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Southern Christian Leadership Conference
NATIONAL MAGAZINE

SELMA 2020 55 YEARS LATER



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Vol. 49 / No. 2

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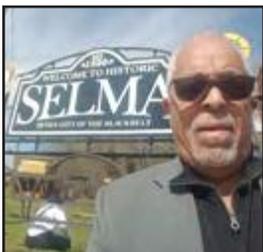
Cover:

(L-R) SCLC First Lady Cathelean Steele, SCLC President/CEO Dr. Charles Steele, Jr., Mrs. Kat Steyer and Tom Steyer, billionaire activist and former candidate for Democratic Party Presidential nominee.

Inset: Mr. and Mrs. Steele with Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

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Photos: PHIL GANDY



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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Martin Luther King Jr.
FOUNDING PRESIDENT
1957-1968



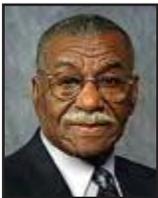
Ralph D. Abernathy
PRESIDENT
1968-1977



Joseph E. Lowery
PRESIDENT
1977-1997



Martin Luther King III
PRESIDENT
1998-2003



Fred L. Shuttlesworth
PRESIDENT
2004



Charles Steele Jr.
PRESIDENT
2005-2008



Howard Creecy Jr.
PRESIDENT
2011



Dr. Charles Steele, Jr.
PRESIDENT & CEO



Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr.
CHAIRMAN



During the Covid-19, SCLC is still fighting for people.

"All Americans, not just corporations, must benefit from the funds to end the crisis and restore our economy and I challenge the congressional Black Caucus."

BY DR. CHARLES STEELE JR., SCLC National President & CEO

With all Americans bearing the brunt of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis, as President and CEO of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), I have called on President Donald Trump and the U.S. Congress to make sure all Americans benefit from the \$2 trillion stimulus relief that is being spent to restore the health and welfare of citizens and the economy.

As SCLC's leader, who proudly captains the venerable national civil rights organization co-founded and first led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I want to weigh in on behalf of average Americans—as most of us are.

We have seen this socialist bailout of corporate America before. As the Trump Administration and Congress are now set to help their corporate friends, hand out new lucrative contracts and create new jobs to address this pandemic, we must ensure that billions of dollars end up in the hands of the people who have been historically left behind. Poor people, black and brown people, must be recipients of these generous gifts that routinely go to conglomerates."

President Trump has signed into law a stimulus package approved by Congress to financially assist corporations that have been hit hard by Covid-19, including the travel and cargo industries, such as his friends at Boeing Airlines.

He's also pledged to assist small businesses, but there are still murky specifics how those disbursements will be handled for Mom & Pop store owners in impoverished communities.

The Congressionally approved legislation also calls for direct payments of \$1,200 to every American earning up to \$75,000, to help them through the crisis. But where does that leave gig workers, freelancers and part-time workers—many of whom are "barely making a way out of no way" as our parents used to say? These are perilous times for poor folks and their families struggling to survive.

When it comes to bearing the weight, it is not fair that the corporations get the financial support when the



rest of us starve, I argue. We saw our government bail out the banks during the housing collapse. We also bailed out the auto industry and Wall Street. Those industries recovered, but we didn't. Most black and brown people lost their homes. We lost our wealth.

Nearly 75 percent of poor people are living from check to check. Many of us have no health insurance. We can't afford to take a day

off work. Now what?

SCLC, which has focused on the plight of the poor and the voiceless since the days of Dr. King, has received calls for individuals and groups who are concerned about how individuals with no jobs and insurance will fare during this pandemic and recover after the crisis is over.

"They are asking, 'Where are our leaders?'"

That's why I am lobbying The Congressional Black Caucus and urging my friends and SCLC's supporters within that esteemed group of elected officials to work with us to develop a plan to save Black businesses.

"As you may know," I wrote, "The SCLC, have been pushing for a \$250 billion fund to save Black businesses and communities. This current crisis has laid bare the effects of the neglect and malicious treatment of African Americans over the years.

"Now more than ever, we need our leaders to focus on race specific remedies. If you look at where we are as a people, you cannot let racist policies control our future.

"Therefore, we need race specific remedies, especially when it comes to government programs for the Black farmers, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, Small Business Association (SBA) programs, and African American non-profit organizations.

"Thus far, the federal government has refused to make the needs of Black people a priority. We have taken the backseat too long. This government has assured that while a few of us prosper, most of us struggle—even those of us with college degrees! We must not be left behind again this time."

SELMA 2020 55 YEARS LATER

SCLC officials and supporters on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery at the conclusion of their march from Selma.

Photos: Jacque Chandler





When the storms of life are raging.

BY DR. BERNARD LAFAYETTE JR., SCLC National Chairman

“Violence is the language of the inarticulate. When you can learn how to talk, you can end it.”

Life has some good times and some bad times. The good times are easy, but the hard times are difficult especially when they are unexpected and there is no preparation. These are times when we are deeply touched.

The question is how you assess the resources you need to reinforce the choices you make. The other question is whether your choice of response benefits only you and those around you, or whether your choice benefits the whole.

The other question is whether your response can be replicated or not. What are the resources you need if you are going to want an effective response?

First, you must establish a positive frame of mind. You must believe that it is possible to overcome the problems no matter how difficult it is. You must believe that the resources are the solutions even if they are not presently in sight. You must believe that you are not alone. There must be others who share the same issues and have the same commitment.

If so, then there must be a way of identifying others who are like minded. Then there must be a way of bringing some of them together into a coalition of groups that share some of the same ideas. However, it would be necessary to screen out the differences and narrow down the fine points of agreement on substances as well as a philosophical approach.

When putting together strategy, it is imperative that clear leadership roles are described and spelled out. It is important to clearly identify a leadership team. One of the key areas of involvement would be communications and media relations. The purpose of having expertise in this area is to reach the maximum participation of the masses and the

greatest number of sympathizers. The second reason the media relations is so important is that it must continue on a consistent basis.

It was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said that “if you can capture the headlines for ten days in a row you have started a movement”.

In addition to arousing the conscious of the masses, it is necessary to stay focused on the goal. Keeping relevant negotiations going, training the participants, necessary fundraising development and the recruitment of supporters, are all key. It is also important to identify those in the power structure who can win others over to support the cause. They may not come out publicly, but they can work behind the scenes.

If your means is direct action, then the direct action must continue until the change is agreed upon by those who have the power to make the change. It is also important to know how to restore order when you experience disorder in your campaign. Trained marshals can sometimes make all the difference. Maintaining close communications can be another factor. Providing a handout sheet with goals, purpose and instructions can also be helpful.

Finally, leadership must model the method and be a representative of the goal you are trying to reach. When there is conflict among your leadership then that becomes the priority. It may be necessary to compromise, but never compromise your principles.♦



Jan. 16, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr., accompanied by Bernard Lafayette Jr., talks about a planned march in Washington, D.C., during a news conference in Atlanta

Saluting the power
of a dream
and the courage
of a voice.

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
1929-1968*



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61st Annual Convention on the
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STEELE**
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President & CEO

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Justice for Girls

BY CATHELEAN STEELE
Founder



The months of March, April and May were to be dedicated to exposing our girls to the world around them. Unfortunately, the Coronavirus has derailed our plans. I would like to share a glimpse of what our girls experience each year.

The Classroom

Once a month we have an opportunity to visit the school partnering with our initiative. We have the pleasure of working with a group of girls that are excited and willing to learn. Our classroom objectives are as follows:

- > Sex Trafficking Awareness
- > Teaching self-empowerment
- > Teaching leadership skills
- > Practicing civility through training

We create our classroom environment around this quote from William James. “The greatest discovery in our generation is that human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives.”

During the last three months of school we focus on activities outside of the classroom.

