

the **Stand** south side news

www.mysouthsidestand.com

Syracuse, NY

February 2011 issue 8 FREE

PARKER THE PIONEER

Ann Parker was one of
the first black women
on Syracuse radio

RACIAL PROFILING

It is a matter of perception: six-page special report

snowy mess

Unshoveled sidewalks
have become a cause
for concern

**Jeramie
White**
South Side native proves that education
is an alternative to the street life

CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY



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SEE LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR,
PAGE 3, ABOUT OUR NEW LOCATION
ASHLEY KANG: (315) 882-1054
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IN KEEPING WITH COMMUNITY STANDARDS.**SCHOOL AND YOUTH** | Read what parents and students say about unshoveled sidewalks as children trek in sloshy streets to get to school or the bus stop.**RACIAL PROFILING** | Check out a special six-page report about racial profiling from the perspectives of youth, local leaders and police. It's all a matter of perception.**FEATURES** | Meet Ann Parker, a pioneer in local radio, whose inspirational message for young people today is to go for their dreams — just like she did.**ENTERTAINMENT** | Get ready to celebrate Black History Month. Read about local events and a historical preservation exhibit, on display at the Onondaga Historical Association.**CHURCH** | Find out how the New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ is doing as it searches for a new home. The high cost of repairs forced the church to close its doors.**EDUCATION** | Read about Jeramie White, a South Side native who lived a "rough" life but found a way out through education. High school columnist Olivia Harrison tells his story.

■ Cover photography of Ann Parker by Mackenzie Reiss

**THE STAND
HAS A NEW HOME**

> The South Side Communication Center held its grand opening Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011. The center is located at 2331 S. Salina St. on Syracuse's South Side. The center is home to The Stand, the Southside Community Coalition and a community computer lab. On opening day, The Stand board member and secretary of the Southside Community Coalition, Shanteashia Harris El, enjoys a warm cup of tea and greets South Side residents. For details about the timing of The Stand's move to its new location, see the Letter from the Director on Page 3. | Steve Davis, Staff Photo

CALENDAR | FEBRUARY**What:** Valentine's Christian Ball**When:** 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 11**Where:** Payton Memorial Temple COGIC,
1816 Midland Ave.**Cost:** Donation of \$10 for ages 13 and older;
\$5 for ages 12 and younger**More details:** Semi-formal event will feature
food and Christian music by DJ Wiz from
Houston, Texas**More Info.:** Call (315) 935-6820, (315)
214-8893 or (607) 761-8808**What:** "Black Girls Rock!"**When:** 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 19**Where:** Beauchamp Branch Library,
2111 S. Salina St.**Cost:** Free**More details:** Discussions will focus on
self-empowerment, goal setting, image control
and the importance of historical knowledge
and self-awareness. Event facilitated by
Ashley Neal and Chy'na Nellon**More Info.:** Call (315) 435-3395

Much has happened over the past two months. Our biggest news: The Stand is moving from the South Side Innovation Center, 2610 S. Salina St., Suite No. 6, to a new home in the South Side Communication Center, 2331 S. Salina St. The Stand shares the space with the Southside Community Coalition and a community computer lab. This move allows our project to reach out to the community. Depending on when you read this, we may be in one place or the other as we are in the process of moving. For now, the best way to contact us is at Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com or (315) 882-1054. We will update you via our website and in The Stand's March issue.



The Stand also welcomed two board members: Yolanda Beckon and Monica Richardson. Read about them, below, and why they got involved.

In December, The Stand's founder, professor Steve Davis, along with professor Seth Gitner and I joined nine Syracuse University journalism students (who wrote for The Stand last fall) on a global reporting experience to South Africa. The video stories collected during six days in Grahamstown will be featured alongside video profiles of local South Side residents. The site is currently in development.

We also are planning journalism workshops reserved for community members who are serious about contributing articles to the paper. The first journalism lesson will be held at the end of February. Interested? Contact me at Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com.

Now, turn the pages and enjoy the stories that have been written for you.

Ashley Kang

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing for REACH CNY in response to "Words of Wisdom: Catholic Charities aims to educate Hispanic girls on teen pregnancy."

REACH CNY collaborates with Latinamigas through our Syracuse Community Services Project. Although REACH believes in comprehensive sex education, we believe that successful teen pregnancy prevention can and should include varied philosophies and approaches. Thank you for recognizing Conchita Mazorra and this valuable program.

While abstinence from sexual activity is an important option for young people, REACH would like to clarify that educating teens about condom use and effectiveness does not promote sexual activity. Numerous studies have shown that youth who participate in programs that make condoms available and/or give accurate information about birth control (including condoms) have either no increase in sexual behavior or actually decrease or delay sexual activity. If you would like to learn more, please contact REACH CNY at 424-0009, or jarras@reachcny.org or ebortel@reachcny.org

Sincerely,

Jane Arras

Adolescent Pregnancy
Prevention Program Manager



YOLANDA L. BECKON

Yolanda is a native of Syracuse and currently a student at University College, located at Syracuse University. She graduated as valedictorian from Bryant and Stratton College in 2003 with an associate degree in business management and was the first student at Bryant and Stratton to have an article published in The Post-Standard.

Yolanda currently works for Syracuse Housing Authority where she advocates for low-income families, under the Human Services Department.

In her efforts to see teenagers in Syracuse Housing Authority have the opportunities to go to college or Job Corps, Yolanda has networks with On Point for College. One idea Yolanda has for The Stand is to see a column she would call "Whacky Words," which would introduce SAT words to the community to broaden their vocabulary.

During her spare time, Yolanda enjoys volunteering as a dance instructor. She also loves to spend time with her children and family.



MONICA RICHARDSON

Monica, a former mental health counselor, is currently the youth development program coordinator for Prevention Network, where she actively engages the community-at-large to cultivate support and opportunities for young people.

Monica has spent her professional career training youth and adults in core competency areas, such as communication, self-awareness and resiliency. Monica is passionate about education and works tirelessly to eradicate social and emotional barriers that can hinder the success of today's youth; she holds a master's degree in psychology and specializes in "at-risk" populations. Monica is a firm believer that "people are destroyed because of lack of knowledge."

When she isn't visiting her family in Buffalo, in her spare time, she enjoys reading, baking, writing poetry and attending movies and theater.

Monica would like to see The Stand publish poetry and recipe submissions, as well as articles written and developed by youth.

SNOW AND BUSINESS

At the Hair Did Barbershop at 1200 South Ave., apprentice Jobie Patterson sees business drop more than 50 percent when it snows.

"The sooner it passes by, the better it is for business," said Patterson, who sees more than 30 customers daily when the weather is good.

This is a completely different story for Thomas Hayward, of Syracuse.

