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DECEMBER 2019

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Online in December

Visit BLACdetroit.com for web exclusives and to stay up on what's happening in black Detroit



December Happenings

Browse the expanded version of our Access Detroit calendar.



Christmas Spirits

Try your hand at these holiday cocktails.



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See the 'who's who' attending top events around you. Did we spot you?



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Black Life, Arts & Culture

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Driving Community

Sponsored by Ford Motor Company Fund



Main Photo
by J. Lindsey
Photography

Allandra Bulger, Executive Director, Co.act Detroit

This Oakland University graduate has made a career of supporting nonprofits – and, in her newest role, she’s creating an environment where the city’s organizations support each other.

Officially launched in June, Co.act Detroit is inviting southeast Michigan’s nonprofits out of their separate corners and providing a space where they can mingle and access the resources that will help advance their missions.

Funded by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and spearheaded by TechTown Detroit and the Michigan Nonprofit Association, Co.act Detroit is a resource hub offering “programming that nonprofits can plug into,” executive director Allandra Bulger says. “Really, it’s about accelerating collaboration among nonprofits and

other cross-sector partners.”

During their Co.Lab Connect sessions, for example, nonprofit leaders get one-on-one time with experts from various sectors like financial management, human resources, legal and the like. Through this and other workshops and conversations, Co.act is “creating a more connected and resilient nonprofit community,” Bulger says.

“We recognize that organizations across Detroit and across our region are doing amazing work, but it often is very siloed. It’s also often a lot of competition for resources, and so we really see collaboration

as a solution to that.”

Bulger has spent her entire 17-year career in the nonprofit sector, working as a consultant, in project design and management, and in other capacities. She earned her master’s in public administration from Oakland University, specializing in nonprofit organization and management; she currently teaches nonprofit management at the school.

“I’ve always been really interested in the work that nonprofits do to support our community and make our community better,” Bulger says. “This opportunity is kind of a

culmination of those experiences and that interest, and being able to provide this resource and grow this resource with the nonprofit community, for me, is just amazing.”

Before Co.act launched, Bulger and the team spent time engaging with nonprofit leaders to co-create the most resourceful space and programming possible. She says they learned that the needs of the community’s nonprofits were vast – “which was no surprise” – but, especially, leaders were looking for a safe space in which they could get together, and they had a strong “desire to disrupt business as

usual.” Bulger says, “What folks are really looking for is lasting and transformational change.”

The 6,500-square-foot facility at Woodward and East Grand Boulevard was purposefully designed and is a direct reflection of those engagement sessions, boasting small- to medium-sized conference rooms, coworking and flex spaces, flat-screens, conference call equipment and whiteboards. And Co.act’s main gathering space can accommodate up to 80 people. “A really cool component that we have is our communal table.”

Every second and fourth Friday, they host a drop-in work day for people in the nonprofit sector, so it’s not unusual to find people working at that table or throughout the space. It’s all con-

ducive to creating what Bulger calls “natural collisions.” She says, “What we have happen in our space a lot is where someone has come in for an event or for a coworking experience, and then they meet someone who can help with their work or vice versa.”

Co.act doesn’t require memberships. “We are really designed to be accessible to nonprofits, big and small,” Bulger says. She recommends signing up for their newsletter and keeping an eye on their social media pages to stay up on what’s happening and learn how you can get involved. And not all resources are specifically geared toward nonprofits – like the monthly Candid Conversations – “parlor-style conversations, particularly around hot-button subjects in

Detroit” – hosted by Urban Consulate. All are welcome to pop in.

In 2020, Co.act will start to utilize the Activate Fund, a \$1.5 million grant from RCWJF to support the development, growth and strengthening of nonprofits in various ways – most notably, Bulger says, by facilitating collaboration and leadership development, with an emphasis on leaders of color.

In their nascent stage, Co.act is hoping to plant the seeds that’ll birth a new culture and cultivate from there. “For us,” Bulger says, “it becomes about lifting up what works well, both from a local and a national perspective, but also creating an environment for folks to work together and learn together.”



Images above by Brett Mountain, McIntosh Poris Associates • Images below by Val Waller Photography



TEAMWORK

For more information on how Co.act Detroit strengthens nonprofit collaboration or to join an upcoming event, visit coactdetroit.org.

“It takes a village to raise a child – but just one person to change a community.”

Ford Salutes Allandra Bulger and Co.act Detroit for designing a support and innovation center to provide nonprofits with the resources needed to empower and advance their missions.

Teamwork and collaboration are the cornerstones of future success and key to businesses’ ability to get the support they need quickly and effectively, allowing them to strengthen partnerships and prosperity within the community.

Over the years, Ford has invested millions of dollars into various nonprofit programming and initiatives to empower businesses, students, teachers, schools and neighborhoods, while building sustainable communities and driving social mobility.

Ford proudly congratulates Allandra Bulger on her new role, and we commend Co.act Detroit for being that positive force for change that the nonprofit community needs.

*– Pamela Alexander,
director of community
development for Ford
Motor Company*



D LIFE DISCOVER
By Paris Giles

\$4.50

Item #:
053-01-1477
target.com



THAT'S A

\$9.95

Item #: 405506
crateandbarrel.com

\$4.99

Item #: 499EJR1091
hallmark.com



\$9.95
Item #: 5685332
amazon.com



\$6.98
Item #: 053-08-0144
target.com

WRAP T

he holy chant of real estate aficionados may be “location, location, location,” but when gift giving, it’s all about presentation, presentation, presentation. You’ve put so much thought into the perfect gift, why slack on the wrap? Sure, candy canes and Santa hats are great for the kids’ toys, but for the grown-up portion of the program, these pretty papers could be just the elegant final touch you’ve been looking for.