The Retreat

The retreat is always a favorite because of our presenters and trainers. The self-defense training and the spiritual enlightenment dancing always make our girls joyful and gives them a sense of power. The retreat provides guidance through activities some of which involves self-reflections. The girls experience both happiness and sadness as they laugh and cry during the course of the activities.

The College Tour

We choose our college tours according to the state we as a

group decide to visit. The Alabama tour was quite successful. We visited six colleges in five different cities within two days. A couple of girls were granted scholarships after the visits. This year we had planned to tour colleges in Georgia.

The Civil Rights Tour

During the past years we have visited the King Center, the Civil Rights Museum, the APEX Museum, and the SCLC Headquarters. In 2020 we were planning to visit the Equal Justice Museum in Montgomery, Alabama. I believe that visiting this museum will create a desire in our girls to value our history.

Hiking and Ruby Falls

Through the years we have visited Ruby Falls in Chattanooga, Tennessee and hiked the trails in Helen, Georgia. “Ruby Falls is the deepest underground waterfall open to the public.” Helen, Georgia is also known for its vineyards and Bavarian-style buildings.

The Princess Tea

At the end of each school year it is the pleasure of my Justice for Girls team to show our thanks to the girls that participated in our program. Therefore, we have a Princess Tea. We all dress like proper ladies, learn the history of the afternoon tea, enjoy poetry and singing, we listen to a wonder speaker and lastly, we enjoy our tea. However, this year a decision was made to crown the girl meeting all of our requirements as Ms. Justice for Girls.

We are looking forward to a wonderful 2021 and we are asking all of our chapters to join with us. I am a firm believer that when you improve someone's life, you have also improved your life.



RACIAL TRAUMA IS REAL.
Confront the pain and begin
the journey forward.



Sheila Wise Rowe, MEd, has counseled abuse and trauma survivors in the United States and South Africa for over twenty-five years.



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The Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery

1921-2020

SCLC mourns the passing of its third president.

Known as the Dean of the Civil Rights Movement, Rev. Lowery's exceptional visionary and oratory gifts convened diverse leaders to the table and the masses to the streets to protest injustices.

BY MAYNARD EATON

Dr. Charles Steele, Jr., president and CEO of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), issued the following statement regarding the passing of the Rev. Joseph L. Lowery, the civil rights organization's third president, who died Friday evening at the age of 98.

The SCLC was co-founded and first led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, who also co-founded the SCLC, was the civil rights organization's second president. Rev. Lowery, another co-founder of the organization, led the SCLC from 1977 to 1997.

"Our prayers are extended to the family of Rev. Lowery, my dear friend, mentor and fellow comrade in the civil rights movement. Rev. Lowery led our organization through some trying times. He was an exceptional visionary with tremendous follow through and he was very successful in taking the SCLC to the next level in terms of entrepreneurship, building the worldwide recognition of the organization and educating society about Dr. King's philosophy and contributions. He was a highly effective leader.

He was very articulate. He had the gift of understanding people and working with individuals from all sectors of society. He was recognized as a great orator for delivering some powerful speeches, but he was just as gifted at motivating people from different cultures, religions and agendas to convene at the table to work together for the common good. With the problems we are addressing today around the world, he would continue to be that catalyst to bring folks together. He was that glue that kept us at the table until we found the solutions.

That is what is missing today with current leadership. I had a very serious conversation with Dr. Lowery concerning

Aug. 12, 2009, East Room of the White House: U.S. Pres. Barack Obama presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Joseph Lowery.



the SCLC and the movement about nine months ago. It was just he and I. He said he was confident in my leadership. He was most appreciative of the new debt free headquarters for the organization. That endorsement elevated my credibility, because, in this day and time, leaders can't depend on membership alone to take care of the needs of an organization. We must go around the world to build the thirst for people to support and be active in the SCLC. The people must believe in what we are doing and how we are working diligently to keep the legacy of Dr. King and the SCLC alive. While Dr. Lowery was mostly confined to his home over the past several years, he was still mentally sharp and full of wisdom. He motivated and stimulated us all until the very end. He will be missed."•

Dr. Joseph Lowery

REST IN POWER

PRESIDENT- SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

1977-1997



DR. CHARLES STEELE JR.
SCLC PRESIDENT

"Our prayers are extended to the family of Rev. Lowery, my dear friend, mentor and fellow comrade in the Civil Rights Movement. He was an exceptional visionary with tremendous follow through. He was very successful in taking the SCLC to the next level..."



SCLC
Southern Christian Leadership Conference



Mar. 6, 2020, SCLC marchers in celebration lead the way to the Alabama State Capitol after completing 54 miles. Dr. King's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in the background.

Time to Handle Unfinished Business

BY JEREMY PONDS

Our founder Dr. King stood in the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church on August 16, 1967 to address the 10th Anniversary and Convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

In his words: "SCLC stood at the forefront of all of the watershed movements that brought these monumental changes...but in spite of a decade of significant progress **THE PROBLEM IS FAR FROM SOLVED.**"

Fifty-five years later from the events of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights Movement the problem is **STILL FAR FROM SOLVED!**

On March 01, 2020, hundreds of thousands of people spanning various generations and races converged on the small city of Selma to "REMEMBER" the time 55 years ago when ordinary African American citizens got fed up with being left out of the political process. Many of those young people there came because either they saw the movie "Selma" that was released in 2015 or they saw documentaries on it in school. The elders at the Bloody Sunday anniversary were there as a reminder of the work we still have left to do in this global and ecumenical community.

Selma has always held a special place in my heart because it was there at the 32nd Anniversary in 1997 where, as an 11 year old, I was asked to be a part of the SCLC. The

late Rev. Hosea Williams, Dr. Joseph Lowery, the late Rev. E. Randel T. Osborn saw something in me. I was there to recite Dr. King's famous "How Long, Not Long" speech and they helped develop me into another realm of organizing and leadership. Since that time, the Lord allowed more individuals of SCLC to be mentors in my village of activism. Those included: Brenda Davenport, Rev. Fred Taylor, the late: Rev. James Orange, Frederick Moore and Ralph Worrell and so many others. Under these "soldiers of freedom" I was immersed into being able to move into communities across this country engaging people from all walks of life to help us to fulfill our SCLC motto to "Redeem the Soul of America."

Every five years SCLC completes the entire 54-mile march from Selma to Montgomery to address the issues going on during the present time. Sadly, 55 years after fighting for the "Right to Vote" we still had to march **YET AGAIN** to "Protect The Vote." In this current political and socio-economic climate, our society has been plagued by the constant appearances of the "Triple Evils" so adequately described by Dr. King as: Racism, Poverty and Violence.

March 2, 2020 a committed group of marchers from across the country crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge once again to help begin and complete our five day march to the

state capitol in Montgomery, which culminated on Friday, March 6, 2020. It was a blessing to have been tapped by SCLC National President/CEO Dr. Charles Steele, Jr. as the Director of the 55th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March. As a 35 year old young man from Panama City, Florida, who has grown up participating in previous marches with SCLC for the past 23 years of my life, no words can describe the immense responsibility I was tasked with, especially as a National Board Member.

The tutelage and training from my SCLC mentors in organizing showed a true sign that by mentoring and teaching younger generations it helps us to be able to pass the mantle to a generation HUNGRY FOR ACTION.