In early 2010, Hayward bought a \$3,000 snowplow attachment for his truck so he could make extra money. On Dec. 4, he plowed more than 30 properties for \$10 to \$15 each.

"I've been looking for the snow," Hayward said in the middle of December's snowy onslaught. "It was a good investment. I made the money back already."

SYRACUSE SNOWFALL

SEASON TOTALS

2004-05: 136.2 inches

2005-06: 124.6 inches

2006-07: 140.2 inches

2007-08: 109.1 inches

2008-09: 149.6 inches

2009-10: 106.3 inches

**December 2010 alone:
72.8 inches**

A SNOWY MESS

Record snowfall, unshoveled walks cause safety problems for students



> Dennis Rice, 11, once walked five blocks through 8 inches of snow to get to school. | Fernando Alfonso III, Staff Photo

By | Fernando Alfonso III
Urban Affairs reporter

Students who walk to school describe their frustration with wet socks and snowy sidewalks

Snow-covered sidewalks in Syracuse are more than just slippery surfaces — they're a slippery subject.

In 1964 a city ordinance that fined persons or businesses not clearing their snow-covered sidewalks was repealed, essentially leaving the police with tools "with no teeth," said Syracuse police Sgt. Gary Bulinski.

Sidewalk complaints are dealt with by the community-policing unit, whose officers will try to contact people or businesses when snow piles up, Bulinski said. The police can detail the civil liabilities involved if someone is injured in the snow, but no ticket or written citation is given out, said Bulinski, who hopes that citizens will do the right thing.

"It's a matter of common courtesy for your neighbors and people in your community. It would be beneficial if they cleaned their sidewalks," Bulinski said. "All the police can do is work with whatever law is on the books."

The city of Syracuse is evaluating the situation and looking at ways to improve things, said Lindsay McCluskey, press secretary for Mayor Stephanie Miner. In the meantime, many students on the South Side are forced off the sidewalks and into the streets when they walk to and from school.

"The unfortunate reality, if someone hasn't cleared



> Thomas Hayward, of Syracuse, in front of his truck during the Dec. 4 snowstorm. | Fernando Alfonso III, Staff Photo

their walk, it is almost unpassable. You have to walk in the street," said Mike Henesey, Syracuse City School District spokesman. "Student safety is almost of the utmost importance to the school district. And when students have to walk in the street versus being on the sidewalk, it's an unsafe situation."

In the month of December alone, Syracuse received 72.8 inches of snow. This includes a four-day, lake effect snowfall that set a record of 37 inches of snow from Dec. 5-8, said Tom Kines, senior meteorologist at Accuweather.

This is not good news for Dennis Rice, 11, a sixth-grader at Danforth Magnet School who walked five blocks or so through 8 inches of snow to get to school Dec. 4.

"I stomp off" and I wait in the auditorium to dry off," Rice said about how he deals with the snow once he gets to school. "It's cold."

Charles Jennings, 15, and Kyseen Robinson, 15, are both students at the Institute for Technology at Syracuse Central. Like Rice, both students must contend with the snow on their journey to and from the bus stop, which is a couple of blocks from home and usually takes about 10 minutes, Jennings said.

The sidewalks are usually so packed with snow it's easier to walk in the street, said Jennings, who brings an extra pair of socks to school when the weather gets bad.

"The sidewalks are terrible," Jennings said. "The snow goes in your shoes. It adds about 10 more minutes. I'm wet up to my knees, sometimes."

SWITCHING SCHOOLS

By | Beckie Strum
Urban Affairs reporter

Concerns are raised that some students will lose mentors and won't adapt to unfamiliar places

The Rev. Roosevelt Baums sat dry-eyed when the Syracuse school board voted to shut down two longtime schools, Elmwood Elementary and Bellevue Middle School Academy, on Jan. 21.

But as a handful of parents wept and embraced in a room at district headquarters, Baums warned that the closings will harm the children, families and communities of the South Side and Near West Side. "You see the emotion. They are very much hurt," said Baums, a pastor at James Street United Methodist Church.

In a 4-3 vote, the school board narrowly decided to close the South Side elementary school at 1728 South Ave. and a middle school at 1607 South Geddes St. The decision will allow the district to move forward with long-delayed construction plans. But the closings will likely exacerbate the neighborhood members' distrust in city politics, said Monique Wright-Williams, a board member who voted against the closings.

"We are doing something that is further deepening the chasm of mistrust that this community has for us, that we have their best interests at heart," she said.

Wright-Williams said her peers had rushed the decision-making process. Had the families been given time to review the facts, the distress and anger among the dozen or so families at the meeting might have been diminished, Wright-Williams said.

But Richard Strong, the board's president, said the closings will create temporary spaces while other schools undergo necessary and overdue renovations. The closings mean reshuffling the students into new schools, farther from home and with an unfamiliar staff.

Baums, who also works as a child psychologist, worries about children who act out or disrupt class. A new environment will likely make behavioral issues worse, he said. "By the time I get their behavior straightened out, the next day they're acting up again," Baums said. "The district is going to have a tough time with the behavior of these children by displacing them."

Baums listed a handful of social workers he believes provide a strong — and specifically black — adult role model. There's no guarantee these mentors will travel with the children to their new schools.

And many students at Elmwood and Bellevue not only walk to and from school but stay at homes of nearby relatives before their parents or guardians return from work. Now in jeopardy, "that arrangement means a lot to working parents," he said.

PARENTS SPEAK OUT

Elmwood parent **Eliza Sampson** says the rush to create swing space unfairly and unnecessarily targeted the South Side, as plans to renovate the city schools have been in the works for years.

