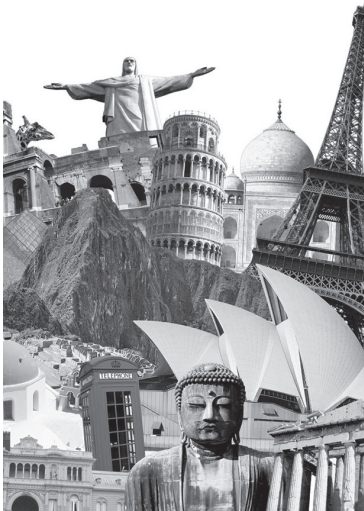


Students who study abroad are more likely to finish their degree . They are also likely to have a higher grade point average.

Organizations like the Diversity Abroad Network now exist to provide both financial and social resources for students of color to successfully navigate study abroad experiences.

Students who study abroad are more likely to finish their degree. They are also more likely to have a higher grade point average than those who don’t study abroad. travel is worth the cost.

“People think it’s expensive, even though there are so many scholarships out there just sitting,” Laing said. “My travel would not be possible without several scholarships.”



Advice: Dear Loud Chick..

Q. Dear Loud Chick,

Do you think my mother has the right to go through my personal and private stuff in my room ?

A: Is water wet? Look Hun, your mom has a responsibility to make sure you are safe and healthy. If she thinks you are up to some shenanigans or you might be hurt she better bust down that door to get into that room. Trust me, you will thank her later!

Your stuff is only yours in the sense that she has made it possible for your to have and use. i.e shelter, food, clothing, furniture, cell phone. If you feel slighted, talk to your Mama and I am sure that you can come to a compromise you both can live with.

Q: Dear Loud Chick,

My Parents won’t let me go on dates with boys, I’m in the 7th grade. They won’t even let me go on group dates. All the other girls have boyfriends. I have a boyfriend, my parents don’t know. He wants me to go to the dance. He will break up with me if I don’t go. How can I convince my parents that I have to go to this dance.

A: Keeping secrets from your parents? Not cool Hun!

I get it, you feel old enough to date, but can you stop smelling yourself long enough to understand that your parents are only looking out for you?

Your parents have these rules for a reason. As for your Cas-

anova, do you really want to risk losing your parent’s trust over some dude who threatens to break up with you because of something you can-

I get it, you feel old enough to date but can you stop smelling yourself enough to understand that your parents are only looking out for you?

not control? Girl let go and let God with that one and have a talk with your parents about when you can date and what are the rules. Then follow them!



BOOM BOOM BAN

For Chance Walker, middle school was a chance to learn about herself and what she wanted from her future

by Chance Walker
Contributing Writer

Middle school is that awkward time where everyone hits that horrific stage known as puberty. Red dots start to appear on your face, you're hungry all the time, and suddenly none of your clothes fit. However, it is not these tiny kinks that define your adolescence, but how you choose to overcome them before you make the big leap to high school.

Entering sixth grade from elementary school can be terrifying and exciting at the same time. The chance to meet new kids, join clubs, and participate in school sports is all so fresh. Immediately, there are new responsibilities in addition to more challenging academics -- such as joining the basketball team, robotics team, speech club, trying to maintain a social life, and of course, getting good grades. And as a result of participating in all these newfound interests, you'll likely forego some sleep. A couple months into the year, it is easy to get overloaded, overbooked, and overwhelmed. Unless you have a strategy.

For me, I had to start prioritizing. I began by assessing the current load I was taking on and compared it to my middle school goals. What did I want the most? If it was to break the school record, I would focus on sports. If it was to attend an "ivy league" high school, then grades. If it was to run for student body president, then I would be extra social. The only problem with this is that I wanted it all. I wanted to break the record, and have good grades, and to be student body president. However, as the famous author Napoleon Hill advises, choose between mastering a single craft or be content with mediocrity. I heeded the advice and found some middle ground. I would choose good grades and sports to be the main focus of sixth grade.