For the past five years I've worked as a Clerk for Fulton County Superior Court in Atlanta. I've come across cases and seen multitudes of our younger generation come through the courthouse hungry for mentorship, leadership and an opportunity to show what they can do. Growing up in SCLC and "The Movement", I have no other choice but to galvanize others



(L-R) Jeremy Ponds, Dr. Charles Steele, Cathlean Steele, Kate LaFayette, and Dr. Bernard Lafayette. (Back row) Marchers who completed the 54-mile journey from Selma to Montgomery.

to do the same. If SCLC and "The Movement" as a whole are to survive then we must make it a priority to focus on development. Criminal justice reform, immigrant human rights, economic development are just a few pieces of the puzzle we have been tackling but now more issues continue to transcend into the days ahead. If we put all hands on deck then I have no pessimism that we won't be able to eradicate these injustices. Responsibility starts with us as individuals so as a collective



SCLC Board Member and Selma-to-Montgomery March Director Jeremy Ponds gives a rendition of Dr. King's "How Long, Not Long" speech on steps of Alabama State Capitol. He is surrounded by Dr. Charles Steele, Jr. and Dr. Bernard Lafayette.

force the impact can be so much greater as we seek to turn this nation from "inside out to right side up" in the words of President Emeritus Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery.

In our African American contemporary vernacular, in this younger generation, we often refer to each other as "bruh" in a term of endearment in greeting. However, in SCLC, I was raised where we referred to each other as "Leader." Even if you weren't holding a leadership position just being referred to in that man did something to your sense of pride knowing that you possessed the talents to help take our nation to the next level. Now it's our time to infuse SCLC with other "LEADERS" that are eager to shift this paradigm we are experiencing in 2020 and ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE!"

My late grandfather Lawrence Ponds, Sr. was a deacon in our home church in Panama City, Florida and in the spirit of the old African American church tradition he would "line a hymn" during devotion. As he belted his loud baritone voice across the congregation he would pull from his and my favorite hymn "A Charge to Keep I Have." The last verse of that hymn always stuck with me and it is still relevant to SCLC today and those of us in "The Movement" continuing to fight the good fight:

"To serve thy PRESENT age, my calling to FUL-FILL. Oh may it be all of my powers engage to do our Master's WILL."

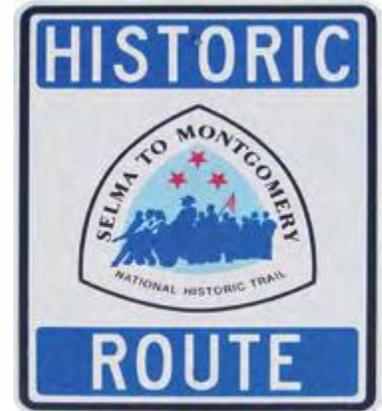
Now it's Time to Handle "Unfinished Business."•

JEREMY PONDS lives in Atlanta where he is a Senior Court Clerk at Superior Court of Fulton County and National College Director-S.O.U.L. (Students Organized United in Leadership) at Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

1965 Selma-to-Montgomery March: Black Farmers Made it a Reality

BY HEATHER GRAY

This year, 2020, marks the 55th anniversary of the devastating March 7, 1965 “Bloody Sunday” in Selma, Alabama, as well as the 54-mile march from Selma-to-Montgomery on March 25, 1965 to demand voting rights for African-Americans. It is generally not known that the March 25th event could not have successfully taken place without the assistance of Black farmers who owned land along Alabama’s Highway 80—the route from Selma-to-Montgomery.



March 7, 1965 ‘Bloody Sunday’ and March 25, 1965 ‘Selma-to-Montgomery March’

On March 7, 1965, Alabama State Troopers accosted the marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma who were launching the march to Montgomery to demand their voting rights under the U.S. Constitution. It became known as ‘Bloody Sunday’ as 17 people were hospitalized and many more were injured by the troopers, including activist and now Congressman, John Lewis who was hospitalized with a fractured skull.



‘Bloody Sunday’ did not end the activists desire to continue their trek to Montgomery from Selma. In fact, on March 17, 1965 Federal Judge Frank Johnson ruled in favor of the marchers by allowing them to continue their journey down Highway 80 to Montgomery.

Recognizing that Alabama Governor George Wallace was not going to protect the marchers, President Lyndon Johnson sent one thousand military policeman and two thousand army troops to escort the marchers from Selma-to-Montgomery.

The ‘March’ down Highway 80 went through three Alabama counties: Dallas (where Selma is located), Lowndes and Montgomery (where the city of Montgomery is located) and the Judge allowed for only 300 to march on the 2-lane portion of Highway 80 through the renowned Lowndes County.

At the time of the march, Lowndes County was 81% black and 19% white, and not one black was registered to vote. In contrast, 2,240 whites were registered in the county. (*Wikipedia: Selma to Montgomery Marches*).

The ‘Selma to Montgomery March’ and the Four Campsites

The marchers needed places to stay on the 4 day, 54-mile route from Selma-to-Montgomery and, as mentioned, Black farmers offered assistance. White farmer cooperation along the route was out of the question.

Below is a listing of the campsites from the National Geographic website entitled ‘Selma-to-Montgomery’:

Campsite 1

The first day of the Selma to Montgomery march, March 21, marchers walked seven miles out of Selma to (Black farmer) David Hall’s farm.



March 21, 1965, marchers cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala. for African American voting rights. Photo: Spider Martin

Massive amounts of spaghetti and pork and beans were cooked by congregants of Selma's Green Street Baptist church. The food was delivered in new garbage cans. Four large tents housed the marchers as temperatures fell below freezing.

Campsite 2

(Black farmer) Rosie Steele's farm was the second campsite on the march. Marchers stayed here on the night of March 22.

That evening, curious people from the neighboring countryside gathered to see what the march was all about. SNCC workers returned to Lowndes County after the march to educate and register these new, mostly African American, voters.

Campsite 3

(Black Farmer) Robert Gardner's farm served as the third campsite for the marchers, on March 23. Heavy rains turned Gardner's field into a soggy mess. Dinner that night was barbecued chicken, hash, peas and carrots, and a candy bar.

Here, activists made burial mounds that said "segregation."

Campsite 4

This field, belonging to a Catholic social service organization dedicated to supporting the African American community, served as the final campsite for the marchers, on March 24.

More than ten thousand people came to listen to speeches and a concert put on by Harry Belafonte, Joan Baez, Sammy Davis, Jr., Dick Gregory, and Peter, Paul and Mary.

The next day, thousands of marchers entered Montgomery (National Geographic).

Summary

Alabama attorney, Tamara Harris Johnson's whose uncle, Robert Gardner, lived on the family farm where the marchers stayed on the third night, had this to say:

"Selma" touches all of us in some personal way. The image of the marchers from Selma-to-Montgomery was nothing short of awesome. Selma touched my family and me, personally....

Calls were made to as many of them (the family) as could be reached for permission for the marchers to rest on the farm. I recall that permission was given proudly. My Uncle Robert and his family, who lived on the farm, endured threats to their lives and property as a result of allowing the marchers to rest there. (Greene County Democrat).

In the early 2000's, I drove with SCLC leader Reverend Joseph Lowery down Highway 80 from Montgomery-to-Selma. Lowery, in fact, played the leading role in the organizing of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery March.

As we drove down Highway 80, Lowery turned to me and said, "This is hallowed ground." Indeed!•

HEATHER GRAY has a history of activism on civil and human rights for decades in the southern region of the United States as well as nationally and internationally. She expresses this background and activism in media both on the radio and in articles. She holds an undergraduate degree from Emory University and Georgia State University in Anthropology and a Masters Degree in Sociology from Georgia State University.

SOUL DOCTOR: The Movie

BY MAYNARD EATON

Daniel “Danny” Wise was conspicuous amongst the sea of Black activists and civil rights leaders. He was holding court and commanding attention in the hallway outside the opening session of this year’s 50th Anniversary of the Selma Bridge Crossing in Alabama. Wise was there for the screening of his forthcoming movie musical, *SOUL DOCTOR: The Movie*. “Transforming the National Conversation on Race,” is Wise’s publicizing premise.

It is a Broadway musical, he adapted to film, that focuses on African American and Jewish relations centered around the historic partnership/friendship between “rock star” Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and iconic musical artist, civil rights activist Nina Simone.

