

BLACK LIFE, ARTS & CULTURE

BLAC[®]

Up Close &
Personal With
**Mary
Sheffield**

**Say
What?**

Speaking Your
Heart and Mind in a
Cancel-Culture
Society

**A Spicy
Affair**
with Chef
Ederique





UPLIFTING OTHERS

RHONDA A. GLOVER'S passion for serving youth began early – first helping care for her mother and siblings, then as a single mother with three children.

To help ensure a better future, Rhonda earned an Associate Degree in Business Administration from Schoolcraft College. That education, plus her own hard work and dedication, led Rhonda to her current role as Executive Director for the National Association of Black Suppliers Scholarship Fund.

In this position, Rhonda's incredible energy and sharp business sense have created opportunities for hundreds of high-achieving young African Americans.

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Photo of Cornetta by Bre'Ann White

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CHECKING IN WITH THE LIEUTENANT

Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II shares significant developments in Gov. Whitmer's administration.



BLAC FRIDAYS BEST OF THE REST: MARCH MADNESS

A round-up of national news from our weekly BLAC Friday newsletter



Best Of The Rest

Trending Topics You Should Know

Howard University Receives \$2M to Digitize Black Press Archives

EBONY magazine reported that the Jonathan Logan Family Foundation granted Howard University \$2 million to digitize the Black Press Archives. The collection contains more than 2,000 newspaper titles from the U.S., countries in Africa, and the Caribbean, including the New York Amsterdam News, the Chicago Defender as well as publications written in Xhosa, Kiswahili, and French. Once digitized, the archive will become the largest, most diverse Black newspaper database in the world. (EBONY)

James Earl Jones' Career Celebrated with Broadway Theater Named in His Honor

The Shubert Organization announced that their 110-year-old Cort Theatre will be renamed in honor of James Earl Jones and his outstanding contributions to American theater. Throughout his 69 years in theater and film, Jones has won three Tony Awards, two Primetime Emmy Awards and a Grammy. He has been part of the American Theater Hall of Fame since 1985 and received the National Medal of the Arts from President George H.W. Bush in 1992. He performed in his first play at the Cort Theatre in 1958. (BroadwayWorld, The New York Times)

Who is Ketanji Brown Jackson?

Ketanji Brown Jackson, longtime attorney and a current federal judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals, is President Joe Biden's nominee for the Supreme Court seat vacated by Justice Stephen Breyer. Her reputation as a jurist is outstanding and makes her no stranger to this particular conversation. She was among the candidates vetted by former president Barack Obama in 2016 for Supreme Court consideration. Despite the attacks levied against her nomination by conservative pundits and legislators alike, she has been confirmed by the Senate on a bipartisan basis three times — twice as judge and once to serve in the U.S. Sentencing Commission. (The White House, TheGrio, PBS, NBC News, The New York Times)

Da Brat and BB Judy is married now! And they're having a baby!

Shawntae Harris, better known as rapper and media host Da Brat, married longtime love Judy Dupart on "Twosday," February 22, 2022. Dupart is founder and CEO of the uber-popular Kaleidoscope Hair Products. Brat and Dupart walked down the aisle together, in custom dresses designed by Ese Azenabor. Speaking to People magazine, Brat said of Dupart and their relationship "She inspires me and she makes me fearless; she makes me not afraid...So many people live for other people and they live by the judgment of other people. I think it's very important to live for yourself. Whatever makes you happy, don't suppress it. Don't hide it. You only live once." The wedding comes just weeks after the couple announced via Instagram that they will soon welcome a baby. The child will be Brat's first and Dupart's fourth. (People)



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Women doing it for themselves.

That behind every great man / There had to be a great woman /
But in these times of change / You know that it's no longer true
/ So we're comin' out of the kitchen.

These are the words so eloquently sung by Aretha Franklin on the Eurythmics song "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves." These words resonate on a different level. Growing up — thinking back to career day — I didn't see many women, especially Black women, in executive seats or owning businesses. Subconsciously, that sent a certain message.

Could we do it?

To usher in Women's History Month, this issue features Black women who are occupying seats at tables where women weren't always allowed to sit. Their individual journeys are a celebration of Aretha Franklin's lyrics.

Women doing it for themselves. Creating experiences for others.

In this issue, you will read about our Memphis City Editor Brenae Inge's interview with parents, students, and educators to discuss what can be taught at home, amidst the two year pandemic. Then, there's Beverly Dawn Whatley, MEd encouraging families to book time for book time — just in time for National Reading Month.

"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair."



EYK
Erikka Yvonne

A Couple Of Things About Me:

I love sippin' my tea. I'm referring to minding my business and drinking tea.

I love Detroit Black Independent Films. It's something about the authenticity that screams Black Detroit Excellence!

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BLAC

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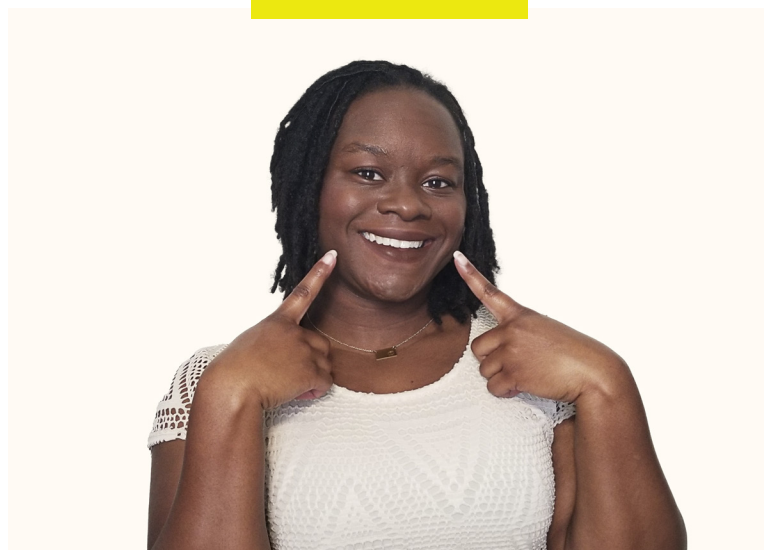
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Meet Our Contributors

BLAC thanks our freelance writers and creative contributors. They help make each issue possible.



BRENAE INGE-MORGAN

Brenae Inge-Morgan is a journalist and digital content creator who expresses her thoughts in colors of her own design and imagination. Though she was born in a small town in Mississippi, she grew up in Memphis and calls the city home. Throughout her childhood she found her voice in comedy and culture. With her heart of the city upbringing she followed that pulse to find her muse in writing, editing and content creation. With her B.S. in Communication, Brenae has worked in many aspects of broadcasting – including promotional production, marketing producing and social media management for news outlets such as ABC24, CW30 and WUSA9. Not satisfied with one form of creation, she worked to learn print and web design for a local newspaper. You can find her spending time hosting podcasts and creating digital content across YouTube and TikTok when she's not writing articles, web-designing or podcast/audio/video editing. Her life's mission is to provide a personable, entertaining experience to everyone she meets.

KAREN DUMAS

Karen Dumas is a communications professional & media contributor committed to excellence, entrepreneurship, and equality. As founder of Images & Ideas, Inc., she has earned a reputation as a communications strategist known for performance and excellence. Dumas also served as Chief of Communications & External Affairs for Mayor Dave Bing and the City of Detroit.



WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR TALENTED CONTRIBUTORS!

If you're an experienced writer, photographer or artist interested in working with BLAC, email your résumé and samples of your work to editor@BLACdetroit.com.

Say what?

By Karen Dumas

Speaking your heart and mind in a cancel-culture society.

For women, the fear of being “canceled” for simply speaking up is nothing new. Apprehension in personal and professional encounters for fear of retaliation or loss has long fueled a silence that has become both crippling and deafening.

While women raise families, engage communities, run corporations and prove themselves as undeniable leaders, the fear of speaking out continues to feel stifling. Women are gagged from knowing their worth, sharing their accomplishments and demanding respect.

Women are still underpaid, making only 80 cents for every dollar paid to men; they are overlooked in the professional arena. They often settle for less, and rarely challenge their circumstances.

In their personal lives, women find themselves stuck in abrasive and

abusive relationships for fear of instability, and loneliness. They're tied with an emotional brick around their proverbial ankles, keeping them from protecting themselves.

The #MeToo Movement highlights generations-old numbers of women who stayed quiet and cooperated with men who compromised them simply because they felt they had no right or reason to speak up. They fear they'd lose their income and lose their careers. So, they kept quiet and allowed themselves to suffer in silence.

With factors ranging from being raised to sit pretty and stay quiet; being taught not to challenge authority, usually male, figures; suffering from Imposter Syndrome; or just basic fear of inadequacy — never has speaking up been more important than now.



KNOWING IT'S OK TO SAY YES — AND NO.

We've all seen the memes that encourage self-awareness, celebrate the wonders of womanhood, and elevate female achievements. Yet, speaking up is more than a social media post. Speaking up begins within.

As women, we must first recognize, embrace and accept all that make us unique. Our value isn't rooted in public validation. But rather, it stems from self-awareness that stands tall and strong regardless of the presence or opinion of others.

It's knowing that sometimes, our self-worth must be shared to be acknowledged and upheld. If we don't believe it, why should anyone else?