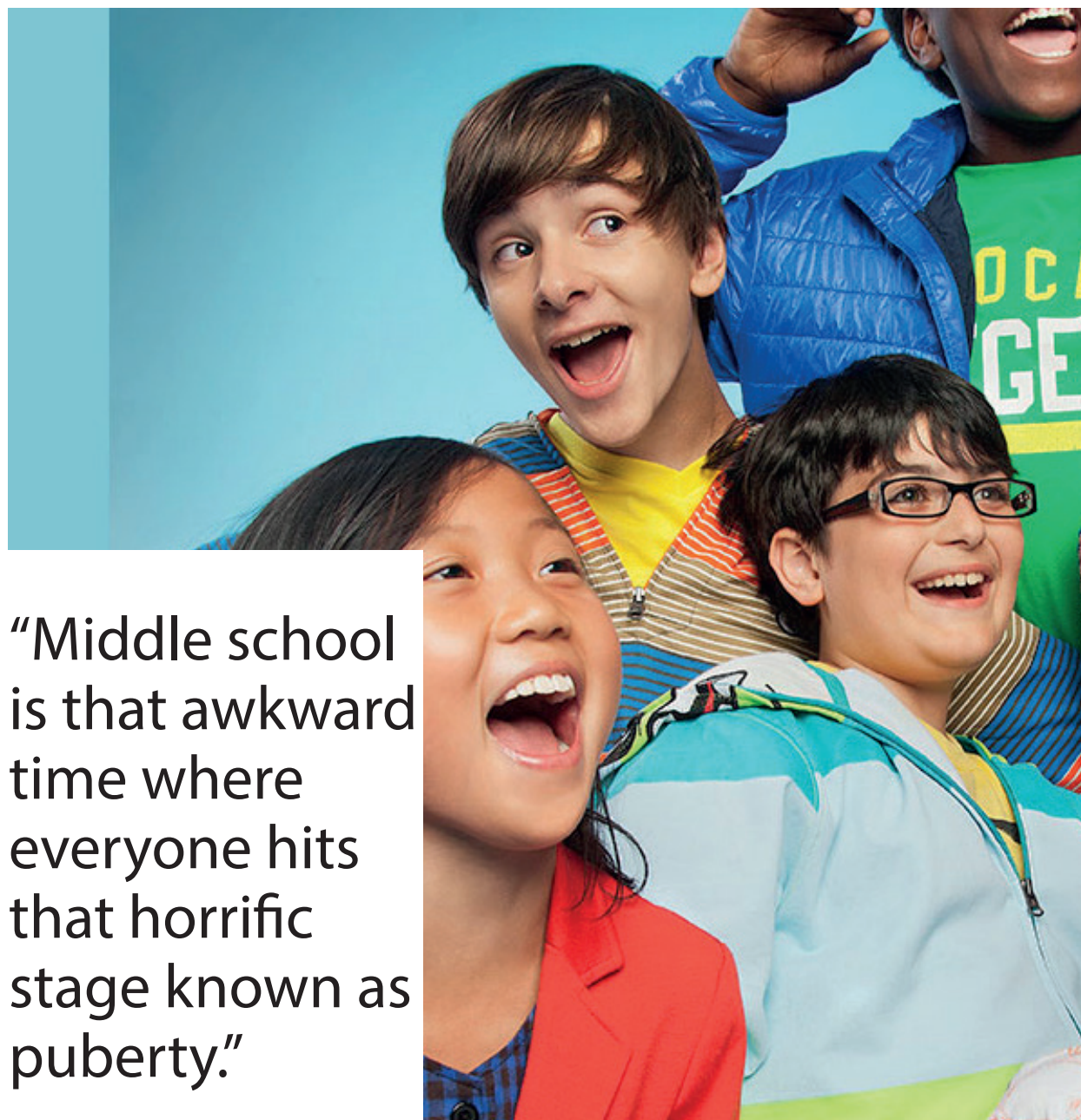
Next, I bought a fun calendar to keep me on task. Using

a variety of pens and markers, I was able to create a colorful system to stay organized and manage my time. Plus, if you're artistically inclined, you might find this as a creative outlet.