“We’re writing the story of the foremost Jewish composer of the 20th Century,” says Wise, who wrote and directed *SOUL DOCTOR* on Broadway in 2014 and now the movie. “Carlebach was the father of contemporary Jewish music and the voice of the Jewish revival after the holocaust. This is a story of two people that never wanted to be singers. Nina Simone wanted to be a classical pianist but was offered a job playing piano at a bar on condition that she also sing. Shlomo Carlebach was a prodigious young rabbi who escaped Hitler’s Germany as a child and was now exploring the counterculture in search of a way to help reinvigorate the Jewish experience. This was a fluke encounter. And, Shlomo had never composed a song. Simone was the daughter of clergy and they formed a very deep bond. She introduced him to gospel music and encouraged him to write music. He told her, ‘You’re going to make it to Carnegie Hall,’ and she did.”

For her Carnegie Hall debut in 1963, Nina Simone sang four Shlomo Carlebach songs in Hebrew, as a tribute to him for encouraging her career when she was unknown. And she

did record songs in Hebrew and performed in Israel. Her first husband was a Jewish musician.

Wise says Rabbi Carlebach masterfully created a new Jewish revival with roots in the Hassidic soul experience but was also influenced and shaped in its content and form by black gospel. “He would regularly visit black churches and even recorded black spirituals,” says Wise in his New York City accented, distinctive baritone voice.

Nina Simone also performed and recorded Shlomo’s music, which reportedly makes this is really a unique story. “It really was the kernel of what became the contemporary Jewish revival until this very day,” Wise says.

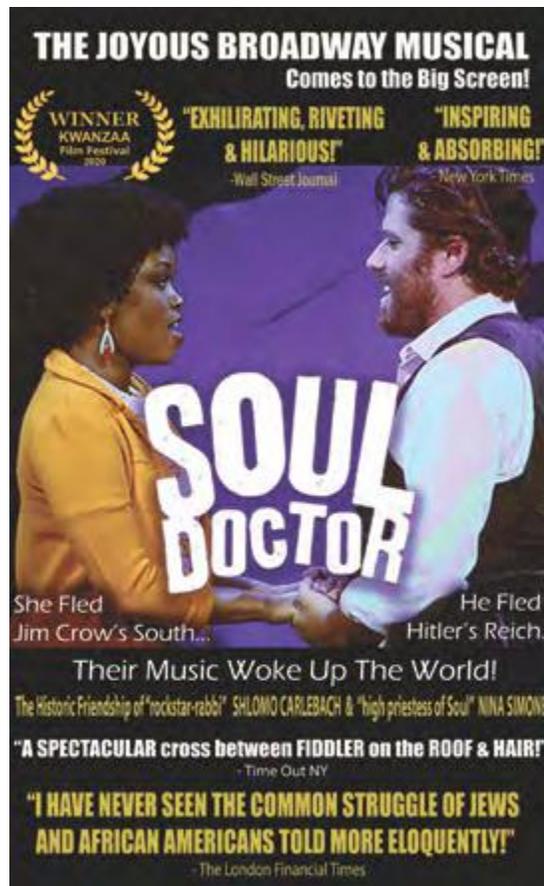
And over the past decade, Shlomo’s daughter, Neshama Carlebach brought this full circle when she introduced her father’s music to many black gospel churches, often performing and recording throughout the world together with The Green Pastures Church Choir and others.

Robin Williams, is an accomplished ethnomusicologist and inaugural Director of the New Orleans Jazz Institute: “I understand the cross-cultural and cross-spiritual dynamics of Shlomo and Nina’s connection,” says Williams, “Diamonds are created under pressure; in this case, both artists were borne of oppressed people and the

sheer brilliance and passion of their combined artistry was a shining example to their ancestors of beauty that could not be bound.”

In effect, it is often said, that both Simone and Rabbi Carlebach became the voice of their respective racial group’s revival and identity. Nina Simone became a strident and significant Black Nationalist.

“Although she had a challenging relationship with the white community, and was very affected by racism in America, she had a very different relationship with the Jewish community,” reveals Wise. “I’m sure Simone did not realize



the extent of the impact she had on the Jewish experience. It really wasn't until we researched this turning point in Carlebach and Simone's life that a full picture of how their friendship helped shape the Jewish experience."

Wise continues wistfully, "It's so important for both peoples to see. It is important for us to recognize how much we have given each other. You can see the dynamic of the Shlomo Carlebach, Nina Simone connection and, really, the power of that history and that time within this entertaining narrative."

The charismatic filmmaker and theater veteran was in Selma for the Annual 2020 Selma Jubilee to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others successfully did on March 21, 1965. After the march, the historic Walton Community Theatre, in Selma hosted screenings of the movie to the hundreds of marchers that had convened there from across the nation.

"After each of screenings we've presented throughout the country, the audiences are up singing and dancing in the aisles" Wise exclaims. "The story is so celebratory and redemptive"

Wise readily admits that he genuinely believes this movie or "his baby" is something special.

"I say it's my baby, not in terms of my ownership, but rather looking at something that is now bigger than me. It was my baby, but it has certainly grown up," he opines. "I had no idea that such a visceral experience, such a live experience like this story would translate into the big screen. We're being approached now and in advance discussions with major distributors about worldwide distributions."

The film stars Tony Award nominee Josh Young (Jesus Christ Superstar, Evita) as Shlomo, and Nya (star of the recent Cleopatra and the current Broadway musical Caroline or Change) as Nina Simone.

"The movie is very powerful," opined Naomi King, the wife of Martin King's brother, the late A.D. King, following a Selma screening. "If you are lacking in knowledge it is a must that you see this movie to become more informed. Any person watching this movie, it should shake them, move them, and hopefully change them."

Wise was raised in NYC and Israel. He grew up, he says, in Jewish/black neighborhoods, whether it be Crown Heights or Far Rockaway. "It is disappointing today that many young people don't realize how much the Black and Jewish community have enriched each other and continue to empower each other" he laments.

Wise proudly reveals his parents were involved in civil rights because, they were "more of the Bernie Sanders kind of Brooklyn socialist Jews" that were incredibly involved with social action.

"My mother ran something called The Freedom Center for CORE, and she marched with Dr. Martin Luther King," he tells. "We have many pictures and recordings. My mother just sent me a bunch of slides that she took of Dr. King at a small rally in Chicago and a small rally in New Haven, Connecticut."

Wise enhances that, "After having written, directed and edited the piece, and witnessed how African American audiences experienced this movie, I realized how deeply the civil



Martin Luther King III and 'Soul Doctor' director, Danny Wise at the opening celebration of the 55th Anniversary of the Selma Bridge Crossing.

rights movement activated the Jews and the Jewish identity at a time when it was terribly forlorn."

Asked to describe the relationship between the Jewish and African American communities today, Wise replied.

"The Jewish community owes a great debt of gratitude to the African American community because of this shared experience, and because of how we were so culturally enriched by the African American experience.

Wise tells this reporter during an online Atlanta Video Network interview that when he was in Selma he was "moved to tears to see such powerful people within the African American community, so focused and with such excellence of character and articulation, especially the young generation," he enthusiastically explains.

"It reminded me so much of being a young Jewish teenager," he remarks nostalgically. "It was 30 or 40 years after the holocaust, we sang and marched together, all spirited with the connection to our heritage. Marching over the [Edmund Pettus] Bridge and seeing predominantly African American kids from all over the country, and singing We Shall Overcome and those other Freedom songs that I grew up with, like it was their own contemporary songs, was very encouraging."