\$4.99
Item #: 499EJR1096
hallmark.com



\$13.49
Item #: 556822165
walmart.com



MOLDING MINDS

"I always liked kids and teaching. I loved to see children explore and learn," says LaShawn Bridges, owner of Blessed Beginnings Learning Center. "Being there for that aha! moment gives me deep joy, because I always knew I wanted to help children be great."

Blessed Beginnings started as a two-child operation in Bridges' mother's home. Two decades later, Blessed Beginnings has relocated to a new building on Detroit's east side, one that boasts a five-star Michigan Department of Education rating.

"Five stars means that we're serious about what we do. You're held to a higher standard because you worked hard to reach those goals, and it's a reflection of the care that we give," Bridges says. As a Motor City Match winner, Bridges received a \$75,000 grant to purchase and furnish the new building with everything that her innovative curriculum might need. Comfort lighting, enclosed playscapes, sensory tables and age-appropriate décor are just some of the features of the new space.

Through Blessed Beginnings programs, Bridges wants to restructure how kids learn and grow in Detroit. "We use the High-Scope curriculum. I believe if you build on social-emotional skills, academic success will follow," she says. "Success comes in assertive speaking, problem solving, listening and focus, alongside hands-on STEAM experience."

Blessed Beginnings accepts kids aged 6 weeks to 5 years, and tuition, fees and scholarship assistance for families are evaluated based on income and need.

— A.S.

14050 E. Eight Mile Road, Detroit
blessedbeginningssl.com

TEAM BUILDING



Photo by Martez Brooks, Kardiak Films

The Fitzgerald neighborhood on Detroit's west side may seem like a random spot to open a coworking space, but Detroit native and Strategic Community Partners CEO Chanel Hampton knows that the history of the community makes it the perfect location.

She says, "When we started, we knew we wanted a neighborhood. What really attracted us to Fitzgerald was the legacy. In the 1850s, an escaped slave named James Kanada landed in that community after coming to Detroit from Ontario. He was a successful

free black farmer, the first in the area. A lot of people don't know the history or forgot, but we didn't."

The 2,000-square-foot building will offer workspace hubs, conference rooms and programming areas for local businesses and organizations. As a rule, space for non-profits and initiatives that serve the community are provided at no cost. "We believe when strategy pairs with community and cultural frameworks, beautiful things can happen," Hampton says. "Sometimes, all these phenomenal groups need is a meeting place that



costs them nothing or a brick-and-mortar spot where they can organize and really start to do great things."

Hampton says that it was important to create a "sustainable funding structure, based on funding black-owned spaces with black dollars." As someone who faced an uphill battle towards success and taught middle school English for years, Hampton knows exactly how pivotal a

quality education can be to black and brown kids. The Fitzgerald coworking space is offering free resources and supplies for Detroit teachers, especially those affiliated with the Teach 313 initiative.

"I found myself living on my own at 13. Statistically speaking, I shouldn't be here, but I knew I could use education to my benefit. I believe that through education and advancement, we can make our communities self-sustaining."

— A.S.



10240 W. McNichols Road, Detroit
strategiccommunitypartners.org



Watch out, Ralph Lauren. Detroit has a new luxury fashion label with big style and even bigger plans. Dr. LaToya Thompson and her husband Anthony unveiled The Upperow last month at a ribbon cutting ceremony in New Center, with the assistance of a \$40,000 grant from Motor City Match. “MCM helped us with half the financing, and we self-funded the rest,” says LaToya. “We hope to have a full manufacturing facility by 2025.”

The Thompsons started their custom suiting business in 2012 to fill the style gaps they found at major retailers. What began as a way to create their family's personal style evolved into a cut-and-sew fashion house that aims to make waves in the fashion sphere. “I could never find anything for my boys with that preppy nautical look I wanted, so we decided to have someone make it for us

before my husband said, ‘Let’s just make it ourselves!’”

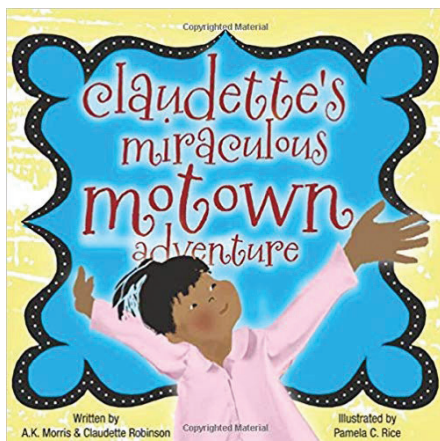
The Upperow offers dresses, shirts, skirts, blazers, children’s clothes, athleisure and accessories. LaToya says that she and her husband want The Upperow to bring a sense of relaxation and luxury back to the city. “My husband and I are both from Detroit. We both love being out on the water, traveling and fishing and boating,” she says. “We wanted people to realize they have access to the luxury lifestyle that style denotes.”

The Upperow’s slogan is “Together Above All.” LaToya says the new venture has been a learning process but that the community support is “blowing me away.” She says, “I’m a perfectionist, but learning to deal with the powers that be in the city let me be OK with the process and take the time I needed to refine the product to what the customer wants.”