It's knowing that it's OK to walk-away from what isn't good or right for us — individually or collectively — and that doing so is sometimes what's just needed to leverage our ask.

It's knowing **"No"** is a complete sentence that we have every right to say

and practice to protect our peace and our progress.

It's also knowing to say, **"Yes"** despite what we're taught as young ladies. It is OK to be who you are and stop relegating yourself to the sideline where you may be overlooked.

It's knowing it's OK to venture to where we are valued and compensated accordingly: commensurate with our skills, commitment, experience and potential.

This lets us walk away from friendships and relationships that are more draining than rewarding, and cut off connections where we are giving more than we are receiving.

This lets us uphold and uplift other women, recognizing the value of collective elevation: when one rises, we all rise.

Speaking up isn't a bad thing. It doesn't mean yelling, screaming or emotionally regurgitating everything you've held onto over the years. Instead, it's a clear understanding and communication of who you are, what you expect, what you will or will not tolerate, and a picture of the landscape you expect to participate in.

None of this is bad or should ever be frowned upon. If you are told otherwise, it's time to go.



FINDING THE COMFORT TO CLAIM YOU DESERVE

Know that you deserve to be in the rooms you find yourself in, even if you quietly second-guess how you got there. Own your opportunities and all the things that make you who you are — however real and imperfect it may be.

Finding comfort in who you are brings confidence. Confidence fuels competence, and therein lies your voice. At times, it may shake or may even be the lone voice at times, but it is your greatest weapon in creating and protecting your personal peace and professional sphere.

So, when something doesn't feel or sound right, or if you know that you are due the longer end of the deal, speak up. Let it be known that you are worthy of more, entitled to better, and deserving of whatever is being denied. And only your vision and voice can secure these things for you.

The fear of being criticized or canceled should be just the fuel needed to drive you to an elevated place above the pettiness and chatter that may have before clouded your judgment. Speak up and move on.





HER WAY: SHANTERA ON LIFE AND CREATING AN EXPERIENCE FOR BLACK WOMEN

Shanteria L. Chatman is a powHERhouse in the corporate world and beyond. As the President of PowHer Consulting, Founder of HerWay Retreat, Founder and Executive Director of the Chatman Women's Foundation, and Writer of the books "emPowHering YOU: 12 Tips for Finding Your Voice," "PowHer Play: A Women's Empowerment Guide," and "Transformative Ally Framework," she brings a lot to the table. She graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Bachelor of Business Administration in Information & Operations Management and she says, "I had a plan to change the legacy of my family." She did just that by climbing her way up the corporate ladder, to entrepreneurship, to leading women's foundations, and to, most recently, creating a professional development and self care retreat dedicated to Black women. We sat down with Ms. Chatman to discuss the highs and lows that got her to now. Read more about Mrs. Chatman's story below.

You have built an empire. What were you like as a young girl?

When I was younger, I was that kid who loved school so much, I didn't want to go home. I was the one who wanted to teach the other kids. I wanted to be the teacher; I wanted to stand in front of people and tell them what I knew.

You loved school so much, what was the environment like?

It was mostly people of color. In middle and high school, it was Mexican and Black. In middle school, we moved into a better school district; it still had a lot of Black students, but it was all white teachers with honors classes. I had to test into those classes even though I was a straight A student. They put me in the remedial class. They sat me in special education. Until I tested into those classes, they wouldn't even put me in regular classes. When it was time for me to test, they sat me in the hallway. It was anything to distract me, but they couldn't. About a week later, I tested in all the classes.

Tell us about your time at Texas A&M University?

I was synced up with the Department of Multicultural Services. If I ever had a question, I knew where to go to find that mentorship and a safe space. During the time of 1994–1998 Texas A&M had the largest number of Black kids on campus '94–'98 and that was only 2%.

What was life like after college and going right into corporate America?

My first job was a consultant for Booz Allen Hamilton and I worked with NASA. I didn't have anyone to lean on in my home office. But, I did have someone who was a partner with the firm Reggie Van Lee. He was in D.C., and, when he heard I was hired, he flew back to meet me. We still talk to this day. He mentored me from afar. When I was in D.C., he would have me come and see how he lived because he lived a luxurious life, and he would tell me you can do this. If you want it, you can have it. When I would have issues, he would navigate me through; he helped me behind the scenes for 13 years.

Mentorship and community really helped you along your journey. Were you mentoring other women as well?

Yes. It was whoever I saw. If it was a woman that I thought I could help, I would help; that's why I started my women's foundation. I always had someone to call. Some people don't have anyone to call, I wanted to be that for people. Your mentoring is what led you to the women's shelter. Tell us about that.

I volunteered at the women's shelter for a couple years because Booz Allen wanted to have a charity to give to. I got attached to the women, and I asked if they needed anything else besides my company's money. They said they needed someone to help them teach assertiveness. On Tuesday nights, I would help them teach assertiveness. They eventually gave it to me because they said the women were coming for me. They said before me there were three students, and then, after me, it turned into 30. That class led me to doing a women's conference which turned into the foundation.

How do you take care of yourself?

I have a therapist. My husband bought me a massage chair, like one from the middle of the mall. I have it in my room next to the window; it has a bluetooth speaker. I will set aside half an hour, or an hour to sit in it. My friend is a Deepak Chopra self-care instructor and she helps. Those three things, they help me release.

HER Way Retreat sounds like a dreamland. How did it come together?

George Floyd murder stimulated the retreat. With my women's foundation, I work with women who are finishing their education, women who are starting a business, but I was never touching the corporate women. I said, "OK, Black women are going to get hit hard because they are going to want them to fix everything." My friends started calling me like, "Can you send me some diversity moments?" Their bosses wouldn't pay for me to come do it. They didn't want to allocate funds for me to do it professionally. These ladies are tired; they are not getting paid the way they should. I prayed about it. I messaged minda hardest? I asked her if she was in; I wanted to keep it small, to make it luxurious. I want to do it MY WAY. I want them to show up HER WAY; we should call it HERWay retreat; you don't have to come in like you were in the office. Everything was your way.

What do women experience?

From the moment they step in the door, I wanted them to feel like queens, period. If they drank, they had champagne with their names etched on it, and, if they didn't, they had sparkling cider, they had little gift boxes; every little thing was curated for them. We had a welcome reception that Friday evening, and they had a moment to be themselves and just hangout. By the next day, we didn't have to do introductions. We could get into our sessions;

we were open and ready to talk. Everyone was sharing with one another. We had a playlist for the whole retreat the ladies could download. We had a lot of breaks so the ladies could have time to process. We have ladies from corporate America, entrepreneurial women, and women who are climbing the ladder. We had women who were CEOs, and some who aspired to get to that level. I want the mentoring to happen on different levels.

What can the ladies expect from this year's event?

This year, the ladies want to dive into breathing techniques. They want to know how to create a safe space, and how to close out the world. We want to discuss why therapy is still taboo. I want a therapist to come. I want to have serious days around that. It's going to be a full and a half way of self care. It starts Friday evening, at 7 p.m. Friday and it goes until 1:30 p.m. on Sunday. This year people have the opportunity to upgrade their experience. If they want to stay an extra night to process the weekend, the resort is offering a wonderful deal.

What are a few HER Way reviews that warm your heart?

After the first session on the day of development, a lady walked up and said, "that's my money. If you don't do anything else, I got my money's worth; all my money for the weekend has been well spent by 9 a.m."



THE “R” WORD:

5 Ways to Handle the Touchy Topic of Racism with Your Children

Children are naturally curious about their environment. They experience the environment through interacting with it, such as playing in the snow, walking in the rain, kicking away fall leaves, and swimming in a lake. It is from this innate curiosity, that the conversation about race should start. The conversation must be an interactive dialogue.



#1 OBSERVE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

This does not have to be a science experiment. When walking or driving helps children to see the differences trees, colors of flowers, and sizes and physical characteristics of birds. Show that they are different from each other. Explain that this is the way the world is created: with a lot of different people, animals, trees, and plants. We all share the same earth. Be aware of your language. To say that “I’m different than you” may be perceived that the race of a child is the norm. A better statement is “We are different.” It’s also important to identify what is similar. Even though trees have different names, they are all trees. Even though races may have different skin colors, hair textures, shapes of noses and mouths, we are all human beings.

#2 ASK YOUR CHILD WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT RACE.

As early as three years old, children know the difference and associate either negative or positive perceptions about race. Sit down with your child and simply say, “Tell me what you know about the race.” For early age children, show pictures of diverse people, point to one, and ask, “What do you think about this person?” “What do you know about this person?” You may be surprised that children have already formed perceptions about other races.

#3 BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR FAMILY’S RACIAL IDENTITY.

Discuss and celebrate your family’s racial identity. It’s important for children to know their identity. In fact, this identity is a building stone for appreciating other races. Example: We belong to a group of people that are descendants from Africa. We are African Americans. Tell stories about your family. Show pictures of relatives. Use a map to locate the country where you are from.

#4 DISCOVER AND APPRECIATE THE RACIAL IDENTITY OF OTHER PEOPLE.

Select books and documentaries that tell of other people: Latino, Chinese, Japanese, Caucasians, and Native Americans. These books are easily accessible at libraries, bookstores, and online. Use of videos, such as 500 Nations (Native Americans), Brother Eagle and Sister Sky.