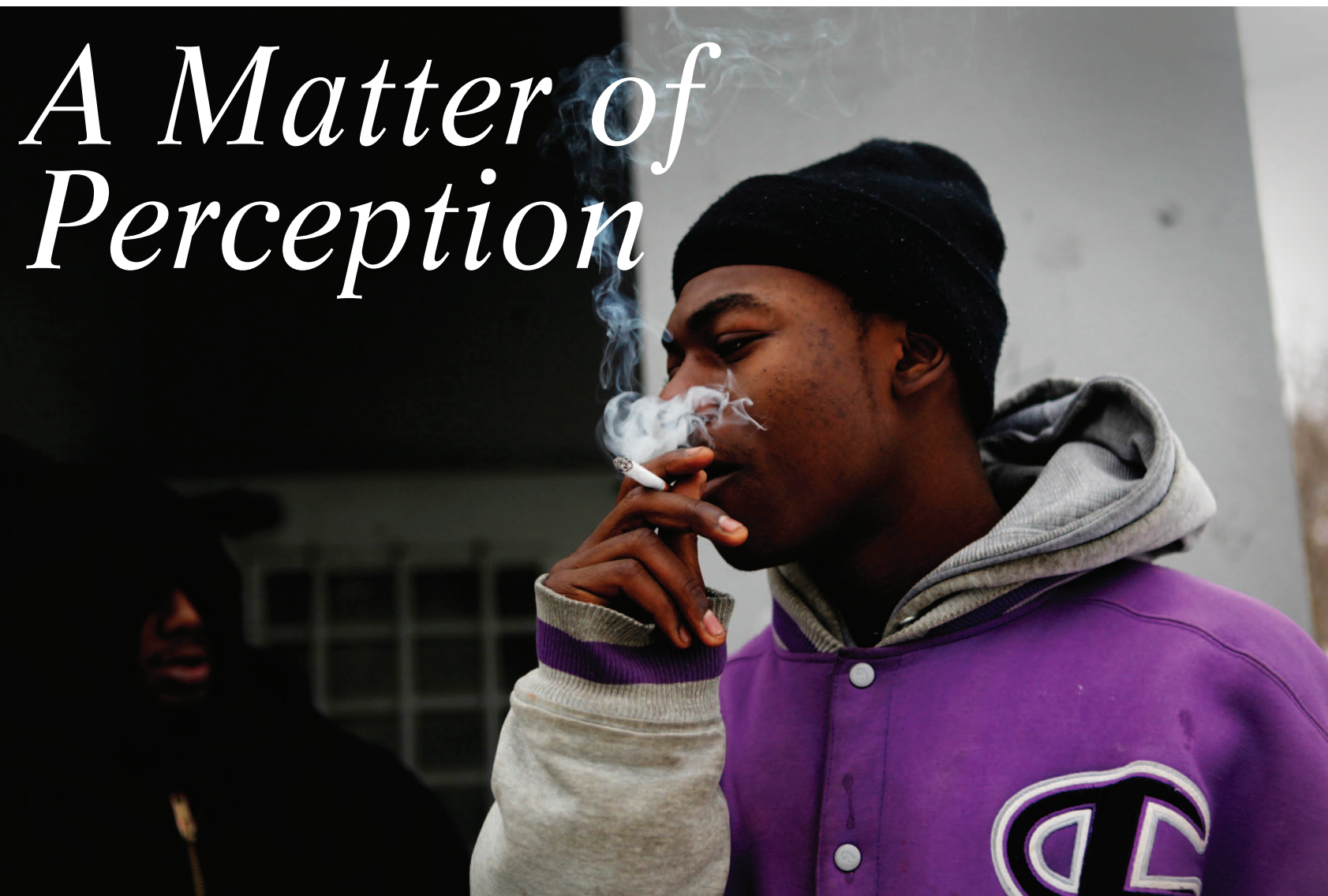
"I don't think the board understands that it's not just about the buildings."

Through tears, Sampson said if the city had planned better years ago, the closings would never have been necessary.

Another parent said the closings are enough for her to move out of the district and away from the chaos entirely.



A Matter of Perception



> Tyquan Cannon smokes a cigarette outside the Midland Discount Market on Midland Avenue. Residents call the shop the “Hood Store.” | Mackenzie Reiss, Staff Photo

By | Christine Mehta
Urban Affairs reporter

South Side youth say they're unfairly judged; police are looking for trust, cooperation in city

Tyquan Cannon and his brother, Tyrell, say they were walking from their YouthBuild orientation — their books under their arms — when they found themselves thrown against the side of a car by two detectives from the Syracuse Police Department.

“Personally, I think it was rude and disrespectful,” said Tyquan Cannon, 21. “We told them where we came from, and I had my books and stuff in my hand so it wasn’t like we was just sitting on the corner selling something.”

The two detectives asked the Cannon brothers whether warrants had been issued for their arrest, and finally let them go after calling in to confirm the brothers’ records were clean.

“People think that the police don’t racial profile? Tell them to put a hoodie on and come down in the neighborhood. I guarantee they’ll get stopped,” said Tyrell

Cannon, 23.

The two brothers shared their story at a YouthBuild meeting Dec. 10. The Cannons join a group of 29 young black men and women between the ages of 16 and 24 at the Sidney Johnson Vocational Center on East Genesee Street every Friday morning to talk about their lives, their struggles, and how to become successful. YouthBuild is a program run by Jubilee Homes; it provides at-risk people with the opportunity to earn a GED while learning a trade skill, such as construction.

All 29 come to the program under challenging circumstances — a history of drugs, violence or unstable homes — but are determined to change their lives. However, the past can’t be erased, they said, especially with the police. They are familiar with the police who patrol the South Side, even though many of the group members do not have criminal records.

“The police feel that everybody in that neighborhood is a thug,” said Jahlmiria Jones, 20.

Most of the YouthBuild members said they had been stopped at least once, and a few reported extensive

experience with the police, even noting which officers were the “meanest” and “out to get you,” and which ones were fair.

“It’s not only the regular cops, it’s the detectives that will get you. The ones that are unmarked and undercover, they’re looking to put somebody in jail. If you’re white, they leave you alone. If you’re black, they ask where you can get a gun and drugs,” Jones said.

In November, the results of two studies on racial profiling were released; researchers said neither confirmed or ruled out racial profiling in Syracuse. Still, one study did say African-Americans were more than twice as likely to be stopped by police as white individuals.

Racial profiling, officials and residents alike say, seems to be as much a matter of perception and personal experience.

South Side residents, community organizers and the police department say that in light of recent shootings, concerns about police behavior have been eclipsed by a need to stem the violence. There were more than 225 shootings between January 2010 and mid-December of last year alone, including the death of 20-month-old Rashaad Walker Jr., a toddler killed during a street shooting in November.

While several YouthBuild members told stories of police stopping them because of their race or their appearance, others said the police were just doing their jobs.

Derrick Thomas, the class president of YouthBuild, said he feels the police do target people who are black, but not just because of that.

“It’s more your appearance and how you carry yourself in the streets,” he said. “If you look like you’re getting ready to cause trouble, that’s when the police judge you. Black people are dominant in the violence on the streets. It’s not like it takes a rocket scientist to figure out that it’s more black people who are doing the crime.”

Thomas, 22, grew up with his grandmother until she died when he was 16. He had more leadership and discipline at home than many kids on the streets. He went to Faith Heritage High School, a private school, until he was a junior, but then transferred to Corcoran High School when he moved into his father’s house and financing private school became impossible. With a less challenging workload, less discipline, and surrounded by his childhood friends who grew up with him on the South Side, Thomas said he began to lose focus and started smoking weed. He dropped out of high school.