Anthony adds, “New York has Gucci and everyone else – Detroit now has The Upperow.”

– A.S.

**3031 W. Grand Blvd.
Ste. 180, Detroit
upperow.com**



**Claudette’s Miraculous Motown
Adventure is available on Amazon.**

A MOTOWN MIRACLE

To accompany Motown’s 60th birthday celebration, the First Lady of Motown Claudette Robinson co-authored and released a children’s book in September, *Claudette’s Miraculous Motown Adventure*.

The tale follows Claudette, who lives in the magical and musical kingdom of Motown. An evil witch casts a spell over Motown, plunging it into a dark silence, but little Claudette finds a box of Miracles in her attic and, inside, she discovers four mini songbirds – Smokey, Bobby, Ronnie and Pete – and the five of them sing sweet music together, hoping to bring the joy back to Motown.

The longtime Miracles member and ex-wife to Smokey Robinson says she wanted to introduce a younger generation to her story and to the story of Motown. That Motown sound is important, she says, “not just to Detroit but to the entire world. It’s affected many other artists such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and so many others.”

Robinson has been traveling the country on her book tour, meeting small children and delighting them in the power of music. She says, “I tell them, ‘I still believe in miracles and I believe in dreams.’”

– P.G.

PUBLIC DISPLAY

Currently open-March 15, 2020
dia.org



One of the Detroit Institute of Arts' newest exhibitions is as much about the art zealots as it is the art itself. "Detroit Collects: Selections of African American Art from Private Collections" opened to the public on Nov. 12. The name tells much of the story. Curator and head of the General Motors Center for African American Art Valerie Mercer and team have gathered 60 works in diverse media, styles and genres from 19 private Detroit area collections to be displayed at the museum through mid-March.

Visitors are invited to peruse works from the 19th century to present-day by Charles McGee, Alison Saar, Tylonn J. Sawyer and others, while also learning about the history and prevalence of African American art in Detroit, and about the collectors.

Mercer says of the art and the collectors, "I put them on a similar playing field in that I do show portraits of the collectors in the exhibition." You'll also find quotes from collectors displayed alongside the pieces. "I want people, especially the African American community, to know who some of these collectors are." Mercer says she wants to "demystify" the art of collecting art.

◀ "Mom Says I'm Her Sun," Mario Moore. From the Collection of David and Linda Whitaker.

PRINTING PRESS

Starting Dec. 19, The Wright Museum will host "Personal to Political" featuring the work of Paulson Fontaine Press artists, all African American or of African descent and tackling themes like race, self, identity and politics. San Francisco Bay Area-based Paulson Fontaine Press' specialty is intaglio prints, created by incising an image into a material – like metal or coated paper – and then depositing ink into the sunken areas so that it sits below the surface.

Assistant curator of collections and exhibitions Jennifer Evans says,

"When you come to this exhibit you learn about this printing style. You learn that printing is an art in and of itself, and then you also learn how artists who specialize in all different areas – even some sculptors – have learned this printing style and then have created this unique work that's now traveling."

Organized by the Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek, California, the traveling exhibition will feature the work of 14 artists including Kerry James Marshall, Lava Thomas and David Huffman, whose pieces, in part, address the Watts riots, black

hair and Afrofuturism respectively. Plus, discover quilts by the Gee's Bend Quilters, an African American collective of rural Alabama women quilters whose artisanship dates back to the 1920s.

"Our hope," Evans says, "is always to talk about the history, but to make it contemporary and meaningful and relevant to today. And so, this exhibit really does that with these 14 contemporary artists who are learning this traditional style of printing, and they're learning how to create new works that are relevant now." **B**

"Hoop Dreams,"
David Huffman



Dec. 19-April 5, 2020
thewright.org
paulsonfontaineprint.com



Simone Toney and Robert Nunoo

Simone is an office operations manager for Ford Motor Company and Robert is a data scientist engineer for Rockwell Automation. The couple lives in Chicago and honeymooned between Miami and Key West. Here, they share details from their elegant wedding day.

THE DRESS

"I wore a white A-line gown with a low-cut back from Bella Bianca Bridal Couture in Chicago. It had great detail like intricate beadwork, sequins and lace. It was easily the best thing I've ever worn!"

THE TUXES

"They were custom-ordered from London. Each of the groomsmen are from different parts of the country, so this was the easiest way to get matching tuxes. Then Robert added accents from

his Ghanaian culture to his, like a proper kinte print bow tie, socks and a pocket square."

THE FOOD

"The Westin Book Cadillac provided the delicious food. They provided duet plates of salmon and filet mignon with mashed potatoes and green beans."

THE CAKE

"We enjoyed white cake with fresh strawberry filling that we got from The Pastry Palace in Wixom. It

was the hit of the day, along with our amazing DJ!"

THE FAVORS

"Bubbles! We also handed out lovely wine stoppers with our engagement photo as the topper."

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT

"Robert's speech was definitely my most memorable moment. He is typically quiet and reserved, but his speech was so funny, genuine and loving, and it really solidified our love for one another." **B**



Date: July 27, 2019

Ceremony and reception:
The Westin Book Cadillac
Detroit

First dance: "Perfect" by
Ed Sheeran

Photographer: Mark
Adrian Photography

BLAC wants to help celebrate your nuptials. If you've gotten married recently and would like to be considered for our monthly matrimony feature, email a few of your best wedding photos to info@BLACdetroit.com. Put "WEDDING" in the subject line. Be sure to include your phone number. BLAC reserves the right to publish or omit photos.