#5 BE DILIGENT IN POINTING OUT MISTREATMENT.

Children often see but may not understand. I saw a black and white photo of an African American being lynched. Young, white children were in the mob watching. What were they told? How did their parents justify this atrocity?

Although this conversation may be very sensitive, children need to learn that there is mistreatment based on the color of one's skin. Helping them to be aware that how they are created is good ... is beautiful. But at the same time, teaching them about how laws, politics, and stereotypes have harmed people is necessary.

Adults are the catalyst for honest discussion. We must also see through the eyes of other people.



↑ Little Sister

You're not supposed to go out on the Riverwalk at night which, of course, is why we went. I and Little Sister. Because, the best way to make sure that a kid will do something is to tell that kid not to do it, especially two kids like us. I guess you could say we specialized in finding new and creative ways of doing the wrong thing.

It's not that we were bad kids. Not really. Well, OK, yeah. But still, we were fun, and that is not something you can say about most folks you meet, right? Most folks, once they're grown, just go about their lives doing what somebody they don't even really like tells them to do because they have to work at some job to make money to pay rent and buy food and whatever else year after year, and then they die.

The end.

But. I kinda get it. I mean, if you're an adult. It's hard to be fun and responsible at the same time because the two don't always get along. But, if you're a kid? It is your responsibility not to be responsible. You have the rest of your life to blend in and come in last place in the rat race. But for those few, bright shining years before you become too busy dying to live — that's the only time when you will ever really see. And if you remember anything about when you were a kid, then you know what I'm talking about; there are those things out there that you can see because everybody else sees them too. Things like the RenCen, Belle Isle, the Detroit River and the sky. But then, there are those other things —

Which is why I woke Little Sister up at 2:16 a.m. on that Friday morning in August. Actually, I don't think she was asleep because she got up too easy and her eyes were too bright. But that's beside the point.

"C'mon. You gotta get up now."

"Stop shakin' me, Tommy! You always shakin' me."

I shook her again because I was the older brother and I felt like it. So Little Sister took a swing at me which I didn't see coming. Caught me right in the lip. Nine years old and she didn't back up, back down or apologize. Just gave me that look, like "Do somethin'." I had to grin. She had always been a tough one, and I knew I could have done way worse as far as siblings go. I had friends stuck with little sisters and brothers that they wished they could have traded in for a better model like Little Sister, or maybe just drown them in the river. Yeah, I know it sounds grim, but if you think kids don't have thoughts like that then you don't know much about kids — or you don't want to.

Anyway, she got up. Swung her little, short pajama-clad legs over the side of the bed and stared at me. Already any evidence of that hot temper was gone from her eyes, like a storm had passed, and she was

showing off that crooked smile that looked like it was copied from the Amazon logo. Not to advertise Amazon because I'm not a fan, but it's the best way I know to describe it.

"We goin' to see it?" she asked.

I nodded.

"Yeah. I promised you we would, didn't I? But we gotta go now. That's why I got you up. But you weren't even asleep, we re you?"

She shook her head.

"Cause I knew it was gonna be tonight. I heard that voice again."

I started to ask her about it, but I got that chill all over again just like the first time it happened and decided not to. If I needed to know who this voice was that had been reaching out to my sister the past few weeks then I guess I would find out, but maybe I didn't want to know. Or maybe I already knew. Because the first time Little Sister told me about hearing that voice was the day after I had seen it.

It happened right down there at the Riverwalk by the carousel. It was close to midnight and I had snuck out of the house to meet this girl from school. She kind of dared me, telling me that if I really wanted to get with her then I had to prove it. This was the way to prove it. I told her I was pretty sure you couldn't even get on the Riverwalk after 10 at night, but she said that was only if you didn't know how. So I asked her how, and she told me that was for me to figure out. She would be waiting.

I figured it out, as any determined and horny boy would. But the girl wasn't there. I waited a long time too, but she never showed. The moon was out and it was still summertime warm, not much of a breeze. Nobody else was out there and it was almost too quiet, so I decided to head back home. I imagined all the ugly things I should say — or do — to that girl the next time I saw her. Luring me all the way out there on a dare, just so she could laugh about it with her friends and tell them how she got this stupid boy to sneak all the way out to the Riverwalk in the middle of the night.

Yeah. I knew that's what that was about. I probably even knew that's what was going to happen when she dared me, but I still felt like I had to do it. Because, what if she had been there? Then, she'd be telling everybody Tommy was too chicken to show. But now, I was feeling like this was not the place I needed to be this time of night and that I'd better get my ass home before —

"Tommy? Why don't you stay awhile? It's such a nice night, after all."



er Rises Up



So, imagine the one time in your life when you were as scared as you could ever be. Imagine that time when something happened that made your breath get caught in your throat and your heart race into overdrive. Now, double that, and you're close to feeling what I was right then.

When I heard it, I had just turned away from the river and taken a few steps toward home. The voice sounded watery and thick, but also too deep to be real. There was a man in our church who sang bass in the choir, and no one else could sing anywhere near as low as he could. Sometimes he would be featured on a song because his voice was like a gift, and everybody would get happy whenever he would hit those notes so low they made your chest rattle. This voice was way lower than that, and it echoed inside my head.

"My parents, they're gonna worry if I —"

"They don't even know you're gone, Tommy. They are sound asleep, and will be for quite some time."

"How could you know that?"

The way it laughed made my stomach hurt. I put my hands over my ears, but that didn't help.

**"Turn around, Tommy. Let me see you."
"You can't see me from there?"**

"Turn around, Tommy."

So, I did and was sucked into the absence of the moon and stars. Its size erased all boundaries of reality, swallowing the light — and me.

"So nice to meet you, Tommy. I have been waiting."

"So what does it look like?" she asked, as we walked down Joseph Campau.

The only noise I heard were our footsteps on the sidewalk, which made her question sound that much louder. I shrugged.

"I dunno. It's kinda hard to explain. You'll see."

Little Sister stopped walking. I didn't.

**"I thought you said you saw it," she said.
"You're lying."**

"Ain't lying," I answered, without bothering to look back at her because I knew she would follow eventually. "It's just hard to describe. It's big, though. I can tell you that. It's really big."

I heard her jog to catch up beside me.
"Big like what? A whale?"

"Bigger."

"Bigger than a whale? In the Detroit river, Tommy? You are lying!"

"So come and see for yourself then. Tell me if I'm lying."

We walked the rest of the way in silence that didn't really feel like silence; it felt like a silence that wanted to scream but couldn't. Once we reached the Riverwalk, even the river wasn't making any noise. My heart started to race again.

"So where is it?"

I shrugged as I gripped the railing, looking across at Canada.

"It comes when it comes."

Several more minutes passed, and Little Sister was getting impatient.

"Are you sure this is where it's gonna be? It's a big river, Tommy. Maybe it's waiting for us somewhere else."

"Except that, I'm right here, little one."

All I can say is that it wasn't there at all — and then it was. Somehow it seemed even bigger than before, which was impossible, and it smelled like the sum total of everything that had ever died in the river. Why hadn't I noticed that smell before? I stumbled backward, clamping my hand over my nose.

"Tommy was right, you really are bigger than a whale. But you can't be ... can you — ?"

It laughed, and this time my stomach hurt even worse. I called out to Little Sister, but I don't think my voice was more than a whisper. How was it she couldn't smell that thing?

"I can be whatever I want me to be, Little Sister. And so can you."

"How you know my name?"

The laugh echoed louder, and I doubled up in pain on the ground. I was grinding my teeth so hard they should have broken into pieces. I reached out, hoping somehow my hand would grab some part of my baby sister and she would see what was happening, but she was already rising up slowly into the night air.

And she was smiling ...

DOMINATING IN HER LANE

Artis Lane is the preeminent Black portrait artist, who has captured the likeness and essence of icons like Oprah Winfrey and President Barack Obama. Her work lives in some of the most distinguished collections in the world. Her portrait of Rosa Parks lives in the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, and her bust of Sojourner Truth resides in the collection of Emancipation Hall.

Artis Lane was born in North Buxton Ontario and studied at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto before moving to Detroit and studying at Cranbrook Art Academy. She currently lives in Los Angeles where she continues to work.

Lane renders her portraits in a variety of mediums, from oil paintings to cast bronze statues. Her process is equal parts technical and spiritual, as she imbues her work with ethereal properties.

"My work operates on three levels: individual portraits, social justice, and divine metaphysics," Lane says.

"Working with individuals such as Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, Mary Baker Eddy — I see the reality of their being is determined by their deeper and higher qualities. This is why I choose Matisse over Picasso because Matisse portrayed human beings' spiritual nature."