“I was a knucklehead,” he said. “I never got fully in the gang thing, but I stopped caring about what was important.”

Based on his experience on the street, he said racial profiling does happen but only with certain officers. He said a bigger issue is the rise in crime in his neighborhood.

“It used to be cool in the streets, but now there’s nothing out there. ... If you just look at somebody wrong, they’re ready to shoot you. Every kid now, they all feel the same, and some of them only get involved in the streets because they want to be cool or have this fame.”

However, the rise in crime confuses Thomas.

“When I was out there in the streets, it was easier to do stuff. Now, the police are everywhere. I don’t understand how more and more things are going on. Now somebody gets shot and the police are out here, but it’s like they don’t care.”

Thomas has two sons, 2 years old and 9 months.

“That baby (Rashaad Walker Jr.) was shot right outside my house,” he said, pointing out the window. “That could have been one of my kids.”

THE STREETS

The day after the Dec. 10 YouthBuild meeting, Tyquan Cannon left his house in the afternoon and headed around the corner to Midland Discount Market on Midland Avenue, or as the South Side residents call it, the “Hood Store,” a corner convenience store.

“This block is hot,” Cannon said. “The police say that a block is ‘hot’ when you got groups of guys hanging out on the corners like that one up there,” he said, indicating a group of black youths tossing snowballs at each other outside the “Hood Store.”

Loitering outside the store, a group of 10 or more young black men looked up and greeted Cannon with shouts of “What’s up, brother?” and “What you doing, man?”

“I know most everybody around here,” Cannon said.

A lifelong resident of Syracuse’s South Side, Cannon “ran the streets” until a gun was pulled on him. He was not shot, but he said the scare inspired him to get off the streets and earn his GED. He applied for YouthBuild but was rejected; he was accepted the second time. “I was one of those ones that just kept on fighting,” he said.

As he approached the group hanging out by the store, he said such groups are what make the police suspicious.

One young man in the group, referring to himself as “Fizz,” said he “hated the police.” He recently moved from Flint, Mich., to Syracuse, and he said the crime and the police’s behavior was much worse on the streets of Syracuse than in Michigan. “They profile too much. If you’re wearing certain clothes, they’re going to be stopping you for certain. I know we come off rough, but we got it hard. Nobody out here got it sweet. We got nowhere to live, nowhere to be. I slept in the park last night.”

A fellow member of the group chimed in.

“Yeah, I think they (the police) call us, what was it? Oh, a ‘menace to society,’” said Rick Chandler, a resident of the South Side.

Inside the store, the shop owner glanced outside nervously at the large group of young men blocking the door. Ali Magid Saleh, the owner, opened the discount store in 2002 after leaving his home country of Yemen for the United States in 1995. He lives on the South Side but says he didn’t realize it was “a rough neighborhood.”

“They make everybody nervous,” he said, gesturing

PERSONAL TRAGEDY

Though some South Side residents say they don’t trust the police, Lyla Wingate wants to see a closer relationship between residents and police.

Wingate is the aunt of Rashaad Walker Jr., a 20-month-old toddler who was shot and killed on Nov. 28 in a gang-related incident.

In 17 years, Wingate said she has experienced nine deaths in her family related to gun violence, including her son in 2002. “I’m tired of it,” she said.

Syracuse Police Department Chief Frank Fowler attended Walker’s funeral. Fowler announced in November that he would form committees of South Side residents to help build trust between the department and the community.

IN THIS SERIES

This racial profiling series showcases the South Side community reacting to crime, how police handle it, and how to move forward.

- Check out an overview, starting on Page 8
- Q&A with leaders in the community, Pages 8-9
- What the two racial profiling studies found, Page 10

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DETAILED OVERVIEW

Racial Profiling: “Refers to the discriminatory practice by law enforcement officials of targeting individuals for suspicion of crime based on the individual’s race, ethnicity, religion or national origin.”

— American Civil Liberties Union

In 2010, Syracuse reeled from a steep rise in violent crime. The Syracuse Police Department reported that 227 shootings occurred in the city between January and November 2010.

“We just need to let the police do their work and throw our support behind them to stop this from happening,” Mary Nelson, the director of the Mary Nelson Youth Center, said at a “Stop the Violence” meeting Dec. 4, 2010.

However, some residents in the audience that day, and youth all over the city, wouldn’t agree with Nelson. They say police target them based on their race, their manner of dress, or simply for standing on street corners.

“If you’re black, wearing a long white T-shirt, blue jeans, and a hoodie, or if you’re driving a flashy car that they don’t think you can afford, the police are going to stop you for certain,” Tyrell Cannon, a 23-year-old South Side

Continued on next page

SOUTH SIDE VOICES

Community disagrees on racial profiling, relations with police



> South Side resident Rick Chandler, right, chats with a friend who calls himself “Fizz.” | Mackenzie Reiss, Staff Photo

By | Christine Mehta
Urban Affairs reporter

Some community members say profiling doesn’t exist; others call police ‘badge heavy’

PASTOR JONATHAN STEPHENS

Pastor Stephens has been the pastor at Fountain of Life Church at 700 South Ave. for 23 years. He operated his own private security company, the Stephens Security Task Force, for 15 years. He is head of security for western New York’s First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, the equivalent of a county within the nondenominational church system.

Q: Do you think Syracuse police officers practice racial profiling?

A: “You know, racial profiling is not as overt as it was. It’s more of a tendency and a problem that lies with guys (officers) that have been raised up outside of Syracuse, particularly white gentlemen. The only thing they know about the inner city is what they hear on the

news. They come here with the attitude like ‘I’m going to change that.’ The white guy doesn’t know anything about the city except what he hears, so really, he actually thinks he’s contributing to the betterment of the neighborhood. We call it being ‘badge-heavy.’ ”

(Stephens encourages youth who have committed crimes to turn themselves in to him if they have a warrant out for their arrest.)

“While the youth don’t trust the police, one thing black people trust is their pastor. I make sure that if a person turns themselves in to me, that he’s allowed to get arrested but with some dignity, and that’s why the kids want to turn themselves in to me.”

PASTOR BURNELL REID

Pastor Reid has been the pastor at Refuge Tabernacle for 16 years. He grew up in various places around Erie, Pa., and Niagara Falls. He has lived on Syracuse’s South Side for 45 years.

Q: Do you think racial profiling exists?

A: “Racial profiling? There’s no way to say no or

yes. When you talk to someone my age, 63, with what we've seen, I would say no, but I come through a period when schools were segregated, actual racism. Today it's not so drastic, but if you talk to my children, they would say yes, racial profiling exists."

Q: What would make your kids say that racial profiling exists?