When Taking Yoga While Black, Finding Your Peace Can Be Stressful

BY DESIREE COOPER



The first yoga class that I took turned out to be my last. It was the '80s and I was a young mother of two elementary school children, juggling the stress of work and home life. I was doing everything that the articles said I should be doing except taking care of myself – and that made me feel like a loser. Determined to get my priorities in order, I decided to take yoga. I signed up for a class during my lunch hour so that I wouldn't have to worry about child care.

I arrived at my first class late (of course) and plopped my mat down in a sea of whiteness. For the next 20 minutes, I huffed and groaned as I tried to keep up – and then the class was over. At least that's the way it seemed when I woke up and everyone was leaving.

I laughed it off, but deep down, the experience was defeating. I couldn't hold the poses like the younger, whiter participants. And I couldn't even be quiet for a moment without falling asleep. I went back and tried harder. But entering into a yoga competition didn't feel like my idea of "self-care." I quit and never tried yoga again.

Decades later, I talked to my friend Dr. Gail Parker and realized that my feelings of alienation while taking yoga weren't unusual. Parker, who is also African American, spent much of her career as a renowned psychologist, once a staple on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." But several years ago, she

shuttered her suburban Detroit practice to become a certified yoga therapist and yoga therapist educator. She now uses yoga to help people heal from racial trauma.

The idea began years ago when Parker was the only person of color in her yoga class. "The environment was comfortable and inclusive," Parker says. She added that often the teacher would touch students supportively to offer postural adjustments during class. "At the end of class, during the final pose of rest, when the instruc-

she asks, "Are you here for yoga?" Couple that with the "perfection pressure" that many people of color carry with them in public and what should be the path to peace can become the road to turmoil.

Certainly, yoga in the United States bears little resemblance to its sacred roots in India where it is a lifestyle, not a weekly class. But even as our version of yoga becomes more diverse, Parker says that instructors need to be more culturally competent so that racial trauma is not exacerbated.

both culturally sensitive but also restorative, says Parker, whose book about healing racial trauma through yoga will be published next summer. Restorative yoga emphasizes deep-muscle relaxation, allowing the body to release the fight or flight tension that racism engenders. The pace of restorative yoga is slow, and pillows, bolsters and blankets can be used to help people sustain a pose long enough for the body to relax.

"People who are traumatized do not feel safe being relaxed and

"When a yoga instructor tells you to push hard to 'find your edge,' we'll go over it because we will do everything 200 percent."

tor would touch our heads and massage our necks, all the issues around trauma and hair came up for me," she says. "Even though she didn't mean anything by her touch, the pain(ful) memory of past insults around texturized hair came to mind. It was hard for me."

These microaggressions happen all the time for those taking yoga while black, from the location of studios, to the pressure to wear Lu-lulemon fashions, to the perplexed look on an instructor's face when

"For example, African Americans have been raised to understand that to get half as far, we do twice as much," Parker says. "When a yoga instructor tells you to push hard to 'find your edge,' we'll go over it because we will do everything 200 percent. That's when physical injury occurs. People of color have a Ph.D. in going too far."

For yoga to be instrumental in healing racism, it can't be a space where people of color remain on high alert. It must not only be

still," Parker says. "Your nervous system is keyed up; you're always looking for a way out, just in case. We need a place where we can lower our defenses and know that we're safe in doing so. Restorative yoga can be that place."

Imagine, all these years I thought that I wasn't good enough for yoga, when it was yoga that wasn't good for me. No. 1 on my list of New Year's resolutions: Find a restorative yoga class that holds me up instead of stresses me out. **B**

DESIREE COOPER IS THE AUTHOR
OF *KNOW THE MOTHER*.



THE *Little Things*

Pore over these stocking stuffers, adorably compact and all under \$40 – and Rudolph can rest his hooves, because these trinkets can be rounded up from local spots. Gift them in the days leading up to the holiday or forego the big, expensive present altogether. During this most wonderful time, let us rejoice as your loved ones dub thee Saint Knickknack. ▶

BY PARIS GILES

THE Little Things



To: The Grooming Gurus

❧ 1 ❧

Vie-Long Butterfly Opening Razor. Sleek, double-edged and perfect for traditional wet shaves. **\$18.95.** Rail & Anchor.

❧ 2 ❧

Pocket Mirror. Slides open for a quick beat check, then tucks away easily. **\$18.** Poketo. City Bird.

❧ 3 ❧

Panier des Sens Orange Blossom Hand Cream. Winter dryness won't stand up to this perfectly perfumed French elixir. **\$16.95.** Rail & Anchor.

❧ 4 ❧

Cellar Door Bath Supply 'Sex Machine' Bar Soap. Infused with amber, saffron, patchouli, cedar, sandalwood and musk, and artfully molded. **\$6.65.** City Bird.

❧ 5 ❧

Golden Grooming Company Big Growth Beard Balm. Natural mixture with hints of sandalwood and peppermint, made for men of color. **\$25.99** (for 4 oz. jar; 1 oz. sample pictured). Golden Grooming Company.

To: The Spiritual Beings

1



2



1

White Sage Tarot Cards. Features 78 pocket-sized tarot cards, a chakra chart, custom spread card and 64-page booklet. **\$18.95.** Source Booksellers.