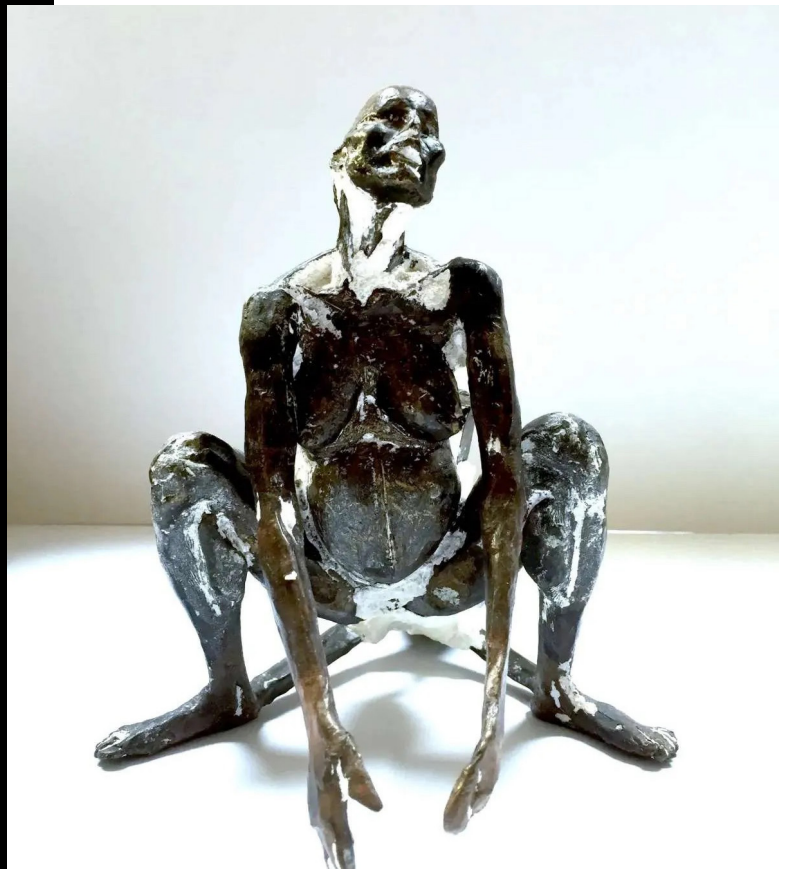


In addition to her portraits, Lane has also done several large design commissions, including sculptures for the Soul Train Awards and the original logo of the Harlem Dance Company.

Recently, Lane has been working with large figurative sculptures. Her latest series, the *"Emerging Man,"* features huge cast sculptures covered in chunks of rock left over from the forging process. The black patina and hardened raw elements left intact on the sculpture represent the figure emerging out of material thinking into spiritual consciousness, according to Lane.

"Employing divine metaphysics, I chose 'Generic Man,' a male from Benin to depict the human journey from the darkness of material thought into the light of spiritual awareness," she says.

Lane is currently working on a 12 ft bronze sculpture for Destination Crenshaw. The sculpture will reside in the newly created Sankofa Park: an art park and open-air museum.



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LIVING A BLAXIT LIFE:

AMBER C. EDWARDS

By Elexis Thomas

The expatriation of Black Americans from the U.S. is a trending topic these days. With the constant unjust and unrest occurring within the States, people — Black women specifically — are choosing to move abroad and create new experiences. Expat coach Amber C. Edwards is no different.

"My dad is from Antigua, Bermuda, but I was born in South Texas. I grew up very international. My goal as a child was to braid hair on the beach in Antigua. But of course growing up and traveling, I didn't see as many Black people as I expected," said Amber C. Edwards.

She's now on a journey to help other black women experience overseas life with her 30 Day Blaxit Course — while living her own Blaxit life!

She moved to D.C. and met her husband. He was the first Black person she met who actually moved overseas and created a successful career out of it. At that point, she realized, *"Wow! We actually can move and experience other cultures. Like, not just on vacation, but for a living."*

They got married, moved overseas, and began living in the Middle East together.



BLAC: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST BLAXIT JOURNEY LIKE?

Amber C. Edwards: Before moving, I quickly found out that the U.S. was not the richest country in the world. I connected with a friend who has been living overseas for 10 years, while being Black. She gave me all the do's and don'ts on living there without living in the Middle East. I also joined this Black Facebook group. It helped me through my moving journey because most of them lived in the Middle East as well.

When I wanted to start a business, I couldn't get a residency because, technically, I was a tourist. It was exhausting!

I ended up moving from the Middle East to Antigua because my father is from there. I was able to get residency and became a dual citizen. I lived in Antigua for two years and ended up arranging vacations for work.

While doing that, I figured out I wanted to do something virtual so I would be able to move around and do different things. I became an influencer, and Antigua was my stomping ground when it came to social media.

Being a digital nomad was becoming popular. A girl reached out to me; I told her *"Why don't you come live with me in Antigua, I will show you the ropes, how to live here, and everything else you need to know!"* This became the first The Local In Training (L.I.T.) House !

I created the course and launched it soon after. Since then, I have helped 23–25 black families move, travel, and create a better life for themselves around the world.

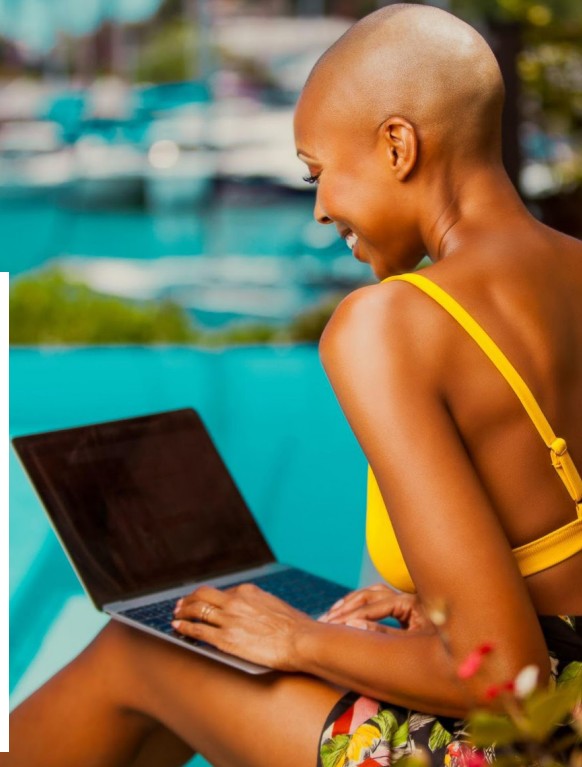
BLAC: SPEAKING OF THE HOUSE, WHO IS THE L.I.T. HOUSE FOR?

1.- The Digital Nomad. This person works virtually, but doesn't want to be home. She wants to explore the world and work at the same time! She doesn't have to plan anything, and she also has the opportunity to be integrated.

2.- The Content Creator. This person wants to figure out where to go and how to expand their life.

3.- The Entrepreneur. She owns her own online business, but does not have to do it from home. Her schedule is different because she works however long or whenever she wants to. She has more time to explore.

Staying at The L.I.T. House is a four-week process. *"Single and Solo"* is the vibe, so no age limits as of right now. During this time we throw a welcome party where I introduce the ladies to other Black nomads around the area. I give them a script that I use which has helped me navigate conversations in Spanish; it's just a little list of Spanish words and phrases. We have schedules planned out around their work, so that, while they are working, they can see new things, learn the language, learn the culture, etc.



BLAC: AS A PERSON COMING TO LIVE OVERSEAS AFTER BEING IN AMERICA THEIR WHOLE LIFE, WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART ABOUT ADJUSTING?

Amber C. Edwards: It's not being prepared enough to live overseas while being Black. When you go to a place, you look up everything you need to know on Google, but it doesn't give you the complete picture of where you're going.

BLAC: HOW DO YOU HANDLE "HOMESICK" NOMAD STUDENTS OR STUDENTS THAT ARE SECOND GUESSING THEIR DECISIONS?

Amber C. Edwards: I have a section of my course called *"The Crew"* where we focus on homesickness specifically because it can be scary for some people.

Probably, 80% of my students are only coming for a month, so they have the option to stay in the country of their choice or go back to the U.S. Some of them have stayed longer or some of them shortened their trip.

I had a student leave her trip from Italy earlier than expected because she hated it, and that is completely OK!

We went back to the drawing board, and figured out that it was this particular city in Italy that she didn't care for. We moved her to a different city in Italy, and it worked out so much better for her! It was all about the vibes and energy in the city for her, so we catered to that as much as we could.

BLAC: WHAT'S ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE CULTURAL EXPERIENCES YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED SO FAR?

Amber C. Edwards: All of the cultures I have encountered have all been so different; it's hard to pick a favorite.

I have used things I've learned from different cultures in my everyday life.

Qatar was the first place I actually lived, so it will always have a special place in my heart.

Antigua is like home to me, with most of my family being there and growing up there. The place drove me to create my first L.I.T. House. Since I already had roots there, it made me want to lay down more roots there.

Mexico will always have a special place in my heart because I was born right on the border. I was raised by a Mexican family. In fact, I know more about Mexican culture than Black culture.

All of these cultures are very special to me. It is radical as a Black American to travel and expand your mind during times like this. My passion is for every Black person in America to have a passport and travel the world.

This interview has been edited from the original for length. To read the entire interview with Amber C. Edwards, please visit blac.media and search *"Blaxit"* If you want more information about Amber C. Edwards and Blaxit, follow her instagram page.

@AmberCEdwards.

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Feeding the Soul (Because It's My Business): Finding Our Way to Joy, Love, and Freedom
| By: Tabitha Brown

"Rooted in nonjudgemental kindness and love," Tabitha Brown shares intimate stories and experiences sprinkled with vegan recipes and inspirational quotes.

Great Morning, Who Said it had to be Good!
| By: Erik G. Williams

Turn your (not so) good morning into a great morning with daily lifestyle confessions, quotes, topics and prayers.