A: "We see a lot of officers being 'badge-heavy,' meaning that these police officers come into the community not knowing anything about the inner city except what they see on TV and think that they're going to change things. That's one of the problems, but the kids here also need to realize that police officers are human, too. They're scared also. They have the mentality of going forth and doing what they have to do, but they want to go home in the end also. Every time they make a stop they put their life in jeopardy and have to protect themselves."

MARY NELSON

A community activist and director of the Mary Nelson Youth Center, Nelson has been spearheading the recent community grassroots movement to "Stop the Violence" in Syracuse.

Q: What do you think of the police? Do you think that racial profiling still exists?

A: "I never had a problem with the police. With so much going on in our community, I want them doing roadblocks and taking whatever measure necessary. If you're doing the right thing, you don't have anything to worry about. I absolutely do not believe that racial profiling exists. We need to throw our support behind the police department to try and put a stop to this violence."

WALT DIXIE

Dixie is the executive director of Jubilee Homes, leader of the local chapter of the National Action Network, and lifetime local activist. He is a native of Syracuse.

Q: Does racial profiling exist in the community?

A: "If you ask the community, they perceive that racial profiling does exist. It happens where fights and crime break out, and it's not just Syracuse. I've talked to the National Action Network in New York City and they say the same thing. Stopping people based on a profile is a tool the police use for prevention, but at the end of the day it makes it kind of hard to live in an urban setting, where there are more black people versus like the Irish neighborhood, where there hasn't been a spike in crime. But I think there is a bigger question now: crimes and shootings. There are too many guns on the street, too many young people not working ... so really it cuts both ways."

Q: What is the communication like between the police department and the community? How does the community view the police?

A: "Well, I think it would be different with a different chief, but Fowler, he's a person of color. He knows the community and has a lot of goodwill. People are willing to trust him. You have to have a good chief with the determination to get to the point of having conversations between the residents and the police, because today, officers do cross the line at times."

Q: What can be done about the rise in crime over the past year?

A: "The most important point is giving young men and women a way to be constructive in what they can do. At the end of the day from all sides of town, one thing is not going to stop the violence, but it's about building kids' character and giving them a sense of purpose if they're treated the right way. I think it would be great if kids can prevent crime themselves. We need to give them the leadership and support they need."



> Police officer is called to deal with troublesome customer at a local corner store. | Mackenzie Reiss, Staff Photo

Continued from previous page

resident, said in an interview.

The Syracuse Common Council released a study Nov. 15, 2010, assessing whether Syracuse police officers treated citizens differently based on their race. The study used data collected from the police department from 2006 to 2009, including the number of stops, searches and frisks, and arrests made by police officers in Syracuse. The study found that blacks were stopped, frisked and searched more than twice as often as whites, but arrested less often. Syracuse University economics professor William Horraces, who co-authored the study, said in an interview that it doesn't matter how many times blacks are stopped by the police, but whether they are arrested or ticketed as a result.

"It's not so much the fact that blacks are stopped twice as often as whites, that is irrelevant," Horraces said.

In a neighborhood where mostly blacks live, it is inevitable that there will be more blacks stopped, Horraces said. But the arrest rates between black and whites should be equal. For example, if 1,000 blacks were stopped in Syracuse last month, and 20 percent of them arrested or ticketed, and 200 whites

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ON THE SIDE

DETAILED OVERVIEW

Continued from Page 9

were stopped in Syracuse last month and 20 percent of them were also arrested or ticketed, there would be no indication of racial bias.

But that is not the case in Syracuse, Horrace said.

“By and large, whites are arrested more frequently. In an ideal world, the frequency of arrests should be equal. ... If you’re living in a society where the police are not using race as a basis for their behavior, you would see that the arrest rates are the same (for both whites and blacks),” Horrace said.

Syracuse is not an ideal world. In both black and white neighborhoods, the arrest rate for blacks, particularly for vehicle traffic stops in all neighborhoods, is lower than the white arrest rate. According to the study’s authors, Horrace and University of Akron professor Shawn Rohlin, stopping an individual without making an arrest suggests that the police officer may have made a stop without reasonable cause, and perhaps because of racial bias.

The police chief and members of the South Side community have pointed out that blacks commit a large percentage of the crime

Continued on next page

WHAT STUDIES SAY

By | Christine Mehta
Urban Affairs reporter

One study says blacks and whites are treated differently; the other study says they are not

On Nov. 15, the Syracuse Police Department and the Syracuse Common Council listened to researchers present their findings on racial profiling in the city of Syracuse.

One study, titled the “City of Syracuse Police-Citizen Encounter Study,” was commissioned by the Syracuse Common Council and conducted by two economists — William C. Horrace of Syracuse University and Shawn Rohlin of the University of Akron. The researchers found evidence that police officers treat individuals differently based on race, but they were emphatic that it is not necessarily evidence of racial profiling. The study cost the city \$15,000 and used data collected from 2006 to 2009.

The John F. Finn Institute for Public Safety, a nonprofit research organization specializing in public safety and security, volunteered to conduct a parallel study on behalf of the Syracuse Police Department. The institute used the same data used by Horrace and Rohlin, but employed a different approach, called the “Veil of Darkness” method, which is based on the assumption that police officers cannot determine the race of the person driving a vehicle after dark. The institute found no evidence of racial profiling.

According to both sets of researchers, racial profiling cannot be conclusively proven from a study alone.

CITY OF SYRACUSE POLICE-CITIZEN ENCOUNTER STUDY

The Syracuse Common Council study asks: What happens to people after they are stopped by the police? Are they treated differently depending on race?

Yes, blacks and whites in Syracuse are treated differently by police officers after a stop, the report found. However, Horrace and Rohlin say that the different treatment doesn’t mean racial profiling necessarily exists.

The study indicates, they said, “that there is differential treatment by race for police-citizen encounters in the city of Syracuse. ... It appears that not only does race matter in police behavior, but also age and context.”

However, emphasizing that racial profiling is unlikely to be conclusively proven from a study, Horrace said: “We have to combine 100,000 observations to make broad generalizations. The problem with analyzing behaviors is that it doesn’t get at specific behaviors and incidents. ... We don’t know if Officer X hates blacks. We will never know that unless we interview him and he confesses. As I said, identifying bias is a very difficult process.”

Horrace and Rohlin limited their study to how likely

a citizen was to be arrested, frisked, or searched after being stopped. They used information from stops police officers made while on patrol, not when they were dispatched, or called to respond to a crime or dangerous situation.