2

The Little Book of Crystals. Judy Hall focuses on 15 crystals, providing information on how to choose, use, cleanse and program your chosen stone. **\$9.99.** Rail & Anchor.

3

Cast of Stones Essential Oil. Aromatherapy oil – a mix of jojoba, lavender, sandalwood, clary sage, chamomile and patchouli oils – infused with calming crystals. **\$24.** Nest.

4

Amethyst Cuff Bracelet. In ancient times, amethysts' signature purple color symbolized royalty and an allegiance to Christ. Today it's thought to help purify the mind of negative thoughts. **\$34.** Free Phoenix.

5

Triloka Ayurvedic Incense Cones. An assortment of water, fire and air cones, prepared in accordance with ancient traditional incense making techniques. **\$18.95.** Source Booksellers.

6

Incense Holder. Colored clay ready to cradle burning pine, lemongrass or lavender sticks. **\$28.95.** Rail & Anchor.

7

In the Quiet Spaces. Local author C.E. Young delivers notes on where God can be found. **\$8.99.** Source Bookseller.

8

'Blessed' Earrings. A simple declaration etched in copper. **\$10.** Flo Boutique ▶

5



4



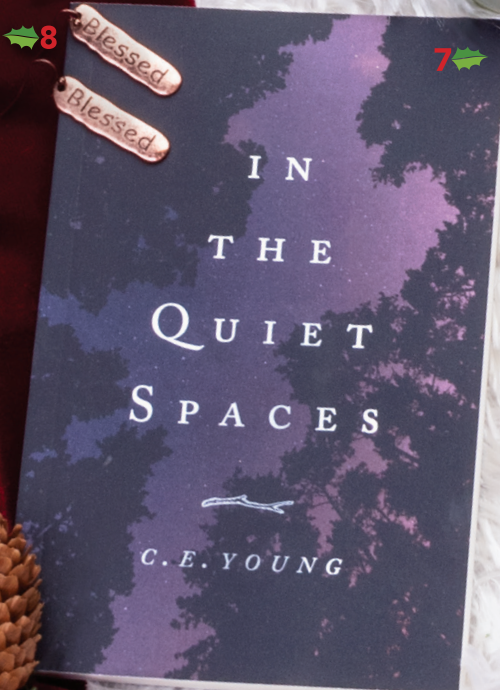
6



8



7





To: The Gen Zers

1

Kikkerland Music Branches. Up to three squad members can listen to the latest at the same time without disturbing anyone else. **\$10.** Nest.

2

HAY Fish Sponge. Dishes just got a bit more whimsical. **\$9** (set of two). Nest.

3

The Found 'The Future is Female' Enamel Pin. The 'feminist' tee's spunkier little sister. **\$10.** City Bird.

4

Block Geometric Photo Clip. Available in different colors and shapes, because frames are so last decade. **\$9.** Nest.

5

Three Potato Four 'Taco Money' Coin Purse. Securely holds spare change and clips easily to a key ring or backpack. **\$8.** City Bird.

To: The Hipsters

1

Cocktail Kits 2 Go Old-Fashioned Cocktail Kit.

Makes two drinks and comes with sugar, bitters, a cute little wooden spoon and a recipe card. Just add bourbon. **\$15.** Free Phoenix.

2

Plants Rock Cactus Growing Kit.

Includes handmade ceramic rock container, potting mix, seeds and instructions. **\$12.** Nest.

3

Shea Brand CBD Pain Reliever.

Topical, nonpsychoactive, made with 50 mg CBD isolate and purported to be a natural remedy for aches and pains. **\$25.** Free Phoenix.

4

Forestique Wooden Card Holder.

Handmade from recycled cherry wood, just right for an ID and debit card. **\$20.** Flo Boutique.

5

Kikkerland Pocket Bike Pump.

Made from lightweight aluminum and scratch resistant, packing 90 psi. **\$27.** Nest.

6

Beer Bottle Opener.

Craft brews and IPAs can be cracked with ease with this wooden doohickey. **\$24.99.** Free Phoenix. **B**

Where we shopped

City Bird

460 W. Canfield St., Detroit
citybirddetroit.com

Flo Boutique

404 W. Willis St., Detroit
flowingflava.com

Free Phoenix

171 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale
shopfreephoenix.com

Golden Grooming Company

goldengroomingco.com

Nest

460 W. Canfield St., Suite 110, Detroit
citybirddetroit.com

Rail & Anchor

502 S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak
railandanchor.com

Source Booksellers

4240 Cass Ave., Suite 105, Detroit
sourcebooksellers.com



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BLAC

**BLAC's 20th
Anniversary Throwback**

A year-long series on where we've been ▶

2014

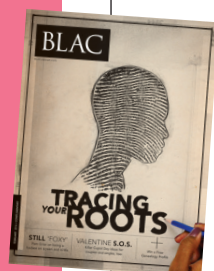
2014



The city itself was the star in the pages of BLAC of 2014. In July, to celebrate Detroit's 313th birthday, we embarked on a good old-fashioned "D Tour," splitting the city into regions and telling you where, within those nooks, to eat, play and soak in some culture. Throughout the year, we kept up with Detroit's burgeoning food scene, sampling the city's most comforting ramen and inventive hot dogs, and spotlighting the newest restaurants that were popping up like whack-a-moles. Some have solidified themselves as go-tos for scrumptious grub, and others went underground for good. We questioned the city's leaders, like Brenda Lawrence and then-emergency manager Kevyn Orr, on how they'd pull Detroit up and govern us into a renaissance; we even asked kids how they'd run the city if they were mayor. Detroit's impending resurgence was palpable, and five years later, we can feel the boom.