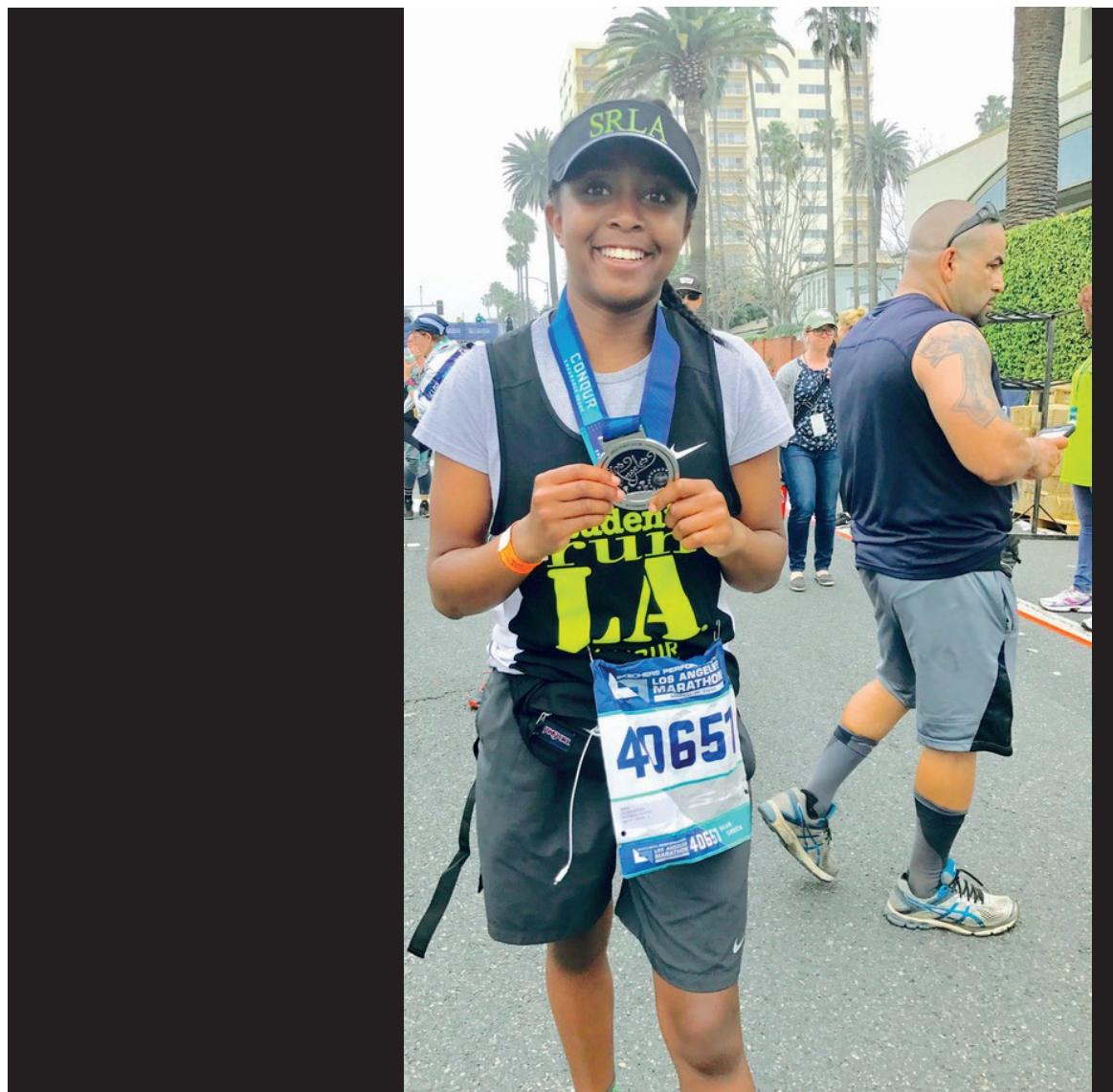
When scheduling, don't forget to factor in sleep! According to the National Sleep Foundation, middle-schoolers require at least 9 hours of rest in order to perform at their optimal level. Additionally, knowing how alluring social media can be, I locked my phone in a drawer in order to stay focused on homework. The snapchats and Instagram posts would have to wait. Without any distractions, I was able to complete homework in under a few hours, eat dinner with my family, and go to sleep at a decent time. By developing a routine, I was able to add more to my plate.

Seventh grade was filled with new activities, adventures, and Grey's Anatomy. Some downtime equaled Netflix time. I practiced my good study habits through the first two years of middle school and was ready to finish the last year with a bang, but I was thrown a curveball. It was like boom boom BANG.

Entering a new school in eighth grade, I started the year with drive and ambition hoping that my trusty tools would get me through like they so lovingly did in my previous years. But when I noticed people were just cruising in their academics, I asked a friend about it. He told me that middle school didn't matter. And he would start really trying in high school. HUH?! I remember finding this remark extremely nonsensical. If you never taught yourself how to double down and focus, are you suddenly suppose to gain these skills when the workload amps up even more? Of course I actually responded, Oh. Okay. Other students noticed my resolve and ridiculed it, calling me far worse things than "nerd" for wanting to try my best. All of a sudden I felt like



"Middle school is that awkward time where everyone hits that horrific stage known as puberty."



NG



I was Nikki Maxwell in Dork Diaries. Amongst my peers, how did I go from 100 to 0 so quickly?

I figured out that more insecurities than ever begin to surface right before high school. Researchers found that girls with low self-esteem and feelings of inadequate self-worth are more likely to engage in harmful coping behaviors. It was not easy for me to hear the hateful comments and rumors spread about me for being different. I had to learn that when people are not confident in themselves they project their self-doubt onto others. Some eighth graders at my school would find short-term remedies for their insecurities by succumbing to peer pressure, vaping, or ditching class. Instead of giving my attention to the pettiness, I spent time with I figured out that more insecurities than ever begin to surface right before high school.

Researchers found that girls with low self-esteem and feelings of inadequate self-worth are coping behaviors. goal-oriented friends, stayed focused on school,

and found an outlet by running the 2017 Los Angeles Marathon.

I cannot promise you that high school will be one hundred percent smooth sailing, but establishing a strong sense of self and an unwavering work ethic in middle school will aid you in your journey. Trying to change who you are in order to impress others is useless. Grow, challenge yourself, and live your best life.

SOLO ROBOTICS CONT FROM PG. 1

Working with youth in grades 6-12, SOLO Robotics offers varying levels of technology classes meant to build on their skill sets as they age. In 2015, Lashley put together her first robotic team, that competed in 2016.

The outpouring of interest has been so great in the community that in 2018, Lashley decided to incorporate the program into a non-profit, offering regular workshops for a monthly membership fee.

Lashley has seen first-hand what can happen when you pleased to be able to provide a space for kids who have similar interest in robotics can come together and learn from each other.