WATCH IT.

A Madea Homecoming | Directed By: Tyler Perry

Looking for comfort TV? "Madea's Farewell Play" has been made into a movie with a few twists and turns. As the family gathers to celebrate her great grandson's college graduation, in true family fashion — drama erupts.

jeen-yuhs: A Kanye Trilogy | Directed By: Coodie Simmons and Chike Ozah

Two decades of raw footage of Kanye West released in this intimate docuseries — showing his journey from budding producer to emerging artist to the genius creative he is today.



LISTEN TO IT.

Ratchet & Respectable | By: Demetria Lucas

Cultural Critic, Demetria L. Lucas, dishes on "pop culture shenanigans, dating and relationships, and everything worth watching on any size screen."





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PRESIDENT MARY SHEFFIELD: AMPLIFYING BLACK FEMALE VOICES IN CITY COUNCIL

As the youngest City Council President elected in Detroit's history, Mary Sheffield, 34, took oath January 7th alongside Mayor Mike Duggan, the Board of Police Commissioners, the City Clerk, and eight other council members, with plans to make an impactful change while amplifying the Black female voice. She became a councilor for Detroit's 5th District at the tender age of 26 and successfully represented her district for eight solid years, before being elected City Council President. With the focused goal of improving the quality of life for some 800,000+ Detroit residents, Sheffield has a long and bumpy road ahead. How does she plan to leave a positive legacy on a city that has historically been underrepresented and canceled out as a watered down remnant of itself? BLAC spoke with Sheffield to learn about her goals as Detroit's City Council President, and how she plans to go about bringing such due respect back.



BLAC: WHAT FEELINGS OF RESPONSIBILITY OR EMPOWERMENT DID YOU FEEL AFTER BEING ELECTED THE YOUNGEST CITY COUNCIL MEMBER IN 2013?

I feel that I should first set a tone of integrity and become an example for young Black women — to show that you should never let age stop you from your dreams.

Making sure that I did my job well and, in a way, that was not only about being elected but about accomplishing things and being able to encourage and inspire other women to do the same.

Being an elected official in Detroit is tough and — being one of the youngest to ever do it, representing so many people — was also a huge responsibility. Making sure that I am being responsive, doing the job of improving people's quality of life, and that I am accessible and transparent. Not allowing the pressure to overwhelm me that I am not able to deliver in a way that I see fit. I've allowed myself to accept that I have a lot of people watching while also giving myself space, and leading at my own pace.

BLAC: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR NEWLY ELECTED SELF? WOULD YOU CHANGE ANYTHING?

I would tell myself to let go of the expectations of fitting into the mold of what I thought leadership should be. I came in at the age of 26, so I doubted myself a lot, and I realized that comparison is a thief of joy. I'd tell myself to lead from where you are and not be so hard on myself.



BLAC: YOUR QUOTE, "IN SERVICE, YOU FIND YOUR PURPOSE," IS POWERFUL. WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUR PURPOSE, AND HOW DO YOU LIVE IN AND WORK WITHIN THAT PURPOSE?

I spent a lot of time contemplating my purpose. Sometimes while we're looking and searching, purpose is right before us.

I've always found fulfillment, happiness, and purpose in serving. I believe that we all have a God-given gift, and, when we use that gift in service, we find purpose. Everybody has it, and that is the beautiful thing about life. My whole life has been in public service. I used to march with Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton as a toddler, growing up being molded by public service, and, because of that, I have always found purpose.

BLAC: CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR INITIATIVES ON GENTRIFICATION AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Most of my work on the city council has centered around affordable and quality housing, and to make sure that we are all included in the revitalization of our city. We've been able to sponsor this City's first-ever inclusionary housing ordinance that requires all new residential developments to set aside 20% of their units for affordable housing. We've also created the City's first-ever housing trust fund, so every time we have a commercial sale, a portion of the proceeds go into a fund that we use to create housing for low-to-moderate-income families.

Right now, we have about \$30 million dollars available for seniors and low-income people to fix their homes.

BLAC: HOW DO YOU AMPLIFY THE VOICES OF OTHER BLACK WOMEN?

Amplifying Black female voices is crucial. I believe that when we amplify our voices and stories, we encourage other women to do the same. Hearing my story and my journey can encourage the next City Council President. To me, it's about empowerment and creating other leaders who will stand up, especially when we hear the vulnerability of what we've been through.

More women who are in leadership roles should share their stories so other women can understand that they don't have to have it all together. They can lead from where they are.

For me, it's about creating safe spaces where people can talk and feel encouraged.

BLAC: WHAT WILL BE YOUR LEGACY?

Ironically, my legacy is not about me. It's bigger than me; it's bigger than my intentions. I want future generations to be inspired to help others. That's where service and purpose really meet, not in the titles or grandiose acts, but waking up every day determined to make a difference. You can show up imperfect and still do something powerful; it doesn't devalue the positive impact you can and will have on the world.



* FEATURE

By Nadira Jamerson

DAY IN A LIFE OF A CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

When do you wake up in the mornings?

I wake up between 5–6 a.m. every day.

Do you have any daily rituals to ensure your success before your day begins?

Yes, I go by the “SAVE” method — something I adopted from a book I read called “Miracle Mornings.” It stands for Silence, Affirmations, Visualizing, and Exercising, followed by scribing. There are days a few times a year I sleep in, but exercising daily is non-negotiable.

When do you begin work?

I begin work at 8 a.m.

How does a typical day of work look for you? How much time do you spend in the office and in the community of Detroit?

No day is typical here. Every day is a beautiful blend of staff meetings, department meetings, City Council formal sessions, phone calls from community members, zoom conferences, and many small fires that may need to be put out in-between.

I spend about 5 hours in the community during the week and numerous events on the weekends. I love every minute of it, whether in the office or in the community.

When do you finish working?

Between 6–7 p.m. in the office. Then, I go home and re-open my laptop, usually.

How do you wind down after a full day of work?

I wind down by spending time with my friends; they really help to keep me grounded. I may lay on my couch and read a book on self-improvement and empowerment; those are my favorites.

How do you schedule time for self-care and time with family and friends? Why is this time important to you and your success as a leader?

I schedule them as needed, but it's frequent and spontaneous; that's the joy of it. It is important because they help me remember my humanity outside of what I do. It helps me to stay connected, tangible and transparent, and that's imperative in every leadership role I operate in.

Ask the Experts

Health Advice from Ascension Michigan

Why Can Telemedicine Be an Effective Health Care Option, Especially for Women

Simply getting in the car and going someplace as ordinary as the grocery store is a risky endeavor these days. That's not apt to change any time soon given that COVID-19 rates are skyrocketing across the nation and a vaccine is still likely months away for most of us.

Continued social distancing where able should be our priority – but what if you're an expectant mother in her third trimester? Or a woman dealing with an issue that requires the assistance of an OB-GYN professional?

Telemedicine and digital physician visits might seem cumbersome and less than effective on the surface, but Ascension Medical Group physician and OB-GYN specialist Dr. Janet Mullings-Britton says that it can be a feasible option.

“Not only has the situation in the office space changed, the climate in many women's homes has also changed. We see ripples from this such as an increase in pregnancy rates – albeit, not necessarily in safe or wanted conditions,” says Dr. Mullings-Britton, a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

“Women can't come in for their routine breast and pelvic exams or lack access to child care, so they miss appointments. While we urge

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Expert



everyone to minimize social interactions, doctor's visits should not be one of those. Women are often the chief cornerstone nurturers of our families and must be well."

Telemedicine appointments are usually held over the phone or through video conference with your physician. Dr. Mullings-Britton says that she and the Ascension team have tried to keep things running as smoothly as possible amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual visits may improve access to routine health care for women encumbered by social distancing, work challenges, lack of transportation and child care needs.

"Telehealth is a useful, convenient alternative. Insurance, family planning and health screens get complicated when you mix in the natural distrust many in the community have for doctors and new technology. We try to be inventive, accommodating and caring," she says.

Nothing will ever replace human touch and connection, which is pivotal to healing, and Dr. Mullings-Britton cautions that there

are some issues which still require physical, in-person attention and assessment. However, she says telemedicine is an accessible tool which can increase the chances of a situation being resolved or diagnosed expeditiously. Telemedicine isn't just for the body's ailments, either.

"The isolation takes its toll on everyone, but again, for women who may be at home in less than ideal situations, stressors mount – and it can start to really negatively impact one's mind. For many of my patients, video visits are a way to connect and dialogue with someone, even if but for a few minutes out of the day," she says. Dr. Mullings-Britton says that the most important thing for physicians to remember during this time is to be understanding of their patients' circumstances, reservations and fears.

"The last thing we want people doing is neglecting their health because they're afraid, anxious or disconnected due to the pandemic. I've had patients reject treatment until what was deemed a nonacute symptom became critical simply because they didn't know who to trust or what to do. Having doctors who mirror you and who have experienced some facets of life the way you have, certainly is impactful. If you haven't walked a mile in my shoes, how can you best help and fully identify with me?"

The crucial thing to recognize is that there are new avenues emerging every day and innovative assistance becoming available. Dr. Mullings-Britton says we must take care of ourselves as best and as completely as we can. "Holistic remedies won't replace conventional medicine, but I can't say there's anything wrong with trying to boost your immune systems with adequate sleep, exercise, water, elderberry, zinc and echinacea," she says.