Still a Thing

Folks get rich eating into mics and you can get a meatless Whopper, but these topics featured in BLAC in 2014 were a thing then and are still relevant today:



Feb '14

- 1 Thrift shopping
- 2 Saving the bees
- 3 Emerging artists
- 4 Genealogy
- 5 Agriscience

Nov '18



On Tap

In our April issue, we introduced our readers to tapping, an emotional freedom technique purported to ease stress and pain with firm taps on the body's key pressure points along invisible contours called "meridian lines." We chatted with proponents and teachers of the alternative treatment – believed to be started by ancient Egyptians – who claim the practice can help ward off everything from daily anxieties to post-traumatic stress disorder to cancer. Advocates like Kai Heru Rama were pushing to have tapping – also called "tapology" – and other holistic techniques, be taught more regularly in medical schools and practiced in mainstream institutions.

Researchers of a 2019 EFT study featured in Medical News Today involving 203 people – mostly women over 50 – reported that participants experienced significant reductions in anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms, as well as in pain level and cravings, and improvements in happiness. Still, some skeptics dismiss tapping as woo-woo pseudoscience.

In '14



Solange lets loose on Jay Z in an elevator after the Met Gala



Apple buys Beats by Dre



The "Sexy Felon" makes the internet swoon



Lupita Nyong'o wins the Best Supporting



No Fly Zone

In the summer of 2014, the phrase “no fly zone” took on a whole new meaning. Detroiters no doubt remember the hit ‘em up drama that ensued between local rapper Trick Trick and Miami-bred artist Rick Ross. If you need reminding, Ross was supposed to headline HOT 107.5 FM’s annual Summer Jamz concert at Chene Park (now Aretha Franklin Amphitheatre). Well, Trick Trick and over 100 of his “goons” showed up to the venue and barred Ross entry, claiming that he was on the rapper’s “No Fly Zone” list, stemming from a disagreement on matters of “respect.” BLAC’s then-senior editor Emell Derra Adolphus sat down with Trick in October to get his side of the story, but the resulting piece caused a bit of behind-the-scenes drama at BLAC. Trick gave a profanity-laced, albeit fascinating, interview. The higher-ups debated about the propriety of printing his direct quotes, uncensored. Well, this is America and this is the patois of many corners of black Detroit, and so ultimately, we decided to let the ‘shit’ fly.

On the reason for the ‘No Fly Zone’ ...

“Canada’s government does the exact same thing that I do. Only difference is we gonna beat that ass. And I’m just saying if you are coming to Detroit, let me see why we should let you come here and pick up all this money. What are you doing for us? Because these motherfuckers aren’t going to do nothing but keep doing people like this. And keep doing what they do if somebody don’t stop them. And sometimes, the motherfuckers just happen to be famous.”



Actress Oscar for 12
Years a Slave



Mo'ne Davis becomes first
girl to pitch a shutout game in
the Little League World Series



On being a ‘child of God’ ...

“I stand for righteousness. It’s all about righteousness and respect. Being a child of God, you are going to be an activist, a philanthropist, a messenger, a teacher, a leader. People are going to hate you. But you know, show me a leader with no enemies, and you don’t got a leader.”

On community involvement and gentrification ...

“Speaking engagements, soup kitchen, helping the homeless. Anything. I am involved in everything they call me for. Listen. If you live in Detroit. And you own your home. That’s your shit. They are not gonna send militia to kick you out your home. But they are going to come in there and clean that shit up.”



Health Score

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa started quietly but soon spread across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to become a full-blown epidemic. The U.S. freakout started when Thomas Eric Duncan showed up to a Dallas hospital, deathly sick with the virus. Panic ensued, and schools and stores closed as Americans worried about travelers from Africa coming into the country with the disease. Fears settled as eight of the 10 U.S. patients recovered and were allowed to go home. Though scientists and disease experts say the next global pandemic is all but inevitable.

History Highlight

After decades of an embargo with the communist island nation, the Obama administration smoothed relations with Cuba. Opponents of Fidel Castro’s regime denounced the move, but others heralded the beginning of a new era which looked like a U.S. embassy in Havana, and freer travel and trade. **B**

access

DETROIT | DECEMBER 2019

Compiled by Arianna Smith

15 SUNDAY
WILL DOWNING



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THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION.



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For a complete list of events,
visit our online calendar.

5 THURSDAY

TWAS A GIRLS NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS. Kick off the heels with your new best girlfriends at the seasonal sequel to the Broadway smash hit *Girls' Night In*. \$43. Times vary, today-Dec. 8. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

6 FRIDAY

DETROIT URBAN CRAFT FAIR. In its 14th year, shop over 100 handcrafters, indie artists and holiday vendors. \$1-\$10. 6-9 p.m. today, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 7, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 8. The Masonic, 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. themasonic.com.

7 SATURDAY

MASTER P. The rapper and mogul stops in with Silkk the Shocker, Mystical, Mia X and Fiend. \$39.50-\$89.50. 7 p.m. Masonic Temple, 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. themasonic.com.

ALL-STAR COMEDY. The All-Star Comedy Festival returns with Lavell Crawford, Earthquake, Bruce Bruce, Kountry Wayne, D.C. Young Fly and Chico Bean. \$59-\$105. 8 p.m. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

8 SUNDAY

POP EVIL. Muskegon native Leigh Kakaty and his rock band Pop Evil roll through for a one-night-only show. \$20-\$50. 7:30 p.m. Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit. saintandrewsdetroit.com.