“A couple of years ago I was working at a school with a robotics team and there was a 12-year-old boy who was graduating below his grade level and was always angry and getting into trouble, he wasn’t a part of

and that he could make different choices and go down a more positive path than some of the people he knew. It was amazing, I mean this kid had reached such a turning point and a year before that he didn’t know anything about robotics and now he had learned about goals, learned the meaning of team work and learned I can choose my path, I can do whatever I want to do.”

As for the future, Lashley is working to finalize locations for her 2019 Saturday workshops and is seeking volunteer teachers and help with purchasing equipment to be able to provide participants programming in at least four different robotic

“I will never forget that he was elected to speak at his graduation ceremony and he talked about what a difference being part of the robotics team meant to him...how it taught him what it meant to be part of group...and that he could make different choices and go down a more positive path than some of the people he knew.”

the team but the principal saw something in him and decided to put him in the program as incentive,” said Lashley. “He came in and immediately started building robots and acting as a guide to the other kids and until then not only did nobody else see him as a good leader but he never saw himself as one either.”

Lashley saw how much pride he took in being a problem solver and was pleasantly surprised by the change he saw him in and by the time he graduated he had not only improved his academic performance in school but choose to matriculate to a magnet school with a STEAM component.

“I will never forget that he was elected to speak at his graduation ceremony and he talked about what a difference being part of the robotics team meant to him...how it taught him what it meant to be part of group...

platforms. In February the SOLO Robotics team is going to Barcelona, Spain to participate in a STEAM conference, one that Lashley hopes will be the first of many.

Lashley wants the program building for SOLO Robotics to be interactive and those who are interested are asked to fill out a survey and join the email list that can be find in the bio link of the organization’s Instagram page.

Lashley hopes that participants in the program are able to redefine their relationship with technology.

“I created this program because I strongly believe that our kids need to be just more than consumers of technology. Our kids have phones, they use the Internet, Snap Chat, Instagram, and there is no reason that they should learn how to be creators as well.”

TECH GURU CONT. FROM PG. 1

iPhone which is what motivated him to pursue a career in technology. The iPhone was the first time that users could create applications for other users.

At age 10, Sandu was discovered by a Google designer while in a public library, who promptly offered him an internship. By age 13, Sandu was programming for Google Blogger and Google Plus and the rest is history.

He was only 16 years old. Now 21, the Los Angeles-based young man is the unconventional tech guru who has accomplished many incredible feats, including being responsible for algorithms that have made Uber, Instagram and Snapchat what they are today. The software engineer considers himself a ‘cultural architect’ and said he aims to ‘level the playing field’ between Silicon Valley and young communities of color.”

#HISTORY MATTERS



Ida B. Wells was a pioneering journalist and newspaper editor. A fearless civil rights activist and female suffrage campaigner, she was a founder member of the NAACP in 1909. She co-owned a newspaper, the Memphis Free Speech and Headlight.

In the 1890s, Wells exposed lynching as a barbaric practice of whites in the South used to intimidate and oppress black people, who created economic and political competition and a subsequent threat of loss of power for whites. A white mob destroyed her newspaper office and presses, as her investigative reporting was carried nationally in black owned newspapers.

GenerationNext

GenerationNext is a newsmagazine designed to highlight positive news relating to youth ages 12-21.

It is a free publication that is distributed monthly in printed form throughout the Los Angeles and Inglewood areas and online.

It is a non-profit whose main purpose is to ensure that youth of color have a chance to create their own narratives.

Editor/Publisher :
Dr. Angela N. Parker

Website:
www.generationnextonline.com

Contact Us:
Have any questions or concerns?

Email :
angelaparker@generationnextonline.com



PHENOM GIRLS

Phenom Girls has began its 2019 session. The free program seeks to provide girls ages 11-13 with the mentorship, activities and tools they need to embrace the phenomenal within. Sessions are held every fourth Saturday of the month. For more information, email info@phenomgirls.org.

LINKS COTILLION



The Los Angeles (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and the Los Angeles Chapter Charitable Trust held our 66th Annual Los Angeles Cotillion on Friday, November 23rd at the iconic Beverly Hills Hilton Hotel with over 700 in attendance. This year's theme was 'Rise Up' which was also the song by Andra Day, to which 26 beautiful Cotillionettes danced the Cotillion waltz (rearranged waltz version) after individually being presented by their fathers.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Lewis Metropolitan Church members George Hamilton III and Malik Johnson were awarded the Callie Calvin Scholarship on Jan. 6 for their participation in the Men to Men Ministry, a group that supports the spiritual growth by helping men mature and encourage spiritual formation in others. Hamilton, a senior at Richard A. Vladovic Harbor Teacher Preparation Academy, and Johnson, a freshman at Miles College, are members of the church's youth ministry.

ENTERTAINMENT: BEST FILMS OF 2018

In 2018, the stories told, talent on view, compelling characters, emotions expressed, and genres stretched were just amazing. It was more than enough to make viewers track films from the theaters to streaming services. Or vice versa.