"Paramount to optimizing one's health is stability of spirit, mind and body. Get some vitamin D and C as safely as you can. Bask in the sunshine. Do things that make you happy, and give your body what it needs."

LADY BOSS

Being Your Own Boss

Despite limited access to venture capital and resources, the number of businesses owned by Black women grew 50% from 2014 to 2019, representing the highest growth rate of any female demographic, as reported by Forbes. In 2021, Black women became the fastest-growing demographic of entrepreneurs in the U.S., with nearly 2.7 million businesses nationwide. Black women are continuing to be their own bosses and showing America how it is done.

To shed light on this rare time in history, BLAC spoke with three trailblazing women who are amplifying the voices of other Black women; **Angela McIver**, Founder of Trapezium, a national math club, **Tori Nichel**, Creator of **Maison Black** and **Robin Andrade** of SELL ATLANTA. By creating room for themselves and other Black women to share unique ideas, these women built a lifestyle for other bosses to emulate.

Angela McIver

It was after working as an educator with a Temple University after school program allowing first-generation, college students from low-income families to study on campus, that Angela McIver realized that while her students were prepared for science and math, they were actually dropping out because of their confidence.

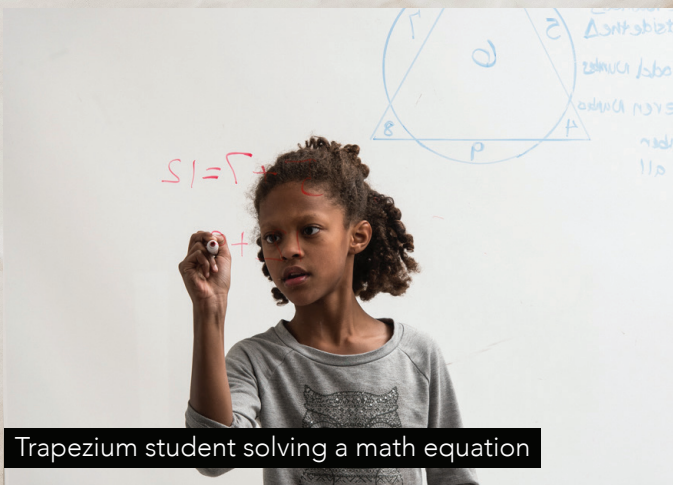
"Less than two percent of Black students in the country take two years of calculus, so we realized that we really knew how to do this and that we knew how to do it for Black children especially," says McIver, owner of Trapezium Math Club. Now a national math club working with students in grades K-5 in fostering confidence in STEM, Trapezium started at home with McIver's own children filling in the foundational math skills they were missing.

McIver started by creating a list of things that students should know by fifth grade if they were going to be successful in math in middle school and high school. After looking over her children's math curriculums, McIver realized that their school was not fully preparing them to succeed in STEM.

By starting her own math club, McIver made sure that own children and their friends were being given all the tools to ensure their success. *"I started a math club with my son when he was in first grade with some of his friends. When he graduated from eighth grade, the only kids who tested into advanced high school math classes from their elementary school were Trapezium math students,"* explains McIver. *"It was the first time in the school's history that Black students tested into advanced math."*



Founder Angela McIver working with a student from Trapezium



Trapezium student solving a math equation

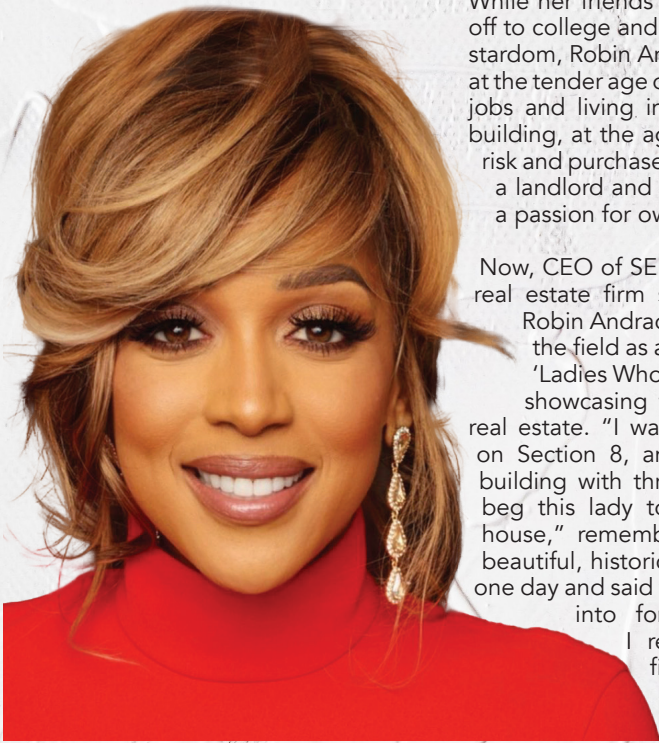


Trapezium students working in the classroom

As a mother and educator, McIver is dedicated to improving her children and students' confidence and now Trapezium serves students in 18 states. *"When I realized how much I love math and how good I was at math it was surprising. I never had that confidence,"* says McIver. *"I want to make sure that students, and Black girls particularly, come out of elementary school feeling that they can do this."*

Robin Andrade

CEO of SELL ATLANTA, Robin Andrade



While her friends were dreaming of going off to college and pursuing their careers of stardom, Robin Andrade became a mother at the tender age of 17. Working low paying jobs and living in a section 8 apartment building, at the age of 21 Andrade took a risk and purchased the building becoming a landlord and homeowner and igniting a passion for ownership.

Now, CEO of SELL ATLANTA, a boutique real estate firm servicing Metro Atlanta, Robin Andrade shares her expertise in the field as a cast member on OWN's 'Ladies Who List: Atlanta,' a TV series showcasing the very best in Atlanta real estate. "I was living in an apartment on Section 8, and it was an apartment building with three families. ... I had to beg this lady to even let me rent her house," remembers Andrade. "It was a beautiful, historic home. The bank called one day and said that the house was going into foreclosure, but because I resided there I had the first option to buy." Back then, there was no internet...I made

phone calls to banks and figured it out. I bought that house, and I was 21. I lived for free for six years and learning how to be a landlord and a homeowner at the same time sparked my desire to have more real estate in my life."

Launched in 2010, SELL ATLANTA, has sold hundreds of properties in commercial and residential real estate while offering residential, commercial, rental, and property management services. It wasn't until given the opportunity to share this knowledge with a wider audience on 'Ladies Who List: Atlanta,' that Andrade found her calling helping others acquire their dream homes. "I've always been in the pursuit of happiness and in the pursuit of some sort of relaxation. When you're young, you have to wake up at five in the morning to be at school at 7 a.m., to come home and go to work from 4 to 8 p.m., and then come home again and take care of your newborn," says Andrade. "It's like the clock never stops ticking. You're always out of time, and that would build up such anxiety in me. Being an entrepreneur has helped me to find a smooth landing."



CEO Robin Andrade poses with agents from SELL ATLANTA



Tori Nichel

Designer, and design leader, Tori Nichel founded Maison Black New York because of her passion to mentor budding designers. The creation of her Fashion Scholarship Fund helped seal her name in history as "Designer to Watch" by Women's Wear Daily and Forbes Magazine. "Other than wanting a house full of kids with a hubby and a dog named Leroy, my life is quite aligned with the vision I had when I was younger. I was blessed at a young age to know what I wanted to do", said Nichel. "I recognize that not everyone is born with that chip and has to find their why over time. Others are forced to be someone they were not put on this earth to be. It's for that reason I embrace and immerse myself into it, helping others build their dreams on a daily basis."

In creating Maison Black New York, Nichel honors the voices of other Black designers as a destination to be recognized for shaping global style.

Since its founding, Maison Black has showcased works of such designers as Apotts, Esenshel, and Lorraine West. "It's still really important to make sure that the brand vision is held together. I have a close relationship with each designer, so I need to make sure that their product is shot in the right light and that we're protecting their brand integrity as well as our own," says Nichel. "My advice: follow the three P's: Prayer, Perseverance and Persistence. Ensure your foundation is on lock. I am talking about your sistership crew, tribe, and family. The people who you know have you covered without asking, and the ones who will lift you on days you want to give up because there will be those days. I believe that we only get one shot at life, and getting paid to do what we dreamt of being as a kid is a blessing."