Wise, a widely respected entertainment entrepreneur, wisely concludes about our country's current civil rights movement:

"We were at a different time, in terms of leadership," he proclaims. "Dr. Martin Luther King was a great prophet, but he was also a great businessman. He was someone who understood focus and because of that he unified people to a purpose, but with specific and urgent goals. Now, it seems more about broad platforms. And it's a shame because there is still systemic racism and inequality in this country."•

Yolanda King

Artist, Activist, and Innovator

1955-2007

BY PROF. ARTHUR REESE and PAUL DARGAN

Knowing Yolanda King in my years as technical director for the National Black Theater Festival was a pure blessing. She was among those who took part in the very first festival, performing with Atallah Shabazz, the daughter of Malcolm X, in a show called *Stepping Into Tomorrow*. We were frankly amazed at her tremendous level of talent. During my time at the festival I have dealt with many “celebrities,” from Oprah to Denzel, but Yolanda was always special because she exuded a genuine warmth, compassion, and love for the arts that somehow superseded the knowledge of just who her father was and what he meant in my life and the lives of millions of others. Over the years, we became friends, and I always looked forward to my next meeting with Yogi (she eventually kindly informed me that her nickname was “Yoki”), however, one particular occasion will be burned into my memory for as long as I live. We were at the Ring Theatre of Wake Forest University, where Yoki was scheduled to perform. We were waiting for her to arrive for her technical rehearsal, and when she walked into the theatre, I saw her in a different light for the first time. In that instant I could clearly see the face of her father in her stoic countenance, and it sent a rush of thoughts and emotions racing through my consciousness! What must it have been like to suffer all of the pain and terror that her family was forced to endure at the height of the civil rights movement? How had she moved on, past events that would have crippled others emotionally, to forge



Yolanda King

her own impressive existence as an artist, activist, and innovator? It’s time we took a closer look at Yolanda King.

Yolanda was fascinated by acting from an early age, so she sought to learn the craft and enrolled at the Atlanta Actors and Writers workshop, the first unsegregated drama school in Georgia. Prior to enrolling, Yolanda wrote her own play, in which her siblings were cast in a story about a queen (played by Yolanda) who is presented with many visitors from different cultures who share their own gifts. By her time in high school, King was convinced that acting was her calling, especially with her involvement in Bill Manhoff’s “Owl and the Pussycat”. That play included her portrayal of a prostitute who kissed a white man on stage. This

sparked an uproar among both blacks and whites in the community, but the role made her path an even clearer choice given the effect it had on so many people. Yolanda attended Smith College and graduated with a BA in theater and African-American studies. Her activism led to the formation, with Attalah Shabazz, of the Nucleus Theater Company, with the mission of enriching high schools and colleges with uplifting programs. In one instance, King produced a one-woman play called “Tracks”, in which she portrayed all of its sixteen characters. The company’s aim was to embody her late father’s philosophy of maintaining a level for all in a society with accountability and compassion.

In the film *Ghosts in Mississippi*, King took on the role of Reena Evers, daughter of Medger Evers, the late civil rights activist and NAACP field secretary, who was slain outside his home due to high racial tensions and enemies in

high panic from the change then being spurred by him and others like him. It took more than two and a half decades for Evers' case to be handled properly through the hands of a local district attorney. Through the work of Bobby De-laughter and a diverse, impartial jury, a long injustice was overturned, and Reena Evers, alongside her daughter and son, found some amount of peace in the result.

King lent her abilities to the television film *Selma, Lord, Selma*, playing the stern school-teacher Ms. Evelyn, who aids Sheyann in learning about what freedom means for those with few to no rights. Sheyann's curiosity grows from witnessing a rally fronted by Dr. Martin Luther King. Although some lawmen cultivate discouragement by speaking of past church bombings, Sheyann (Jurnee Smollett-Bell) witnesses through her young eyes how a community stands strong in times of joy and during sorrow and gains a greater understanding of the sacrifice of many to make equal rights a living, breathing reality.

Additionally, King would play federal judge Esther Green during a long-running courtroom drama *JAG*, hearing arguments for a civilian ship hunter who sought to preserve the sunken naval ship *Dolphin* and claim it as their own from its resting place in international waters. The case had gone on for over fifty years as the government fought to maintain control of the wreck. The US navy did not want any individual to profit from the *Dolphin* and sought a restraining order, despite the widely held belief that the Japanese had sunk the ship after those in power deliberately incited and encouraged the attack in order to justify the institution of home powers. In the end King, as Judge Green, affirms the sub as US property once certain documents are discovered.

One of Yolanda King's last roles would be lending her voice, as the character of Mum Bett, a mother living as a

slave while caring for a Massachusetts family of high status along with her daughter and younger sister, to the history-infused animated series *Liberty's Kids*. Eventually, Mum Bett meets with esteemed attorney Theodore Sedgwick and seeks to legally win her freedom. Breaking out of her servitude, she sues the head of the slaveholding household, John Ashley. Using the new laws in the constitution, Bett's case is won, her wages are back paid by John Ashley, and she chooses a new name, later going by Elizabeth Freeman.

In hindsight, so much of King's work on camera and in the theatre was to bring attention to the struggles of those who had not been granted a voice, spreading the truth about civil rights or those long forgotten in the line of battle, as well as one of countless men or women swept up in slavery before new laws brought down the institution. At the core of Yolanda Denise King shone a light of change for those in the darkness. •

PROF. ARTHUR M. REESE has been the technical director for the National Black Theater Festival since its inception in 1989. He has worked significantly with such luminaries as Samuel L. Jackson, Maya Angelou, Della Reese and John Amos to name a very few. He currently teaches technical theater at North Carolina Central University. Reese thanks God for the opportunity to work and to help young people.

PAUL DARGAN is a thriving student who has appeared on stage for NCCU's theatre department as well as the National Black Theatre Festival in 2019. Some local stage credentials include, "Sister Act", "Blues for An Alabama Sky", as well as "A Need Fulfilled".

Twelve-year-old Yolanda King learns to play the piano with her Dad, Martin Luther King Jr.





Leadership is Fundamental

BY CICONE C.A. PRINCE

Leadership is one of the most fundamental components of any social construct. Without proper leadership, the overall welfare of a society, organization or group will not only go unchecked, but it will also spell the downfall and possible end of an era.

Take for instance the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, even the name of the organization demands leadership that's second to none. I think it only fitting that we look at leadership for what it is and what it is not.

The Definition of Leadership

Dictionary.com defines leadership as: lead-er-ship (noun)—the action of leading a group of people or an organization.

(Similar): guidance, direction, authority, control, management.

The keyword that I want to highlight in that definition is ACTION. Leadership takes decisive action based on providing information. Facts and figures have to be considered for leadership to be effective. Know the numbers will allow for informed dialog and forward-thinking solutions. Leadership should never be done in ignorance. True Leadership looks at the good, the bad and the ugly and takes all of that into account when charting a new course. So there has to be deliberate action taken when information is presented. Failing to do so in a timely fashion can prove detrimental in the end.

If you have been a part of any organization then you have undoubtedly encountered some form of Leadership. Hopefully, it was one that was favorable to the mission as well as the members. I'm sure there would be some lessons that you learned from them even if the lesson was what not to do. We are going to dive deep into how to become an Effective Leader.

The Origin of Leadership

There are several historical references to the origin of Leadership but I ascribe to the Bible one. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul lays out a Biblical principle that sums up where Leadership Originated:

Romans 13:1-7 King James Version (KJV)

These passages point to the fact that even our society government was set up by God to provide order and governance (this does not mean that the government can become corrupt). What it further shows is that there is a hierarchy whose head is none other than God Himself. So the origin of Leadership came from God. That does not mean that Leaders are not accountable, on the contrary, it means that they are MORE accountable.

1 Peter 4:17-19

So given the origin of Leadership, we need to take the role of Leadership seriously because there will be an account given for our stewardship.