Check out the year in movies. Enjoy.

Ben Is Back–The plague of drug addiction hits the tony suburbs and writer/director Peter Hedges takes his audience to the front door of a home that is bearing the brunt. Julia Roberts soars as the distraught mom trying to save the life of a duplicitous son, expertly played by Lucas Hedges. Courtney B. Vance co-stars in this compelling and cautionary family/drama.

Black Panther– The late Stan Lee left behind a key to the future. That key was Black Panther, as envisioned by the very intuitive director/writer Ryan Coogler. The African nation of Wakanda became the world's #1 tourist destination (\$1.3B at the box office). It's supermen (Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan, Daniel Kaluuya) and superwomen (Lupita Nyong'o, Danai Gurira, Letitia Wright)

were artfully displayed (cinematographer Rachel Morrison) as they embodied Black power and pride.

Blindspotting– Of all the films that tackled racism and the PTSD a black man experiences as a result, this very grassroots indie captured that feeling the best. Set in gentrifying Oakland, CA, the ambitious script by lead actors Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal chronicles a time and place when inner city black neighborhoods are disappearing and the inhabitants are stressed—every day. Wonderful direction by Car-

Black Panther– The late Stan Lee left behind a key to the future. That key was Black Panther, as envisioned by the very intuitive director/writer Ryan Coogler.

Focus Features .

BlackKkKlansman– Leave it to filmmaker Spike Lee to find the most hard to believe but true story about a black cop (John David Washington) who infiltrates the KKK with the aid of a Jewish police officer (Adam Driver). The undercover brother even hoodwinks David Duke! A nervy and very informative look at the dimwits who joined the Klan and the brave policemen who thwarted their moves. Considering the times we live in, the 1970s subject matter

has a very contemporary appeal.

Crazy Rich Asians– This jolly film is the first Asian/American movie to get a major release in 25 years! A stellar cast—Constance Wu, Henry Golding, Michelle Yeoh and Awkwafina—turn a rags-to-riches love story into the best romantic comedy of 2018. Director Jon M. Chu with writers Peter Chiarelli and Adele Lim turn a golden opportunity into solid gold entertainment.



Best films of 2018 cont.

played hysterically by Viggo Mortensen. The most unlikely director in the world, Peter Farrelly (Dumb and Dumber), tells the tale with a nod and a wink and peppers it with social and racial themes, real drama and historical facts. An organic crowd pleaser.

The Favourite– The stodgy English period genre gets whacked by this de-



mented take on an 18th-century triad of deceitful women: Queen Anne (Olivia Colman), Lady Sarah (Rachel Weisz) and a very ambitious and cunning palace interloper Abigail (Emma Stone). Eccentric director Yorgos Lanthimos finally gets a project that can withstand his very demented style of direction. Evocative cinematography

BlacKkKlansman– Leave it to filmmaker Spike Lee to find the most hard to believe but true story about a black cop (John David Washington) who infiltrates the KKK with the aid of a Jewish police officer (Adam Driver).

(Robbie Ryan) and production design (Fiona Crombie) paint an astonishing portrait of palace intrigue.

Green Book – A very unlikely story, based on true events, features the best acting duo of the year. The brilliant scholarly actor Mahershala Ali plays a concert pianist who is driven around The South, in 1962, by a burly Italian chauffeur/bodyguard played hysterically by Viggo Mortensen. The most unlikely director in the world, Peter Farrelly (Dumb and Dumber), tells the tale with a nod and a wink and peppers it with social and racial themes, real drama and historical facts. An organic crowd pleaser.

Night Comes On –Kids separated from their parents and relegated to foster homes and institutions should have their stories told. New actor-turned-director Jordana Spiro uses a script she co-wrote with Angelica Nwandu as a basis for her poignant ode to troubled youth. Dominique Fishback plays the train wreck of an 18-year-

old older sibling in the process of leading her 10-year-old sister (Tatum Marilyn Hall) down the wrong path. Vulnerable characters you have to love. Private Life Kathryn Hahn and Paul Giamatti

Private Life – Every 10 years, writer/director Tamara Jenkins makes a feature film. It's worth the wait. A neurotic couple, nearing middle age, tries to have a child. Previously, they were so caught up in their lives that by the time they decided to have offspring, they had to scramble and hope IVF would pay off . Tough challenge for them. Great laughs for the audience. Kathryn Hahn plays the fretful wife with anxious humor and Paul Giamatti is the put-upon husband. A sweet, delicious adult comedy.

A Quiet Place – This is the absolute best use of sound effects ever devised for a horror film. A very innovative but scary take on a post-apocalypse world where demons' attacks are instigated by the slightest sound. Ingeniously conceived by actor/writer/director John Krasinski who guides his wife Emily Blunt into the performance of her career as the protective mom.

REMY MA LAUNCHES CLOTHING LINE



By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

Aside from being one of the best female rappers in the game, Rema Ma is giving back to the community in a big way.