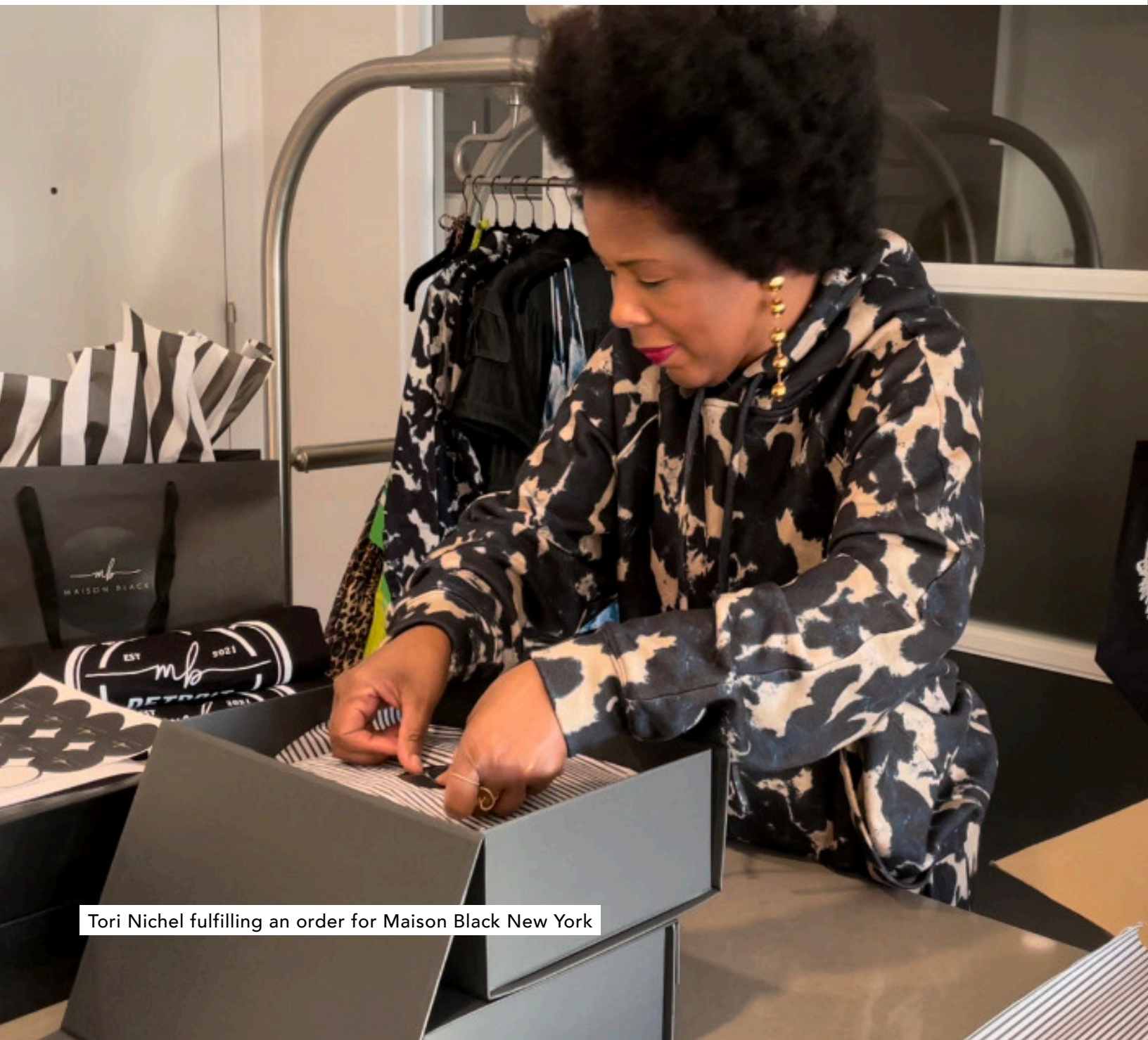
She laments that women like her are often misunderstood because of their ambition

Tori Nichel, founder and chief creative officer of Maison Black New York

and drive. "Be ready for rejection. Be ready for the no's on why your Black-owned, female-led business is not quite ready for the funding or sponsorship, but do not let rejection stop you," Nichel advises. "I truly believe if God gave you the vision to create, then He will provide you the resources to execute. When you get those yes — whew, were they worth all the no's. Building a legacy business is something that someone can leave behind for their children."



Tori Nichel on set



Tori Nichel fulfilling an order for Maison Black New York



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PARENTAL CONTROL: TEACHING STARTS IN THE HOME

by Brenae Inge

TEACHING READING AT HOME

During the pandemic, education became a talking point. School closings meant parents had to add “teacher” to an already long list of hats to wear. Zoom sessions provided little solution as educators struggled to keep the attention of their students. Online learning demanded a lot and was unable to provide individual care for the kids who needed it.

Failing grades and declining test scores were among the factors for reopening the economy and getting children back in classrooms. With American school systems playing catch-up, are there some things that can be taught at home? We asked parents, students, and educators alike, what they thought.

Faydra Hewitt is a wife, mother and full-time professional. She has a young son who is barely school age, but, for Hewitt, learning begins at home. One of the skills she believes can be taught at home is reading.

“[You can teach] by reading to your child daily and making sure you use conversational terms, so asking your child open-ended questions that fill their vocabulary,” she says.

A major tool in her arsenal are flash cards — pairing words with pictures. She uses them to teach reading and word association.

During the pandemic, she learned creative ways to teach other things — including math.

“I used blueberries and I count them out as I put them on his plate. [You] can also teach addition and subtraction,” she explains.

Along with her husband, Hewitt turns lots of things into learning opportunities. Even walking up the stairs can be a lesson in counting.

In addition to the basics, Hewitt encourages teaching history, culture and heritage through storytelling.

“Whatever your heritage, you can give your own cultural history lesson. You can have your own little circle time,” she says.

TEACH WHAT IS NOT TAUGHT IN SCHOOL: FINANCIAL LITERACY

Are at-home curriculum goals the same for parents as they are for educators?

Vilori Adams, a long-time elementary school teacher explains her thoughts on vital lessons to be taught at-home.

"Financial literacy – that's not being widely taught in school," she says.

According to Next Gen Personal Finance's bill tracker, only 25 states in the U.S. introduced legislation to add finance education to the curriculum. This was in 2021 and only applies to high school. Despite this, Adams says there are ways you can explain the complicated subject of personal finance to younger children.

"We did a lemonade stand and we taught advertising – what makes your lemonade different," Adams explains.

This exercise allowed the students to develop life skills by counting money, developing a business strategy and marketing your product. She says

teaching them how to save a percentage of their allowance towards a goal helps increase their understanding of financial literacy.

Though singing is a great way to get kids to learn at home, Adams cautions that comprehension is key.

"They can say their ABCs but ... don't know the corresponding letters," she says. "If you have a child in elementary school and want to get on the teacher's good side. [Teaching] their basic letters, sounds and shapes would be a great help for teachers."

EVERYTHING SHOULD BE TAUGHT BY PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS

Some educators have all but given up on at-home learning.

When posed with the question if she thought there were five things that could be taught at home, Desremona Morgan replied, "Academically, no."

Morgan served as an educator since 2004 in the Shelby County School

system and has gone from teaching K-12, to now being an instructional coach. Throughout her years, she has witnessed substantial changes in the education system. She believes that parents are ill-equipped to teach the necessary lessons the way they should be taught.

"The students that we serve are in the bottom five to 10 percent of the state. It's not even just about teaching multiplication tables. It's about understanding the concept of multiplication," she explains.

It doesn't stop at mathematics, Morgan surmises subjects like history and science have become more complicated to teach at home.

"Science used to be the phases of the moon, the simple things — it's not like that anymore. They have to talk about the ecosystem and human interactions in the ecosystem ... They have to interpret data and read charts and graphs like a scientist," she says.

She also points out that, though Memphis has a lot of history — like being a hub during the slave trade — many students are unaware of those



historical facts. For this, she blames the South for prioritizing money over education.

For Morgan, providing a quality education for students has become a challenge now more than ever.

HOME ECONOMICS SHOULD BE TAUGHT AT HOME

The story isn't the same for Dey'Lan Moore, a boy in his 6th grade, and his mother, Dezannae Moore.

For Dezannae, she credits much of her son's knowledge to beginning education in the home.

Although Dey'Lan was a bit shy during the interview, he

stated cooking and playing sports were his favorite skills that he learned at home. As a young man of few words, his mother stepped in to elaborate.

"I'm his whole tutor 'cause SCS (Shelby County Schools) makes you work overtime. I need a check!" Dezannae says.

She leads a busy life as a clinic coordinator but makes time to teach her son outside of the classroom.

"Baking — my son likes sweets. I try to teach him how to season. Everything gotta have seasoning for Dey'Lan," she adds.

Developing home economic skills are vital in the Moore household, but what about other subjects?



"We use our home computer for educational stuff like math at home. I walk him through projects and everything," Dezennae says.

The Moores also spend much of their time bonding over activities — painting, arts and crafts and building. Dey'Lan also enjoys putting things together.

"I'll go to IKEA to get something together and he'll build that," Dezennae says.

Besides for an at-home curriculum, you can catch the Moore family volunteering at events and giving back to the community. Dezennae prides herself on giving lessons that will help her son into a well-rounded, responsible man. There is no one way to teach any child, nor is there one

subject for kids to learn at home.

As a parent, skills like math and reading can be integral to the development of young brains. These are concepts that are never too early to start. Some teachers will even appreciate the effort you put in. But there are lessons that you can't always get inside of the classroom — financial literacy, cooking and working with your hands. These are just a few takeaways.

Education is a constant development so whatever you choose to teach at home, find a way to make it fun.



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BLAC Food AND Drank

By Ann Duke



Photos © Joe Vaughn / Frame
Photo credit: Valaurian Carter Val Waller Photography

It was a typical winter night in Michigan. The local TV stations were focused on the “big” snowstorm that was headed our way. Snowmageddon 2022? Hardly. We got the snow alright but nowhere near the catastrophe predicted. Those reports didn’t stop our team at BLAC from venturing out for what turned out to be an absolutely amazing culinary experience.