The Need for Leadership

Given the Definition and Origin of leadership, it should go without saying that there is a NEED for Leadership. There is an African Proverb that states:

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

– African Proverb

In this proverb, there is an underline theme of Leadership. Going far takes a team and having a team means there has to be an agreement which means there has to be a Leader. There has to be a head and not many but one. Anything with several heads is a freak of nature. Anything without a head is dead. There has to be one single source of guidance, direction, authority control, and management for forward and positive movement to occur.

Most companies, organizations, and even sports teams, rely on effective Leadership to produce the desired results. The Leaders are looked to for evaluation and adjustments of the team, organization or company. Their ability to identify S.W.O.T.—Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats will help them hire the right people and make the right changes to achieve their goals.

Most people run from leadership and turn around and be the loudest critics when things go wrong. We have to make sure that we are doing our part to develop ourselves first and then those around us to become more effective leaders. We have to be forward-thinking by setting up the next generation to succeed and go further than we did. Leadership should be perpetual and not stagnant because we are going somewhere which is why we need someone to take the lead.

The Different Types of Leadership

We all have dominant traits when it comes to our Leadership Capabilities and it good to know what they are. Identifying the different types helps us to master those but a true Leader focuses on developing those traits that are not as dominant because there will be a time when they all are called upon.

With that being said here are some Leader traits that are more prevalent than others. Study them carefully because there will be a test.

Technical Leader:

This type of Leader deals more with information such as facts and figures. They look at leadership from a numbers and projection standpoint. They want to make sure that it works out on paper before it will work out in the real world.

Stern:

This type of Leader focuses more on discipline because of their belief that the lack of self-discipline is one of the biggest factors in not reaching goals. They have a “Get yourself together” attitude and then do what needs to be done. They are also action-oriented and results-driven.

Earnest:

This type of Leader deals more with the heart of the Mission Statement rather than the concrete aspect of it. They look for ways to move the organization forward based on the emotional outcome rather than the bottom line.

Humorist:

This type of Leader is more light-hearted than the other

types and seeks to elevate people by seeing the lighter side of the mission statement. They understand that stress and low morale have a direct effect on the bottom line so they look for ways to lift any unnecessary burdens.

Influencer:

This type of Leader is known for their inspiration and motivation that is infectious. They know the right things to say to encourage their organization to dig deeper and give more than they would otherwise. They are eager to light the fire in others so that they can continue in their absence.

Want to find out what type of Leader are you?

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We Join SCLC in Honoring
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Atlanta enjoys a celebrated role in the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 1960s, which connects that rich legacy with more contemporary struggles for justice and equality. That's why it is reverently called the "Cradle of the Civil Rights Movement."

It's where civil rights icons such as Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Congressman John Lewis, Rev. C.T. Vivian, Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy and Rev. Joseph E. Lowery, among others, have lived and launched their civil rights activism throughout the South and the nation.

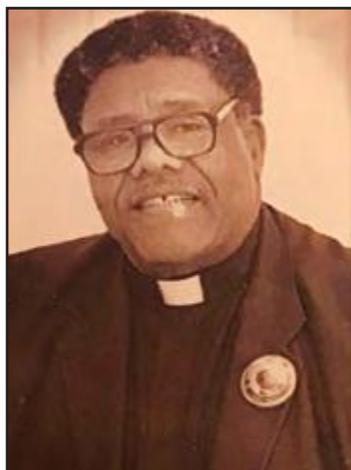
They mostly focused on the evils of bigotry, racism and integration, while Rev. Joseph E. Boone became a renowned civil rights legend because of his career-long crusade for civil and economic rights. He was about the money. He was about providing opportunities and equity for the poor, his family and friends fondly recount.

"You didn't see him marching," recalls his wife Alethea Boone. "His thing was getting economic power for us as a people. It's wonderful to march, but once you get where you

Rev. Boone's unique expertise was negotiating and fighting for fair wages and jobs for African American blue-collar workers and professionals, much like this reporter. In 1978, before my successful job interview for a news reporter position with an Atlanta TV station, Boone, and others, were picketing outside as I arrived. He was there in his capacity as co-chairperson of Atlanta Against Unfairness in Broadcasting. I got the job as a result of him.

Those strategic picketing skills, pastoral persuasiveness, and engaging persona is why his friend, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., named Rev. Boone the Chief Negotiator for Operation Breadbasket, the economic arm of SCLC. There, the Rush Memorial Church pastor, was responsible for coordinating with over 200 other ministers in establishing a network of Breadbasket branches in over 30 cities dedicated to improving the economic conditions of black communities across America.

"Rev Boone was the person in Atlanta that helped launch [Operation Breadbasket] and really got it off the ground," says Brooks.



REV. JOSEPH E. BOONE

Remembering "The Picketing Preacher"

BY MAYNARD EATON

can sit at the table, you have to pay for it. His thing was you've got to have the money."

Michael Langford is a revered Atlanta civil and human rights activist who is president of the United Youth Adult Conference. Rev. Boone, who joined the ancestors July 15, 2006, was his mentor.

"Rev. Joe Boone was indeed a special kind of guy," Langford opines. "He was one of those critical figures responsible for opening some doors that had been closed to Black folks for a long time."

"I met Rev Boone one day at the SCLC headquarters on Auburn Avenue, and Rev. Hosea Williams told me "this is the picketing preacher in Atlanta," says longtime Southern Christian Leadership Conference [SCLC] insider and former Georgia State legislator, Tyrone Brooks.

"I remember my father getting information on local businesses engaged in racial discrimination," Atlanta Councilwoman Andrea Boone reminisces. "He would grab picket signs for me and my sister and we would leave the house on a mission. We picketed those places with the fervor of true crusaders. My father fought tirelessly to help African Americans get jobs and promotions. He never gave up."

"It was through that organization that Joe and the other ministers came into focus that if we can't reach a settlement by negotiating, then we'd put the next thing to you. We'd have to picket," adds the accomplished and atypical high school French teacher Rev. Boone married in 1960.

Alethea Boone continues, "That said to us - the citizens out here—that once you see that picket line you don't cross it; you don't buy there. It was one of the keys to our gaining economic power. I like to [talk] about Operation Breadbasket and how so important it is that we recycle that dollar into our community and support our own."

Eldrin Bell was a tough-nosed Atlanta beat cop in the black community during Rev. Boone's heyday. He joined the APD in 1961 and later became a charismatic, controversial, and later, cherished choice for Atlanta police chief in 1990 by Mayor Maynard Jackson, before winning election as neighboring Clayton County's first black commission chairman in 2004. Chief Bell claims he walked and talked often with Rev Boone, while he was picketing a business or politician or black community problem. Boone was ubiquitous, he says, but never clashed with the police.

"My memories about Joe is that he was probably the first minister to openly display resistance at the way black people

were being treated as they dealt with the entrepreneurs, the store owners, work place companies and manufacturers in the area,” Bell remembers. “Joe Boone, as a minister, was the local forerunner of demonstrations against what he called the maltreatment of black customers in the 60’s. And, I would say prior to Martin Luther King. The kind of protests he took on primarily were in neighborhoods and places where African Americans worked. He wasn’t taking on lunchroom protests downtown at Rich’s Department store, he was taking on neighborhood discrimination.”

But Boone did staunchly support the Committee on Appeal for Human Rights, the Atlanta University Center student movement led by Lonnie King and Julian Bond, that conducted civil disobedience and demonstrations which eventually produced agreements desegregating 70 lunch counters, theaters and golf courses in Atlanta.

That may not have happened without Boone and his Rush Memorial Church.

According to Mrs. Boone, some members of the congregation were “very unhappy because he opened the church for the Atlanta Student Movement”, when they were forced to leave the Atlanta University Center campus.

“Lonnie (King) was very distraught because they had nowhere else to go, so Joe invited them to stay at Rush Memorial (near the Clark Atlanta University campus) for five years,” says Mrs. Boone. “We didn’t charge them anything, and of course, some of the members left.”