As the “All the Way Up,” rapper announced on social media that she’s launched a clothing line called Vim Vixen to benefit previously incarcerated women.

“I’m so excited to finally launch my very own clothing line ... when I got out of prison, I wanted to do something to support women just like me ... women who have done their time and paid their debt to society,” said the star, whose real name is Reminisce Smith.

She went on to say that previously incarcerated women remain overlooked and mostly forgotten.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the clothing line will support the Remy Ma Foundation which helps women who have previously been in prison by providing opportunities and lifelong resources to help enhance their lives and the lives of their families, according to a mission statement.

“I am so very proud of this moment,” Remy Ma said.

“Launching both a clothing line and foundation are two things I have been very passionate about since my release from prison,” she said.

The New York-born rapper served a six-year prison sentence after being convicted in 2008 on charges stemming from

a shooting outside a Manhattan deli where a man was wounded reportedly after a confrontation over money he allegedly owed Remy Ma.

In a 2017 interview with Complex.com, she said hit the studio just hours after being released from prison on August 1, 2014, meeting DJ Khaled to record the “They Don’t Love You No More” remix. One week later she knocked out a song with Jada-kiss.

Then a record with Ty Dolla Sign.

music-industry presence before getting her life in order.

“Looking back,” Remy told Complex, “I guess it was a good decision.”

There was more to come. In 2015, Remy joined the cast of VH1’s reality series, Love & Hip Hop: New York, establishing a footprint in another medium. She also scored a hit record with “All the Way Up,” a collaboration with Fat Joe and French Montana that went double-platinum and spawned a slew of unofficial remixes.

“I’m so excited to finally launch my very own clothing line ... when I got out of prison, I wanted to do something to support women just like me ... ”

Then, since it was summer 2014, she touched Bobby Shmurda’s “Hot Nigga” instrumental.

She was 34 years old, without state ID or driver’s license, without health insurance.

he had to find a school for her then 14-year-old son, who was living out of state at the time. But she had a plan, and she stuck to it: She’d reestablish her

Her new clothing line features everything from tops and jackets, to dresses and activewear and everything in between. Fans can browse vimvixen.com

COMMENTARY: Building power for California’s kids

By Eliza Brooks

Whether you ask a parent, a teacher or even a college student like me, creating a better world for kids is the top priority. If that’s the case, then why aren’t Pro-Kid values reflected in California’s public policy? A recent study



ranked California 36th out of 50 states in children’s wellbeing. Being pro-kid means more than just not being anti-kid, it means embracing the idea that children need to be supported across all sectors to live a

Traveling as a black student, we run into racism or just see things from a different perspective

safe, happy and healthy childhood. Yet in the state of California, the metrics for crucial indicators of child well-being are far lower than they should be, especially when broken down by race. Children of color face systemic barriers including inequitable school discipline policies like suspensions for willful defiance, a catch-all term used to justify dis-

ciplinary action for minor misconduct, and poor access to healthcare due a lack of coordination within the system. For example, suspensions for willful defiance disproportionately impact students of color. In 2013, Black students were more than four times as likely to be suspended as White students, even when accused of similar behavior. These students then face ripple consequences: Students who have been expelled or suspended are six times more likely to repeat a grade, five times more likely to drop-out of high school, and three times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system. Earlier this year, The Children’s Movement came together to take a stand against disproportionate punishments and supported Senate Bill 607 (Skinner), which would limit suspensions for willful defiance. The letter outlined the ramifications of suspensions for willful defiance and was signed by over 120 organ-

The Science Princess Brings Business Savvy and Slime

Its early evening on a Friday, and while many tweens may be relishing some social media time, or a chance to call friends, or even watch a movie, Maria Raquel Thomas is talking to a reporter about her business venture.

Thomas, 12, not only faces the daunting task of rigorous homework, socializing, after school programs, volunteering, making time for friends, family and herself, she is also living up to all the responsibilities of being “Ria The Science Princess.”

“Its my alter ego,” Thomas said. Indeed Ria has found a niche market that helps people her age cope with stress and deal with anxiety.

Slime
Yep, you read it right. Thomas was just as pleasantly surprised at her own discovery as well. “I became super obsessed with slime,” Thomas said. “I would make it and then my friends wanted to play with my slime. So I told my mom I wanted to start my own slime business.”

Thomas opened Ria’s Slime Shop in January of this year. The site is full of admittedly soothing photos of colorful slimes. The products come in a variety of packages from Rias’ Kaptain Krunch Cereal, to Ria’s Bubblegum Land to Ria’s Candy Crush. One of the most beautiful is Ria’s Royal 2 a slime in a soothing purple that feels relaxing just looking at the photo. It’s no wonder that particular one is already sold out. In fact, according to Thomas, Ria’s Slime Shop has sold more than 300 slimes. She’s also garnered a huge following on Instagram, and over 60,000 views from her YouTube channel.

So why has slime been such a hit with kids? Thomas weighed in on the subject.



My generation is now into phones and sometimes we need to get off of Tech and calm down. Slime calms us down. It gives us a relaxing scent.