FINDINGS:

- Citywide, blacks were stopped, frisked and searched more than twice as often as whites.
- In the highest crime areas, blacks were arrested only slightly more often than whites (84.7 percent of the time versus 84.5 percent, a difference of just 0.18 of a percentage point), indicating that police officers practice good judgment when stopping people in high-crime areas. However, in the lowest-crime areas, blacks were only arrested 76.9 percent of the time after being stopped, while whites were arrested 90.48 percent of the time, numbers that could indicate racial profiling in low-crime areas, according to Horrace.
- Whites driving cars in black neighborhoods were stopped more often without arrest/ticket than blacks in black neighborhoods. White pedestrians in black neighborhoods were stopped less often than blacks.
- Overall, the study found that in Syracuse, whites were stopped and arrested or ticketed 94 percent of the time, blacks 91 percent, and Hispanics 89 percent. Horrace said that fewer arrests but more frisks and searches indicate that police officers may be stopping black citizens in low-crime neighborhoods based on factors other than criminal activity.

STOPS BY SYRACUSE POLICE, 2006-2009 JOHN F. FINN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

The study presented by the Syracuse Police Department asks: Who is stopped by police officers in the first place?

The John F. Finn Institute for Public Safety volunteered to do the work at no cost for the Syracuse Police Department. It used the same set of data as the city’s study. Institute researcher Robert E. Worden presented the findings.

Using the Veil of Darkness method, the researchers compared the number of traffic-only stops made before and after dark. The study excluded non-traffic stops. If more blacks were stopped during the day than at night, then there would be an indication of racial profiling. However, if the same number or fewer blacks were stopped after dark, then there would be no evidence.

FINDINGS:

- The likelihood that blacks would be stopped during daytime or nighttime was the same.
- During the “inter-twilight” period defined by the Institute, between 5 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., blacks were stopped at approximately the same rate as during both the night and daytimes.

Continued from Page 7

to the group laughing and smoking cigarettes outside his door. “They’re selling all kinds of drugs. They break into many cars in the parking lot. Anybody that is not from the hood, they rob them. I call the police many times.”

As of December 2010, Syracuse police officers made 43,089 arrests in the city of Syracuse, 26,841 of them African-Americans (or 62 percent). As of 2009, less than a third of the population in the city of Syracuse was African-American; more than 60 percent was white.

Over the same time, 839 felonies were committed on the South Side alone, according to neighborhood statistics on the police department’s website. The South Side neighborhood is home to more than 21,000 people, approximately 68.8 percent of whom are black, according to the newly released Census data.

Police Chief Frank Fowler said he deploys police by the data. If a neighborhood has a high crime rate, he sends more officers, regardless of its racial demographic. In the first six months of 2010, 91 percent of shooting suspects and 63 percent of assault suspects were black.

John Robertson, who has worked in various retail stores on the South Side for 20 years, said there is no shortage of police officers, but they are impeded by residents who won’t cooperate when crimes occur. Robertson calls the police to deal with troublesome customers at the store where he works on the South Side.

“The police have a very tough time. No one around here trusts the police,” Robertson said.

Robertson grew up in the suburbs of Syracuse. He lived on the South Side for nine years before moving back to the suburbs eight months ago.

“In the years I’ve lived here, things are not getting better; they’re getting worse. The police are getting blamed for it but they are doing an overwhelming job.”

THE POLICE

Gary Bulinski, a sergeant with the anti-crime section in the Syracuse Police Department, said he does not expect youth living on the South Side to fully understand how the police work.

In response to complaints that police officers stop individuals based on what they are wearing, their race, or simply because they “fit a certain description,” Bulinski said officers do stop residents walking the streets when police are investigating a crime.

Members of YouthBuild said that being black, wearing a hooded sweatshirt and blue jeans increased the possibility of being stopped. Bulinski acknowledged that if individuals meet the description of a suspect, officers will stop them and question them, even in the absence of criminal activity.

“In the summertime, the majority of youngsters are wearing blue jeans and a white T-shirt. If we get a description of a suspect saying he’s a black male, wearing blue jeans and a T-shirt, we’re going to stop and check out anyone that meets that description,” he said.

Bulinski said cooperation from the community is key in reducing crime. “I’m not sure what else we can do except what’s already been done. The community can approach us, and we do have more citizens cooperating and letting us know what’s going on in the neighborhood. We’re hoping that continues to grow,” he said.

“The only ones who should fear us are the ones committing crime.”

Continued from previous page

in Syracuse. Chief Fowler said in a Public Safety committee meeting in November that the number of stops would continue to rise in black neighborhoods because he “sends officers to where the crime is.”

“The way I deploy my police personnel is data-driven,” Fowler said. While acknowledging that disparate treatment by race exists, he emphasized that he sends more police officers to high-crime areas, which happen to include the highest percentage of black residents. He said that from Jan. 1 to June 13, 2010, black people represented 91 percent of shooting suspects and 78 percent of shooting victims in Syracuse.

Derrick Thomas, 22, who lives on the South Side, said there were many more police officers patrolling in the neighborhood than in previous years.

“I don’t understand how there can be more crime. There are police cars on every corner, but it’s like they don’t care,” Thomas said.

The attitude of Thomas and other youths from the South Side highlights the challenge of getting a handle on violent crime in the city’s neighborhoods where many blacks live. They are willing to cooperate with the police to stop crime, they said, but they are not willing to trust.



> Sgt. Gary Bulinski, of the Syracuse Police Department, poses at the Midland / Colvin corner. | Mitchell Franz, Staff Photo

ON THE SIDE

WORDS TO LIVE BY

ACHIEVE GOALS:

“Get serious with somebody after you achieve your goal, because if you get too serious, you might not finish your goal.”

NEVER GIVE UP:

“Keep instilling in yourself that you are going for the gold that you started for, ’cause I tell you, you can get mighty discouraged and quit. Don’t satisfy that.”

FIND SUCCESS:

“I was successful because I loved what I was doing.”

ENJOY IT:

“If you have a goal that you’re trying to achieve, you become the master in every thought, at every chance you get, to do what you’re trying to achieve. Master it, know that you have it, know that you can do it, enjoy it.”

PARKER THE PIONEER

Ann Parker was one of the first black women on Syracuse radio



> Ann Parker began her career on her pastor’s radio show, which aired Sunday mornings. | Mackenzie Reiss, Staff Photo

By | Brandi Kellam
Urban Affairs reporter

Ann Parker began her career in radio at a time when there were no spots on the air for women

Ann Parker perches on the edge of the red couch in her living room, leaning close — inches from her visitor’s face. Her eyes narrow. She leans in, closer still. It seems their noses might touch. Her eyes water. Is she going to cry, or curse? Now, her visitor — at first engaged — pulls back, concerned, uncomfortable, even a little scared.

Ann Parker speaks. But this is no tongue-lashing. She wants to inspire her visitor, not scare the devil out of her.