FRAME, the brainchild of Super-Couple Joe and Cari Vaughn, is part restaurant, part classroom, and part dinner theater. Joe, a

renowned food photographer, and Cari, a former Condé Nast editor created something truly special in the heart of Hazel Park.

A FOOD MAGAZINE YOU EXPERIENCE

The couple’s journey started in 2015 when they purchased the building on John R. Street to serve as a studio. The front space of the building became a sort of hang-out spot and eventually morphed into JoeBar. Now known as FRAMEbar, that hang-out spot has become a popular eatery in its own right.

In 2017, the tables turned when Chef Brad Greenhill’s wildly popular Takoi burned down. The Vaughn’s invited their friend to set up a temporary restaurant in their 4,200 square foot space which was equipped with an industrial kitchen.

The experiment was a huge success and launched FRAME as we know it today: an incubator and cultural hub celebrating makers of all kinds. FRAME is a safe space for new chefs to experience what it’s like to run their own restaurant without having to incur start-

* ACCESS

up costs. Established chefs have the ability to stretch their culinary muscles and experiment with cuisines that they're not typically known for.

Former Free Press restaurant critic Mark Kurlyandchik joined FRAME in October of 2021 and serves as the company's Editorial Director. The team — consisting of the Vaughans, Kurlyandchik, Culinary Director and Resident Chef Michael Barrera, Sommelier Sean Crenny, and Cocktail and Spirits Director Jaz'min Weaver — have a truly unique concept going here.

The group's background and experience in media and creating content informs their business model. Every dining experience is carefully curated and considered as part of an editorial calendar. The team has extended the concept to include an online magazine with behind-the-scenes detail and interviews with the guest chefs.

"I've extended the concept of editorial to the physical FRAME spaces as well", Kurlyandchik comments. **"That**

means that I work to find and secure chefs and other talents for our programming, because, to me, the power of FRAME is as a storytelling platform. I like to think of it as less a restaurant, and more of a curated food magazine that you experience in person".
THE NIGHT'S CHEF

This particular evening, the venue featured a **"Cajun-Creole Dinner Party"** prepared by Chef Ederique Goudia. The 40-year-old chef is a James Beard Foundation Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership Fellowship alumni, Lead Chef for the Make Food Not Waste Upcycling Kitchen, and the Program Manager for Detroit Food Academy.

Ederique grew up in rural Louisiana where food was central to her childhood. Her grandparents lived across the street and taught her to live off of the land and treasure every ingredient. Those early influences along with her Creole lineage have informed her cuisine.

In 2020, Ederique became a lead chef for Make Food



Not Waste, an effort to feed hungry Detroiters using food that would otherwise go to waste. That holiday season, the group provided Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner to over 11,000 people experiencing hunger and food insecurity. She is currently the co-founder of Taste the Diaspora, a Black History Month initiative celebrating Detroit's Black-owned restaurants and the impact of African cuisine.

THE OVERTURE

The evening started with an ultra-creative menu of craft cocktails. Cocktail-master Jaz'min Weaver walked guests through the offerings.

My tablemates sampled the mirepoix martini, consisting of Hayman's gin, green pepper, carrot, dry vermouth, celery bitters garnished with a cocktail onion; and the clementine sidecar, featuring Pierre Ferrand brandy, housemade clementine curaçao, and lemon.

It was refreshing to see a zero-proof offering on the menu. The **"Not 'Gin' & Tonic"** consisted of house-made ginger turmeric tonic and zero-proof gin.

The craft cocktails served as the overture for this production. When suddenly the wall slid open and the kitchen arena was in full view, as if the curtain was raised and the first act was about to begin. Goudia was accompanied by her students from the Detroit Food Academy who assisted her in the preparation and serving of the five-course meal.

ACT ONE

Chef Ederique introduced diners to the first course which featured red bean hummus, smoked bacon jam, cornbread, and house pickles. The dish was so meticulously crafted that every ingredient was able to shine.

We were crazy for the smoked bacon jam and were prepared to buy a case on the spot!

FRAME offers a cocktail and wine pairing with each dining experience. Sommelier Sean Crenny, along with Weaver introduced each thoughtfully chosen pairing. The first course was accompanied by a M. Bonnamy Crémant de Loire Brut chenin blanc blend. Absolutely delicious.

An amazing Louisiana sunburst salad was next. Ingredients included planted Detroit-grown red-streaked mizuna, romaine, arugula micro-greens, vegan blue cheese, dried cranberries, shallots, sweet potato chips, and tabasco vinaigrette.

I have to admit I was leery of the tabasco. But, wow! It was perfect. Not at all overwhelming. The accompanying warm apple brandy with carrot, lemon, and a caramelized simple syrup perfectly complimented the salad.

The shrimp and mirliton bisque that followed was like a warm hug. At the risk of getting too full before the main course, I couldn't resist eating every bite. My dinner-mates raved about the Domaine Thibert Pouilly-Fuissé chardonnay wine pairing.

THE NIGHT'S CLIMAX

Just when we thought the dinner couldn't get any better, Chef Ederique introduced the main course, featuring a phenomenal duck confit and smoked chicken andouille gumbo. The dish featured fried pickled okra, crispy duck skin, popcorn pie and gremolata. It was a masterpiece! The Domaine de l'Espigouette grenache blend chosen by Crenny was the perfect compliment.

The crescendo of the meal was a banana foster shortcake that literally made us gasp as it was delivered to our table — as beautiful as it was tasty. Topped off with a plantation dark rum, and molasses cacao turbinado with oat milk.

The entire dinner and experience was first-rate beginning to end. We couldn't have been more satisfied.

When asked if it was all worth it, Chef Ederique exclaimed, **"My experience at FRAME was magical. The staff was so welcoming and also provided encouragement and a community-centric space for both my crew as well as the patrons. I would come back as a guest chef or a guest anytime!"**

We agree with Chef Ederique. We'll be back too!



Left to right, Louisiana Sunburst Salad, Duck Confit & Smoked Chicken Andouille Gumbo and Red Bean Hummus with Smoked Bacon Jam, Cornbread and house pickles.



The view from the outside looking in is as seductive as the food that awaits the diners.



FRAME guests sit at communal tables (not during COVID times) which makes the event even more unique.

CELEBRATE YOURSELF!

TAKE THE Y 170 CHALLENGE

This year — as the Y turns 170 — you could be a fitter, happier, healthier version of yourself. Learn how the YMCA can help you achieve 170 minutes of movement weekly, starting now.

YMCA OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

This year — in the lead up to its 170th anniversary — YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit is encouraging everyone to celebrate by committing to the Y 170 Challenge.

"We're trying to make a fun way of celebrating by getting everyone to engage in healthy movement for 170 minutes each week," explains Helene Weir, YMCA President and CEO. "That exceeds the recommended number by the CDC, but if we get everyone in metro Detroit to have 170 minutes a week of activity, everyone will be that much healthier."

You don't have to run a marathon to be healthy, Weir says, and she encourages every

person of every age to just go for a walk every day. "I typically ride an exercise bike every morning, and I have a habit of waking up and getting some exercise in each morning," she says. "I like to go to the Y gym and work on the machines several times a week. And, on a beautiful day, I'll also go for a walk."

Take the Y 170 Challenge

To sweeten the deal — and make it easy to track those minutes — YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit has developed a smartphone app to log your movement. Those who participate will be entered to win prizes, including Y memberships and Y swag.

But the real benefit to taking part in the Y 170 challenge is preventing chronic diseases, like heart disease and diabetes. And healthy movement can help you shed unwanted pounds, too.

The CDC recommends 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week, and adding an extra 20 minutes can offer even greater benefit.

"We are asking people to share their stories,

whether they walk the dog, come to the Y or park far away from the store or office. How do you 170?" asks Latitia McCree, Senior Vice President of Communications and Marketing for YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit.

You don't have to be a member of the YMCA to participate, but if you check out all of the group fitness classes and facilities at your local YMCA, you might just be tempted to join.

Make it a habit

Making healthy movement a habit is key to success, says Patrice Harold, M.D., Chief of OB/GYN at Sinai Grace Hospital in Detroit and YMCA Board Member. She loves to visit the Y because everyone is so generous with their compliments, she says. "The staff members always say 'You are looking great!' and it's rewarding to get that encouragement. It's very helpful," she says.

Sign up for a Zumba, aerobics or spin class to help build movement into your routine and keep doing it until it becomes a natural part of your day, Dr. Harold suggests. Book some time in your local Y pool or take advantage of their expert fitness trainers.

And get your kids involved, too. "Kids want to be like us, so they follow in our footprints. My kids were not runners, but as a family we did a 5K together every few months," she says. "Now they are adults and they are running. When they get stressed out, they go for a 30-minute run." Keep an eye out for Dr. Harold as she challenges friends to a morning group run downtown, then adds some evening yoga to maintain balance and form — and wind down for a great night of sleep.

Whatever your age or ability, 170 minutes of movement each week is an achievable goal, and your local YMCA is here to help.

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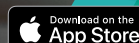
- » Group exercise classes—like Zumba & yoga!
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YMCA OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT



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Reflections and Flowers (detail), 2006, Shirley Woodson, acrylic on canvas. Collection of the artist.



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