“Me and my generation- we are now into phones and sometimes we need to get off of Tech and calm down,” Thomas said. “Slime calms us down. It gives us a relaxing scent.”

To concoct a batch of slime Thomas mixes a combination of glue, lotion and her secret activator. Parents need not worry. Her slime is borax-free and perfectly safe. When she is in a groove, Thomas can churn out a batch of slime in about ten to fifteen minutes.

Thomas’ foray into science was sparked by educators at her school. “I think last year I was in sixth grade I had a new science teacher and she would tell us so much about science,” Thomas said. There are so many things to learn in the world.”

Even though Thomas is a burgeoning entrepreneur with a pretty big influence on social media, her role model are very local. “I look up to my mom and dad,” Thomas said. “they help me with my businesses, but they make sure they tell me this is mine.” Thomas is definitely bit by the science bug. She hopes to attend Harvard Medical School someday. But she already has an idea of how to manage and prepare for her goals and dreams. “I plan on getting scholarships,” Thomas said. For more information go to Thomas’s site at <https://www.maria-raquelthomas.com>.

Building power for California kids cont.

zations across the state of California, including Children Now, ABEN (A Black Education Network), the Children’s Defense Fund and Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action. This letter sent a powerful message to lawmakers, who quickly signed the bill into law in May 2018. Why aren’t Pro-Kid values reflected in California’s public policy? A recent study ranked California 36th out of 50 states in children’s wellbeing. On the health side, while almost 5.5 million children in California are covered by Medi-Cal, there are not enough doctors to ensure that everyone is getting quality preventive care. In 2015, there were only 39 doctors who accept Medi-Cal for every 100,000 patients, a number well below the state standard of 50 (Report Card). In fact, California ranks among the bottom two states for Medicaid provider rates. This lack of coordination means that while quality healthcare is at-

tainable for some kids, it is not accessible to all kids. Research shows that this lack of access leads to emergency room visits for chronic conditions, like asthma. These high rates of ER usage often fall along racial lines. For example, Black children are eight times more likely than children who are Asian-Pacific Islander to visit the ER for asthma related complications. As a result of Children Now advocacy efforts, the 2018-2019 state budget allotted \$1 billion to practitioner reimbursement programs that will expand the availability of medical and dental services for children covered by Medi-cal. Inadequate health and education resources have a destructive impact on child development and socioemotional well-being. And the result of slow-moving policy processes and fractured advocacy efforts is plain and simple: California’s kids of color are not receiving the resources they need to thrive.

So what can we do about it? The Children’s Movement has an answer: By connecting all of the different community groups, businesses, nonprofits, education and health

This letter sent a powerful message to lawmakers, who quickly signed the bill into law in May 2018.

groups that care so deeply about kids, we can create a power base that can be leveraged to promote pro-kid policies statewide. The result of slow-moving policy processes and fractured advocacy efforts is plain and simple: Cali-

California’s kids of color are not receiving the resources they need to thrive. The Children’s Movement currently connects 2,700 businesses, organizations and nonprofits to create an unprecedented pro-kid power base. These groups can opt to sign on to advocacy letters, such as the willful defiance letter, through The Children’s Movement that are sent directly to state senators and assembly members. Members of the Movement range from local Boys & Girls Clubs, to LGBTQ

groups, to NAACP chapters to immigrant rights centers. And while these diverse groups may have differing agendas, they can come together on one crucial issue: kids. Every day we don’t engage in advocacy is a crucial day for a child lacking resources. We urge your groups to sign on to The Children’s Movement at <https://www.childrennow.org/themovement/>. Rather than losing hope, we must remember that our voices are the most powerful tool in the fight for the rights and the equitable distribution of resources for our children, our families and our communities. Eliza Brooks, a political science major at UC Berkeley and a fellow for the Children’s Movement of California, can be reached at EBrooks@childrennow.org. She also works with the Black Recruitment and Retention Center at UC Berkeley, a Black student-run organization founded in 1983.

LA native makes dean list at Ohio Wesleyan

OHIO - Austin Moore, a native of South Los Angeles, has been named to the 2018 fall semester Dean's List at Ohio Wesleyan University. To earn Dean's List recognition, Ohio Wesleyan students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale in all applicable classes.



Moore, who is a senior at the college, was recently elected student body president. He is majoring in Economics & Politics and Government and is the 2018 recipient of

Moore, a senior at the college, was recently elected student body president.

the "Jan W. Baran and Kathryn K. Baran Endowed Fund for the Encouragement of Post Graduate Fellowships" for his research on the psychological impact of slavery and the religious differences within the African American community today. Founded in 1842, Ohio Wesleyan University is one of the nation's premier liberal arts universities.

Located in Delaware, Ohio, the private university offers more than 90 undergraduate majors and competes in 25 NCAA Division III varsity sports. Through Ohio Wesleyan's signature OWU Connection program, students integrate knowledge across disciplines, build a diverse and global perspective, and apply their knowledge in real-world settings. Ohio Wesleyan is featured in the book "Colleges That Change Lives" and included in the U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review "best colleges" lists. Learn more at www.owu.edu.