Michael Langford says Rev. Boone “had raw courage” and his work was the quintessential example of [nonviolent] direct action.

“Joe Boone would challenge the downtown power structure,” Langford recalls. “I remember his involvement when Mayor Maynard Jackson fired the garbage workers, and him being one of those who negotiated on behalf of them, to his strong work at Meade Packing, which I thought was one of the most successful victories for union workers. He was just a consistent warrior all his life. He was just a great friend to blue collar workers and poor people in general. He was more than a civil rights leader; he was a businessman. He never ran away from a fight, especially if it led to an opportunity to improve the plight of poor people.”

That’s why, much like other Atlanta civil rights luminaries, there is a major street named after him that slices through the heart of the black community. In 2008, Joseph

Jan. 27, 2020, the Boone Family at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Joseph. E. Boone mural in Northwest Atlanta.



E. Boone Boulevard was dedicated. In January 2020, Rev. Boone’s legendary status was underscored with a rare event. That’s when a mural was dedicated in his honor.

“It is impossible to recall the America and the Atlanta that existed for Black Americans before Joe Boone,” the program brochure reads.

Former Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell concurs with that sentiment. “Joe Boone deserves the accolades, he deserves the murals, he deserves having a street named after him because he is one of the people that helped craft the country, and certainly the city of Atlanta, that we enjoy today,” he says.

Councilwoman Boone says her upbringing and her father’s teachings were rare and rewarding. “We shared a unique bond as children of civil rights activists,” she reveals. “We all grew to understand the weight

of their calling and the role that we played in supporting that calling.

“These beautiful memories laid the foundation for my future,” she continues. “My father taught us not to be afraid of anything or anyone. That life lesson reminds me of why I’m here.”

When asked how she would describe her father, Jolaunda Boone-Campbell says: “I would say a civil rights sacrificer. What I would like people to know about my father is that he contributed his life to others, as well as, to serve others.

“My father was a wonderful person,” she adds “but my father would not have been the man that he was if it were not for my mother. She was the wind beneath his wings.”

While Rev. Boone may not have been as nationally known or have the high media profile of some other popular civil rights icons, his wife Alethea believes her husband amassed a meaningful and lasting legacy?

“He didn’t get all the stardom or big-name recognition, but I’m not sure he wanted it,” opines the Selma, Alabama native. “He was just happy doing what he was doing. Many times in the moment, you are not recognized. As history looks back on its pages, I feel he will truly be appreciated”

Mrs. Boone continues: “I think his work in helping to desegregate places in Atlanta and, opening the doors of opportunities for economic viability would be one of his lasting legacies. He felt that, if a man had a job, that would then give him self-esteem. He would feel better about himself, so he could feel better about his family and make better contributions to society.”•

The Other Side of This Crisis



BY MATHEW WESLEY WILLIAMS

Black faith leaders are wondering; What does the Coronavirus pandemic mean for the most vulnerable among us? What does this mean for the church? What does this mean for our communities? This crisis is a call back to ministry with the poor, the vulnerable, the indigent; to Jesus himself (Matthew 25).

Any faith worth its salt looks facts in the face. We are on the early end of a once-in-a-lifetime catastrophe. The United States has the most confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection in the world. As testing catches up with rates of infection the U.S. will remain the global epicenter of this pandemic. Things will get worse before they get better.

In the first few weeks of this crisis, I co-hosted a national call with over 500 Black faith leaders seeking answers as to how to proceed with “church” in this crisis. They were desperately seeking guidance on how to move in this new moment. Among all of the key takeaways and action items from that call, one disturbing truth became clear; our normal is no more. This changes everything.

In the early days of this crisis, most of the conversation I heard among pastors was about how we shift our worship services to an online platform. This is an important consideration that helps people stay connected to fellow members and messages of hope. However, it also reveals how deeply many of us have drifted from the mission of the church, Christ’s body. If Jesus’ mission statement in Luke 4:18 is any guide, this crisis is an invitation for the church and its leaders to move beyond its fixation on buildings and budgets.

This crisis has landed like a tsunami on ground that has long been unevenly graded. The United States’ pre-existing conditions of economic inequity, health disparities, and racialized access to resources have made it more vulnerable to the wiles of this virus. And when America gets the flu, Black people get pneumonia.

However, neither race, wealth, nor gender confer immunity. This virus reveals the lie upon which much of our economy is built; for one to prosper another must suffer. Like the 2008 financial crisis, this virus underscores the prophetic truth that Dr. King tried to get America to understand over 50 years ago: “In a real sense all life is inter-related. All [people] are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly... This is the inter-related structure of reality.”

At our best, we who follow in the way of Jesus demonstrate what it means to be Christ’s body by simultaneously

addressing the immediate needs of the most vulnerable among us while advocating for a new way of being in the world. The other side of this crisis will require us to design an alternative social order derived from a prophetic imagination. We ought not long to go back to normal. This crisis makes it clear, our normal is unacceptable.

This moment in the life of our churches and communities is rife with uncertainty. Marshall Ganz observes that leadership is accepting responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty. At the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) we are cultivating a new generation of prophetic problem solvers to lead the church into this unprecedented moment. The educational mission of the ITC operates from the belief that “Education is the process by which a community builds its capacity to solve its problems and co-create its future.” Prophetic problem solvers are not fixated on the pulpit as the sole site of ministry. They are solutionists, led by the Spirit’s call to imagine co-create alternatives to the status quo. They are called toward the pursuit of what we desire, as much as they are active in resistance to what we oppose.

We will surely reckon with deep grief as we witness the indiscriminate toll this pandemic will take on human life. This is a good time to reorient. This crisis is exposing the fact that systems driven by profit motive alone are incapable of caring for life. Perhaps, this moment of social distancing will prompt an inward turn. Let us evaluate the illusions we have taken as laws of nature. See “the market” as an expression of our collective psyche, our own creation. If we choose, we can use our power to co-create conditions for life to flourish. This is an urgent moment. So, slow down. Allow this distance to facilitate re-connection to our true selves, our loved ones, all living beings and the Creator.

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MATTHEW WESLEY WILLIAMS is the Interim President for the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta.



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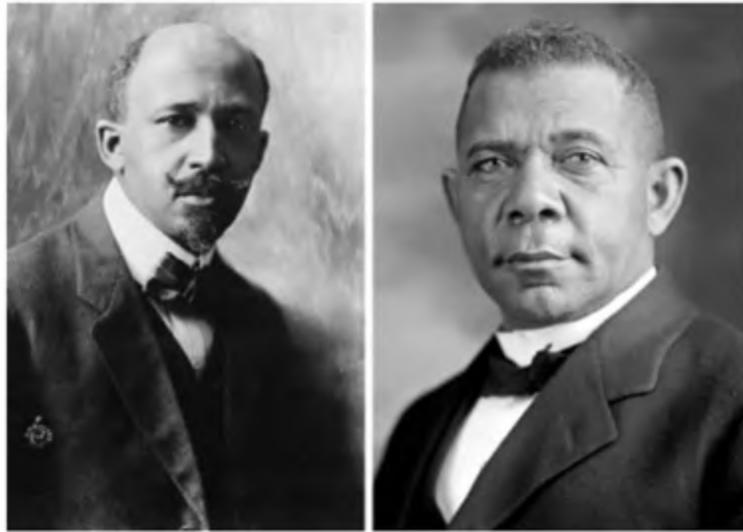


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W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington

The **HARD** Divide

BY OKEEBA JUBALO

If you are familiar with our history in America you will recall the battles of beliefs between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. Both men were very influential and important to our development as a people. I won't go into all the details of their differences of views about what was needed for the Black Man and Black Woman during the very turbulent times that followed the Reconstruction Era.