13 FRIDAY

CIRQUE DREAMS HOLIDAZE

10 TUESDAY

DAMIEN ESCOBAR. The hip-hop violinist stops in. \$45-\$125. 7 p.m. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. royaloakmusic-theatre.com.

11 WEDNESDAY

DABABY. See the breakout "Suge" rapper live during the Michigan leg of his *Kirk* tour. \$49.50-\$79.50. 7 p.m. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. royaloakmusictheatre.com.

To list an event in ACCESS Detroit, send facts and photos two months prior to calendar@BLACdetroit.com. You also may upload information to BLACdetroit.com/Calendar or mail to Metro Parent Media Group, BLAC Calendar, 22041 Woodward Ave., Ferndale, MI 48220. Submissions may be edited or omitted.

Be sure to call before attending events in case of changes. For an expanded version of the calendar, visit BLAC online at BLACdetroit.com.



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14 SATURDAY

GRIZMAS



23 MONDAY

HIP HOP NUTCRACKER



12 THURSDAY

SENSORY DINNER WITH SANTA. Little elves with special needs can meet a trained, sensory-friendly Santa in a safe, comfortable environment, plus enjoy a buffet-style dinner. \$40-\$50. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Detroit Zoo, 8450 W. 10 Mile Road, Royal Oak. detroitzoo.org.

13 FRIDAY

JEEZY. The multi-platinum selling artist stops in with Detroit's own Queen Naija and others during *The Return of Snow, All White Winter MegaFest*. \$79-\$230. 7:30 p.m. Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

CIRQUE DREAMS HOLIDAZE. With 300 spectacular costumes and 20 of the world's best acts, Christmas comes to life in fantastical, death-defying ways in Cirque du Soleil's holiday extravaganza. \$34-\$74. Times vary today-Dec. 15. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

14 SATURDAY

GRIZMAS. Come experience a new level of electro-soul music with Detroit-born, Denver-based techno artist Griz and sample the newest sounds from his upcoming album *Ride Waves*. \$40-\$80. 7 p.m. The Masonic, 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. themasonic.com.

POETRY SLAM. Spoken word artist La Shaun Phoenix Moore hosts this evening featuring the city's finest poets, plus DJ Stacye J and vocalist and cellist Gabriel Royal. \$10-\$49. 8 p.m. The Cube, Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. dso.org.

15 SUNDAY

A VERY ELECTRIC CHRISTMAS. More lights, more music, more Christmas! Enjoy heartwarming tales set to sparkling, synchronized displays. \$10-\$20. 4 p.m. Music Hall Center, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit. musichall.org.

WILL DOWNING. *Will Downing and Friends*, presented by the Coleman A. Young Foundation, invites the jazz and R&B legend



24 TUESDAY

THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL

to perform with Eric Roberson and Eric Darius. \$37-\$50. 7:30 p.m. Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel. 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. soundboarddetroit.com.

17 TUESDAY

THE FIXX. The MTV darlings perform with Royston Langdon. 7 p.m. \$25-\$28. The Majestic Theatre, 4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit. majesticdetroit.com.

18 WEDNESDAY

HOME ALONE. Witness the classic Christmas comedy come to life on screen, accompanied by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. 7:30 p.m. \$58-\$120. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. dso.org.

11 WEDNESDAY

DABABY



20 FRIDAY

TRAP KARAOKE. Gather your friends, show up and show out at this 21-plus event. 8 p.m.-midnight. \$22-\$42. The Garden Theater. 3929 Woodward Ave., Detroit. eventbrite.com.

21 SATURDAY

MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER CHRISTMAS. Chip Davis' classic tunes are paired alongside lighting and media effects to create a multilayered show. \$30. 8 p.m. Fox Theatre. 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

22 SUNDAY

GREAT RUSSIAN NUTCRACKER. The Moscow Ballet is back with an exhibition of dance, art, puppetry, music and special effects that endures through the ages. \$49-\$89. Noon, 4 and 8 p.m. Fox Theatre. 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

23 MONDAY

HIP HOP NUTCRACKER. This urban holiday tale reimagines the original story with mice and whimsical street gangs for a truly unique fusion of ballet and rap. 7 p.m. \$35-\$79.50. The Masonic. 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. themasonic.com.



27 FRIDAY

THE ROOTS' HOLIDAY TOUR

24 TUESDAY

THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL. Are ya ready? SpongeBob SquarePants and his critically acclaimed nautical nonsense come to town, perfect for the whole family. Times vary today-Dec. 29. \$35-\$75. Fox Theatre. 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

27 FRIDAY

THE ROOTS' HOLIDAY TOUR. The multi Grammy Award-winning jazz rap group brings its Philly sound to town. \$59.50-\$79.50. 7 p.m. The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. thefillmoredetroit.com.

SMACKDOWN LIVE. See your favorite WWE Superstars, including Roman Reigns vs. King Corbin, in the first Friday Night SmackDown

in Detroit. \$20-\$85. 7:45 p.m. Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER. The legendary King of Comedy takes the stage during his Rock Your Brim tour. \$75-\$87. 8 p.m. Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. soundboarddetroit.com.