New Student School Board Member Tyler Okeke Sworn In

LOS ANGELES - Promising to be the voice of students, Tyler Okeke was sworn in as the new student board member by Los Angeles City Clerk Holly Wolcott during the Los Angeles School Board meeting today.

"When I sit down at this dais, I don't want you to see Tyler Okeke, the student board member, I want you to see the thousands of students I represent. This is all for them," he said. He also thanked the board for continuing the position and allowing it to thrive. "In this District," he said, "student voices matter."

A senior at the high school recently renamed for School Board Member Dr. Richard A. Vladovic, Okeke is a member of the Los Angeles Mayor's Youth Council, president of the Black Student Union, founder of the Harbor Political Action Committee, and active with the Los Angeles Metropolitan Debate League. He is the son of Nigerian immigrants, Ifunanya Oparah-Okeke and Nelson Maxwell Okeke, who attended the swearing-in.

At the board meeting, he cast his first advisory vote for a special election on March 5, 2019 to fill the vacancy in Board District 5. Okeke opposed an earlier date in January because he said the March date "would give more students time to turn 18 and vote." He is strongly committed to student voter registration.

"I wish to congratulate Tyler Okeke on being selected as the 2018-2019 Student Board Member. I have full confidence he will not only be up to the critical task of being the student voice on the School Board, but will be an amazing representative from Harbor Teacher Prep Academy in Board District 7," School Board Member Dr. Vladvoic said.

"Welcome Student Board Member Tyler Okeke to the L.A. Unified



Just 19 years old, Jordan just closed the deal to open his first retail store location.

Board of Education," said Board President Mónica García. "I'm excited to work with Mr. Okeke on increasing student voice and mobilizing more young people to the polls. We look forward to an amazing year of collaboration and youth representation on the Board."

Board Vice President Nick Melvoin said, "I am thrilled that Tyler is bringing his vision and drive to engage students to the LA Unified Boardroom and I look forward to hearing him weigh in on our conversations with a student perspective."

School Board Member Dr. George J. McKenna III said, "We are pleased to welcome Mr. Tyler Okeke as the Student Board Member for the 2018-19 school year. The students of this District have a powerful

"I would like to congratulate our new Student Board Member, Tyler Okeke, whom I am confident will demonstrate great leadership on the Board. I know he will represent students from all across the District passionately and effectively. Tyler's parents seem deservedly proud of this special young man," School Board Member Scott Schmerelson said. "Good luck Tyler, have a great year on the Board!"

School Board Member Kelly Gonzalez said, "Congratulations to Board Member Tyler Okeke, our newly sworn-in student representative. He brings an important perspective to the School Board. I am looking forward to working with him on behalf of all students of Los Angeles."

Black North Charleston Teen Becomes Youngest Store Owner in Northwoods Mall

Jordan Jackson is the owner of Birch & Pen Boutique in the Northwoods Mall in North Chareston. He is taking the fashion industry and business world by storm. Just 19 years old, Jordan just closed the deal to open his first retail store location. Birch & Pen opened its doors to the public on Thursday, November 1.

Birch and Pen Boutique is a retail clothing and accessories boutique that specializes in high-fashion, trendy apparel for men and women at affordable prices. The brand choices will constantly evolve and set the standard for pop culture style. The Birch & Pen team will never allow their customers to settle for limited options or the mediocre. They will create experiences that customers can add into their everyday lifestyle. One of the store's major

standards is to encourage customers to always take risks, whether it's redefining business wear or adding flavor to casual wear. The team will show customers how to confidently look their best 'selves' through fashion. Birch & Pen plans to be the trailblazer of the fashion industry, in a way that people would least expect.

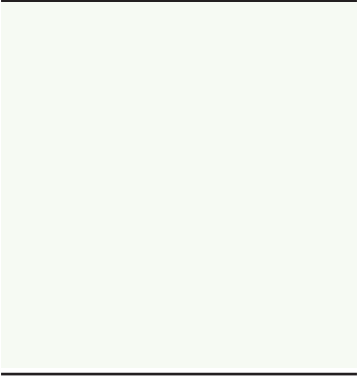
Jordan has a strong eye for fashion and design and on weekly basis, he is being sought out for his advice on style and clothing. In addition, he does home-staging, decorating and furniture building/refurbishing.

Now this gifted Hanahan High graduate desires to put his energy and experience into operating his retail clothing store. Currently, when clients ask him to help them to choose a wardrobe, Jordan takes them to different clothing stores.

He is very excited about having his clients come to his very own boutique.

Being a teenager and an African American male in the North

Charleston/Hanahan area could have been seen as a disadvantage to Jordan. However, he used these assets to courageously launch forward into an uncharted territory to become the youngest store owner in the Northwoods Mall. He hopes that his hard work and fearless walk of faith encourages young people to accomplish their dreams.



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