At the center of their disagreement was the question of what was the best career paths for us as a people. Du Bois believed we needed to focus on becoming educated professionals who also fought to secure our civil rights.

Black tradesmen and how their businesses are running or not running. A shortage of higher level thinking and professionalism keeps many of these small businesses stuck, simply turning their wheels year after year.

There is a hard divide between the groups of educated Blacks who are viewed as professionals and skilled Blacks who are viewed as tradesmen, laborers or domestics. After all of those years of debating between Washington and Du Bois we created two groups of Blacks who failed to work together to make Black America a sound place for future generations to flourish. One group has all of this

“There is a hard divide between the groups of educated who are viewed as professionals and skilled Blacks who are viewed as tradesmen, laborers or domestics.”

Washington felt that becoming tradesmen and laborers who were less focused on our civil rights would be a much better route for our advancement in America.

Over one hundred years later it is safe to say they were both right and wrong in certain ways. As we look at the current state of our communities it should be crystal clear that so many of our people are highly educated and yet underemployed or unemployed at the same time. Our civil rights as key contributors to this society have been reduced to some sort of sick punchline. Think about how many of your family members and friends have one degree after another, yet they aren't able to make ends meet. Then take a look at your local

education and professionalism that appears to be useless when solving our real issues, while the other group has tangible skills that can't be fully monetized because of a lack of a higher education, relationships and intentional roadblocks placed before them by America's racist economic system.

So how does that brief historical reference connect us as YBEs to 2020's state of our current economy and potential economic downturn? The answer is simple, the white man's recession is the Black Man's depression and unless we begin to look at things differently most of us will be wiped out and may never recover as Black entrepreneurs.

I would ask you to look for creative strategies to merge the two beliefs of Washington and Du Bois. Can you apply your education and professionalism to work with someone who is highly skilled as a tradesman, domestic or laborer? To take it a step further, are you extremely educated, yet you love working with your hands on a domestic or tradesmen level? Can you build a business around combining the two different beliefs of being educated and skilled?

As the economy begins to sputter and slow down it is very important for you to know how to capitalize from that downturn. How are your current relationships in your community? Do you have your digital branding in place for

you to start pursuing business outside of America? Can you use the white man's toxic racism as a means to create a thriving business within the white man's community? Can you do the same in your own community? Have you done any research on Black businesses that thrived during the Great Depression of 1929 or the Recession of 2007?

What are you doing to prepare your business to stay afloat and even thrive? I would recommend you sit down and make a list of the top 10 people within your circle who could benefit from your services. Also look at how you could

benefit from working with them. An exchange of invoices between you and those on your list may not be an option. How can you all work together to build a system to invoice others outside of your inner-circle? What would happen if all 10 of your connects formed a new business based on everyone's education, resources and skills?

As Blacks we tend to be afraid to work with other family members and friends. The white man has built a system of generational wealth by denying us access to their resources, along with our asinine refusal to work with each other. How much more of this do you need to see before our ships sink completely to the bottom of America? Honestly I have seen enough. We have what we need to thrive in a recessed or depressed economy, if we work together. Now is the time. •



OKEEBA JUBALO is an Atlanta-based community leader, painter and entrepreneur. Jubalo, best known as a visionary pioneer for the advancement of African American art and business.

The Duke of 18th & Vine

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Following is an excerpt from the forthcoming book by SCLC contributing writer Harold Michael Harvey. "The Duke of 18th & Vine: Bob Kendrick Talking Negro League Baseball" was written in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Negro Baseball Leagues in 1920. It will be released on May 15, 2020 by Cascade Publishing House.*

Bob Kendrick, at 57 years old, has the world on a string at 18th and Vine in Kansas City, Missouri—not to be confused with Kansas City, Kansas. From his office in the Negro League Baseball Museum, Kendrick preserves the rich legacy of the game of baseball when only the ball was white.

Kendrick is fond of describing himself as “A country boy from lil ole Crawfordville, Georgia.” It is a testament to his country upbringing and smarts that Kendrick rose from a tiny town of fewer than 600 people, 90 miles east of Atlanta, on the strength of a basketball scholarship to Parks College right outside of Kansas City, Missouri.

Kendrick grew up in rural America, where the “Golden Rule” is heard early and often by a baby born to God-fearing parents, usually preached before the child enters first grade.

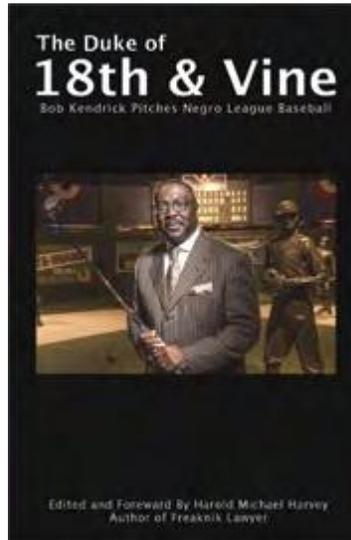
Before Kendrick, Crawfordville’s most celebrated hero was the man it was named for: William Harris Crawford. Crawford’s little Ville is the county seat in Taliaferro County. (That’s Taliaferro pronounced Tolliver in keeping with local tradition.)

In the 1800s, Crawford was a power broker in the early years of the American Republic. He served as the United States Senator from Georgia and served as Secretary of War, Secretary of the Treasury, and Minister to France.

In the 1816 Presidential election, Crawford ran for his party’s nomination (Democratic-Republican Party) against James Monroe. He came close to winning but lost the nomination by a vote of 65-54. Monroe went on to win the General Election.

Monroe ran unopposed in 1820, the only time in American history there has not been a contested presidential election. Then in 1824, Crawford sought the office of president again. This time he picked up 41 electoral college votes finishing third behind John Quincy Adams, who finished second behind Andrew Jackson. The eventual winner was Adams. He was selected by the United States House of Representatives when none of the candidates received a plurality of the electoral college votes. The 10th presidential election invoked the 12th Amendment for the first and only time to elect an American President.

For much of the first third of American history, Crawford had his hands on the controls, helping to steer



Book Cover

the new American government into uncharted waters.

By the time the new country was 72 years old, another southerner born in Crawfordville had established his mark on the American landscape. But instead of working to secure the general welfare of the United States, Alexander Hamilton Stephens, a United States Senator, the 50th Governor of Georgia, worked to divide the country. He answered the call of secession and became Jefferson Davis’ vice president under the Confederate flag. He held this post from 1861-1865.

Ninety-nine years after Stephens rise to the Vice Presidency of the Confederacy, Kendrick was born. Little did the tiny town of Crawfordville know at the time, but Kendrick would become a

necessary bridge healing a nation divided along racial lines.

He has in his soul, all that makes a natural griot.

Storytelling is his weapon of choice. His oral histories are the story of Negro League Baseball. Kendrick’s tales depict how a simple game played on a diamond with cowhide painted white and stitched together with red thread, and shaped in the form of a ball, is enshrined within the national psyche.

Coming from Crawfordville is nothing to sneeze at, despite how much Kendrick tries to downplay his origins. The community grew out of American exceptionalism. There is much to be proud of and a high standard to uphold. The history of Crawfordville, Georgia, is as American as apple pie, a pickup game of baseball on a Sunday afternoon, and simultaneously as racially unified and as racially divided as the red, white, and blue in the nation’s flag. Kendrick is a unique advocate who has in his soul the compassion and understanding to bridge the division within this country. •

HAROLD MICHAEL HARVEY is the author of *Freaknik Lawyer: A Memoir on the Craft of Resistance*. He is a Past President of the Gate City Bar Association. He is the recipient of Gate City’s R. E. Thomas Civil Rights Award, which he received for his pro bono representation of Black college students arrested during *Freaknik* celebrations in the mid to late 1990s. An avid public speaker contact him at hbarvey@haroldmichaelharvey.com.

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