“Never doubt you. Always let you know that you can do it, and be willing to try. ... Anything you want in this life you can accomplish because you’re speaking to someone that did this,” she said.

A few years ago, Parker was on the radio. And while she no longer has a forum to deliver her message to scores of listeners, she still speaks with emotion about

opportunity and success to any person she meets, friend or stranger.

Parker reaches out to everyone — whether it’s someone she meets at the Valley Worship Food Pantry or the Dunbar Center, or an SU student on that red couch who aspires to make a difference in the broadcast industry, as Parker herself did years ago.

Parker, it seems, has never really abandoned her audience, gone “off the air.” She speaks with such sincerity and passion that you would think she was still speaking straight into a microphone.

HER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Parker was one of the first black women to be a radio announcer in Syracuse. She began her career at WOLF, making announcements. There were no spots on the air for women at that time, so she had to sneak in on the heels of her church pastor. It wasn’t an easy ride.

“I started announcing in the church, and from the church I started announcing at the studio.”

There, she realized that being on the air was her destiny.

“I started to go to the radio station with the pastor. He had a Sunday morning program, so I started to go there, and when he didn’t come I would go there and do the show, so I liked it and so I stayed at it.”

Parker recalls the many struggles she faced as a pioneer, as a woman and a minority.

Rick Wright — a television, radio and film professor at Syracuse University — recalls the mutual surprise that he and Parker had when they first met each other at WOLF. He was a Ph.D. student who was hired to engineer her programming.

“Ann Parker was the first person I saw physically on the air at WOLF,” Wright recalls today. When he walked into the station he was surprised to hear a black woman on the air, just as she was shocked to learn that a black student had an engineering license.

Though she pioneered the industry for black women during the 1970s, she faced obstacles from many people whom she knew very well. “It was difficult for me because a lot of people close to me, they were so envious. ... I never thought about it until they showed it to me.”

Still, she viewed her success as a means to help others. “Somebody always has to start something in life because this is how people encourage one another.”

Cora Thomas broke into the industry, too. “I respect her and applaud her for being one who paved the way,” Thomas said of Parker. “She would take me to the station and show me how to do things. I would just come

and watch her in action ... not knowing that eventually one day I would be a radio announcer.”

Thomas recalls what it was like to hear Parker on the air. “She had a delivery that when she spoke, people would listen.”

Her show on WOLF was a mix of Bible, music from local Syracuse groups and the gospel hits of that time, church announcements and news of the community.

That structure was very inspirational, Wright said. “Even at 4, 5, 6 in the morning, people in the community would be listening,” he said.

Parker spent more than 40 years in the industry and worked for several stations, including WNDR, WSOQ, WSIV, and WVOA. Though she is not on the radio today she still carries a message with her that reflects her life experiences.

“To have someone who was an African-American on air, even if they were on air for just 15 minutes or a half-hour or an hour was really a magnificent statement,” Wright said.

STRANGERS BECOME FRIENDS

Today, Parker does not bask in her accomplishments. She’s too busy spending time with friends from her church or uplifting strangers with a motivational word.

“If you got your mind set on a goal ... go for it baby,” Parker tells her recent visitor. “If I could do it, you can do it, and I did it back when it was supposed to have

***“Never doubt you.
Always let you
know that you can
do it.”***

—Ann Parker

been impossible.

“I was an unusual human being, ’cause if they didn’t see me on radio, they was ’gonna see me in church playing piano.”

Back on the red couch in her living room, Parker now wipes away her tears. Sharing her past with yet another stranger is an emotional roller-coaster, but one that often ends with a cathartic moment. She regains her composure and again looks at her visitor and smiles.

She offers one final piece of advice.

“Just like you fear, do the opposite and be positive about yourself. ... Tell yourself, ‘I can do it,’ and never doubt you.”

The guest sitting across the couch from her becomes a new friend and smiles back.

PARKER: FACTS AND TIMELINE

- Starts as 2nd Olivet Church announcing clerk
- Becomes public announcer at WNDR-AM
- Produces and hosts her own show for WSOQ-AM
- Produces all Sunday morning programming on WOLF
- Moves to weekend programs on WSIV-AM and WVOA-FM

ON THE SIDE

Black Syracuse & beyond:

The Richard Breland Photograph Collection



Richard Breland, a longtime Syracuse resident, has been taking and collecting photographs since the 1940s. His collection documents Black life in the region and ties to spaces beyond.

Syracuse University Schine Student Center
2nd Floor - Panasci Lounge

Open Daily through March 3

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This exhibit is sponsored by the SU Black Syracuse Community History & Mapping Project with support from the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences.

It is free & open to the public. Schine is open daily @ 303 University Ave @ Waverly.

For more information, call 315.443.4399, or email [jobryant@syr.edu](mailto:jobryant@syr.edu).

## BLACK HISTORY EVENTS

**Where:** Beauchamp Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN READ-IN

**For:** Children Pre-K to fourth grade

**When:** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Saturday, Feb. 12

**More details:** Community members will read aloud books by and about African-Americans and African-American history

### "ONE DROP" POETRY/OPEN MIC

**When:** 2 p.m.  
Friday, Feb. 18

**More details:** An afternoon of poetry and expressions facilitated by Chene Redwood and Enkeshi Thom

**For more events:** Visit [mysouthsidestand.com](http://mysouthsidestand.com)

## THE BLACK HISTORY PRESERVATION PROJECT

### Address:

The Onondaga Historical Association

321 Montgomery St.  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13202

### Hours:

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Wednesday to Friday

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday

### Free Admission

# HISTORY PRESERVED

*Special moments are on exhibit now; online 'virtual museum' coming*



> Ike Harrison, executive director of the Dunbar Center, is photographed working with students. | Courtesy of Onondaga Historical Association

By | Dan Scorpio  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

## An exhibit captures lives and events dear to the African-American community in Syracuse

A major new exhibit of Syracuse's African-American history — illustrated by dozens of vintage photographs, antique documents and transcripts of oral history interviews — is on display at the Onondaga Historical Association. The collection will serve as a preview of a larger display, the Black History Preservation Project, which the association will put online later in the year.

"This collection is first of its kind in Syracuse and just a sample of what we will display when the virtual museum is ready," said Gregg Tripoli, OHA's executive director.

Other partners for the project include the Dunbar Center, Syracuse University's Southside Initiative and the

Onondaga County Public Library.

The presentation, which opened Feb. 1, will be on display through March at the OHA Museum.

The exhibit is open during regular museum hours, and admission is free.

The exhibit chronicles people, places and events significant to the Syracuse black community.

"Visitors will recognize the places where they grew up, their family members and people they haven't seen in years," Tripoli said.

Almost every artifact on display was donated from local collections, Tripoli said.