31 TUESDAY

MOTOR CITY GALA. Ring in the New Year at this Chicago-style blowout, complete with a martini and champagne bar and catered hors d'oeuvres. Prices vary. 8:30 p.m.-4 a.m. Atheneum Suite Hotel, 400 Monroe St., Detroit. motorcitygala.com.



10 TUESDAY

DAMIEN ESCOBAR

RESOLUTION BALL. At the New Year's Eve Resolution Ball, enjoy lavish hors d'oeuvres, a coney buffet, a midnight balloon drop and more. \$125. 9:30 p.m. The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. thefillmoredetroit.com.

2 THURSDAY

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL: AXEL. Experience a brand-new fusion of acrobatics and ice skating set to a backdrop of vivid graphics. \$49-\$54. Times vary today-Jan. 5. Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313presents.com.

3 FRIDAY

MORGAN WALLEN. Rising country star Morgan Wallen presents his headlining tour, *Whiskey Glasses Roadshow*. \$100. 7 PM. The Fillmore. 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. thefillmoredetroit.com. **B**

How can I lower my stress level?



Victoria Cohen, D.O.

You cannot escape stress. Getting the kids off to school, a ruined meal, taking care of an aging parent, job worries, or any life event can cause your stress level to rise.

“Stress is normal,” says Dr. Victoria Cohen, D.O., a family medicine physician with the Ascension Medical Group Greater Mack Primary Care. “We all have stress. We can find comfort in knowing that we are not alone in feeling stressed or overwhelmed.”

According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorder in the United States. ADAA says that in African American women, anxiety is more chronic and symptoms are more intense than in Caucasian women.

“Stress manifests itself differently between people and we process stress differently,” Dr. Cohen says. “It oc-

curs at different times and it can be associated with different triggers.”

Untamed stress takes a toll. In fact, stress is linked to higher incidents of heart attack, stroke and other types of cardiovascular disease in African American women, the American Heart Association (AHA) notes.

It’s important to identify your “go-to” techniques to relieve stress, Dr. Cohen suggests.

“Unfortunately, many of us use unhealthy techniques,” she says, including stress eating, binge-watching Netflix or shopping. Dr. Cohen says some of these methods aren’t completely bad, however, “the issue is when we are using these for coping and not addressing the main issue.”

There are a variety of tools to combat stress – and among them is mindfulness, which Dr. Cohen describes as “being aware of your physical and mental presence in the

moment. Practicing mindfulness allows you to assess the things going on around you and determine how they impact you mentally.”

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University conclude that using mindfulness meditation can help ease anxiety, as well as help with depression and pain.

In his book *Being Peace*, author Thich Nhat Hanh recommends, “Breathing in, I calm my body. Breathing out, I smile. Dwelling in the present moment, I know this is a “wonderful moment.”

Dr. Cohen personally uses mindfulness techniques to change the focus to breathing rather than the stressor.

“In medical school we practiced a mindfulness technique called ‘Soft Belly,’” she says. “Take a deep breath, saying the word ‘soft’ and slowly exhale, saying ‘belly.’ I found this to be so beneficial that I practice this with my family.”

There are many benefits to mind-

fulness. “You can identify stressors on-the-spot and practice mindfulness techniques to address them immediately,” Dr. Cohen says.

Increased productivity and enjoyment of activities, improved sleep and reduced muscle tension are just a few of the other dividends.

“Overall, it helps to improve your quality of life,” Dr. Cohen says.

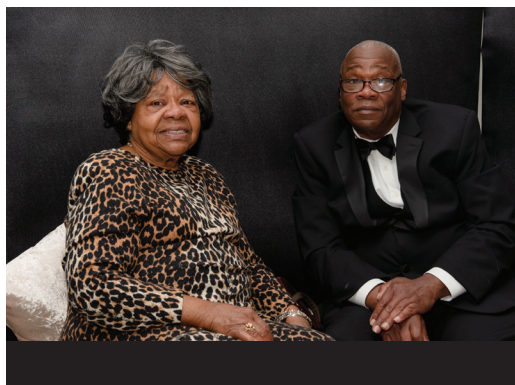
Everyone can use mindfulness techniques, she adds. You can get started today by downloading a free app, such as the Breathe app, to your smartphone. Other mindfulness techniques focus on objects in your surroundings or listening to music. Many of them can be incorporated in your daily routine.

“Mental health plays a huge role in how we are able to tackle our day-to-day responsibilities,” Dr. Cohen says. “You may not enjoy each moment in life; however, we are given new days to turn things around. We can start the change one moment at a time.”

Detroit Institute of Arts Gala

On Saturday, Nov. 9, the DIA invited elegantly dressed guests to its annual fundraising gala celebration. Attendees were also among the first to view one of the museum's newest exhibitions, "Detroit Collects: Selections of African American Art from Private Collections." Read more about "Detroit Collects" on Page 12.

Photos by Sydney Kispert-Bostick



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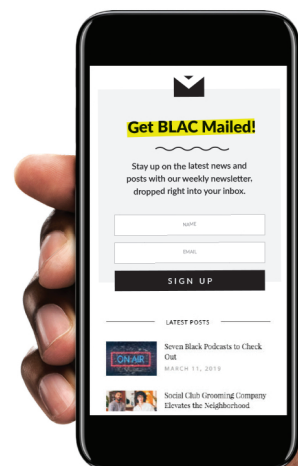
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The BLAC website got a makeover. We know, we know, it was in desperate need of some zjush, but now it's sleeker, cooler and it'll better display the stories you love on your cell or tablet.

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