Project members held digital collection fairs, where community members brought their photographs to be scanned and archived into a digital database.

"We're trying to preserve this history for future generations," Tripoli said.

"We hope this becomes a wonderful walk down memory lane for our community."



# CHURCH CRUMBLING

By | Emily Warne  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

**Severe winters and mounting budget problems force a congregation to leave its home**

The former home of the New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ was victim to two typical Central New York realities — brutal weather and even harsher budgets. The old building at 1641 S. Salina St. is dusted with fluffy snow, decorating a steeple that's been looking over the South Side since 1884. But that same snow threatens to collapse the steeple, and icicles gathering under the rafters look ready to pull the building to the ground. Loose bricks litter the front bushes.

That disrepair, and fears of what the weather might do to the structure this winter, led the city of Syracuse to issue The Rev. James Jones and his congregation an ultimatum — either order the repairs necessary to make the building safe for public use, or leave.

They left.

Estimates for building costs and repairs were far more than the 30-family congregation could handle.

The church has been run by Jones' family for almost 40 years. His father, The Rev. Thornton Jones, converted a former youth center (which had previously been the Danforth Congregational Church) into the newly christ-

ened New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ parish in 1972, and served the congregation there until he passed away in 1992. Then, it was James' turn to take over.

Now, they're searching for a place to lay down roots and start over again. In the meantime, members have been meeting in the lower level of the Prince of Peace Missionary Baptist Church at 317 E. Jefferson St.

Jones is optimistic.

"I believe that God has a plan for us, and we're going to find out what that is soon," he said. "It's just a matter of discovering that path."

In the late 1990s, bills started to mount and the structure began to disintegrate. Warming the church alone could cost as much as \$2,000 to \$2,500 a month during the winter, and the sanctuary, the roof, a gym and classroom were falling into disrepair, he added.

The police and fire department couldn't ignore the hazards any longer. When the building didn't pass inspection in October, as predicted, it was time to go.

"We had tried to raise money through grants before, but we couldn't accumulate the massive amount of money that we needed. We accept that we have to leave, and we're going to start over," Jones said.

Jones describes how he felt about having to leave.

"It wasn't a shock, no," Jones said. "It was more just a resignation."



> Wooden structures hold up the crumbling steeple of the New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ located on South Salina Street | Emily Warne, Staff Photo

## HELPFUL ALLY

When it was time to condemn the church, **Syracuse Deputy Chief Stephen Cavuto** delivered the bad news in person.

"That congregation was a family, and it was like they were losing their home."

"I got to know them very well, and I felt that they deserved something more personal."

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## ABOUT OLIVIA



Olivia Harrison is a senior in Ms. Amanda McKenney's class at Christian Brothers Academy and a South Side resident.

If you are a high school student and would like to write for The Stand, contact Ashley Kang at [ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:ashley@mysouthsidestand.com).

## ABOUT JERAMIE

- 23 years old
- Grew up on Mark Avenue with his aunt
- Shot five times, three times in Syracuse and twice in North Philadelphia
- Mom passed away when he was 7
- Dad incarcerated his whole life
- Plans to open a community center that mentors underprivileged minority youth
- Will be first in his family to graduate from college
- Raps under the name "Drama Montana"

# SCHOOL: REAL DEAL

By | Olivia Harrison  
*High School columnist*

"Where I'm from people don't go to school. You're either selling drugs or playing sports or something, but people don't go to school."

These are the words of Jeramie White, who grew up on the tough South Side area of Syracuse and had every circumstance lined up against him. Yet he prevailed and is making a success of his life.

Today there is a sad fact in America where more African-American males are incarcerated than in college. A study done by experts from Harvard, Columbia and Princeton found that in the inner cities, more than half of all black men don't even finish high school. Many people can think of a song, television show or movie where a typical "hood environment" affects youth — especially young black males who claim they are essentially raised by the streets.

Songs such as The Game's, "My Life," in which Lil Wayne raps, "Dear Lord you done took so many of my people, I'm just wonderin why you haven't taken my life." The sad truth is that for many, "My Life" is more than just a song, it's a true depiction of a vivid reality in which they live. White's reality was one in which drugs dominated, poverty prevailed, shootings came as no surprise and education was essentially nonexistent. His situation didn't stop him, though. He is turning his life around, graduating from college and encouraging others to follow him on his path to success. White is a South Side native. When asked to describe his life growing up, the first word he used was "rough." White has been shot five times and has seen people killed right before his own eyes starting at a very young age.

White describes the environment he lived in as extremely drug-oriented with the majority of people either doing drugs, selling drugs or both. He said he started "husselin" at age 13. This is when he went to "juvie" for the first time and "fell in love" with street life.

By mid-freshman year, White had dropped out of Nottingham High School with no intention of ever furthering his education.

"I fell in love with the streets," White said. "Just got addicted to the street life. I had to take care of myself." The street life sent White on a downward spiral progressing into drug addiction and a young life spent in and out of jail and correctional facilities. "I never pictured myself going to college," White said. "I always pictured myself in the streets."

The problem is the streets have an expiration date, and being shot five times, White's clock was definitely ticking. He had to make a decision and fast. Continuing

to live this street life he had become so infatuated with left him two options: end up in jail or dead.

"The idea that we can keep incarcerating and keep incarcerating — pretty soon we're not going to have a young African-American male population in America. They're all going to be in prison or dead. One of the two," said former Sen. John Edwards at the MTV political forum in 2007. Studies found that in 1995, 16 percent of black men in their 20s who did not attend college were in jail or prison by their mid-30s, and 6 in 10 of these black men who had dropped out of school had spent time in prison. Luckily White realized that prison wasn't his only choice; he could always go back to school, and fortunately he made the right decision.

For many kids, going to college is a top priority, but it was apparent that this goal wasn't a priority in White's world. This didn't stop him, though. He received his GED in 2008 and was scheduled to graduate from Onondaga Community College in December 2010. He plans to attend a university. White says he wants to educate youth and help them avoid the mistakes he made.

White believes in leading by example. Going back to school proves to others that there is hope for them. Just because you are born in a certain environment or faced with obstacles many would find impossible to overcome, doesn't mean there is no hope for you. White believes in himself and has hope for others in his community.

Growing up without a paternal role model had a significant impact on White's life. "I didn't have no Obama to look up to; I had hood legends." He is determined not to let this be a comment he hears from other young people growing up, and he believes education is the way.

"I know what I want in life," White said. Graduating from college and leaving the life he once knew, White is on the path to achieving his goals. You can come from the worst environment and still achieve something great.



> Jeramie White studies a job-interviewing handout for OCC's Educational Opportunity Program. | Mitchell Franz, Staff Photo