

# the **Stand** south side news

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Syracuse, NY

**FEBRUARY 2013 Issue 24 FREE**

## CAMPUS SUCCESS

Jameel Rahim Shareef makes the most of an academic scholarship

## A street fit for a King

Street renaming in honor of civil rights leader is a first

## lucky seven

7 Styles Convenience Store and Deli stocks what customers want

**Images tell their story**  
Book explains how women on South Side view home

## THE LEGENDARY BLACKLITES



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Stand

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■ Cover photography of Jameel Rahim Shareef by Jason Greene

## CALENDAR | FEBRUARY

**What:** Annual Caribbean Cinematic Festival

**When:** Feb. 6 through 10

**Where:** Community Folk Art Center, 805 E. Genesee St.

**More Details:** The festival will showcase films and performances that capture the spirit and cultural richness of the Caribbean islands. The five-day event will highlight cultural contributions as well as address polarizing issues in the Caribbean and the Caribbean Diaspora. These will be explored through film, dance, spoken word, photography, discussions and food.

**Cost:** Free and open to the public

**More Info.:** Contact the Community Folk Art Center at (315) 442-2230 or visit [communityfolkartcenter.org](http://communityfolkartcenter.org) for a full listing of event details

**What:** Harlem Globetrotters

**When:** 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 8

**Where:** Carrier Dome, 900 Irving Ave.

**More Details:** The Harlem Globetrotters began in 1926 as the Savoy Big Five. Now more than 85 years and 20,000 games later, the team has become one of the most recognizable franchises in sports. Players dazzled the crowd at the Carrier Dome for the first time ever last year and are back for another go at it.

**Cost:** \$102, \$69, \$45 or \$15 per ticket, plus fees

**More Info.:** Call (888) 366-3849 or visit [harlemglobetrotters.com](http://harlemglobetrotters.com)

**What:** TACNY's Junior Cafe Scientifique

**When:** 9:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 16

**Where:** Museum of Science & Technology (MOST), 500 S. Franklin St.

**More Details:** Walter L. Sharp, adjunct professor at Le Moyne College, will present: "Where is the Science in the Hollywood Sci-Fi Blockbusters?" A light continental breakfast will be served, and attendees may explore the MOST after the presentation.

**Cost:** Free and open to students and their parents

**More Info.:** For reservations, send an email to [jrcafe@tacny.org](mailto:jrcafe@tacny.org)

We have such a great team working with The Stand. Students, faculty and community correspondents all have a part in making the paper what it is. But we've also recently begun work with local students.

Media students at the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central have covered recent community events in photos. Their work has appeared with online stories, including a collection of photos from the Annual Cut-A-Thon held Dec. 19, 2012 at the Southwest Community Center. Turn to Page 11 to see some of these images by Mikaela David. Sixteen talented seniors in the school's media program have been seeking real-world experience covering district-wide school events and now contributing to The Stand. And the Newhouse School is working with these students to also produce a series of audio stories.



Another group of future journalists comes from Eagle Wings Academy, where eighth-graders have shown interest in learning journalism skills. They have attended a couple of our journalism workshops and will begin to contribute stories to their school's newsletter with plans to eventually share their talents with the wider community by submitting stories to The Stand.

Even with our new student volunteers, we would still love to hear from you, the community. Let us know your ideas, your suggestions and what you would like to learn about in future issues.

For now, take a look at our February issue and read about a recently released book — "A Place We Call Home: Gender, Race, and Justice in Syracuse" — that chronicles the lives of 14 women living on the South Side through photographs. Learn about a young community member succeeding at Syracuse University and check out an update about the renaming of Castle Street to Martin Luther King.

If you are interested in contributing or sharing story ideas, feel free to contact me at [Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com) or by phone at (315) 882-1054.

Ashley Kang

## UPCOMING EVENT

Feb. 10

### South Side Poetry Workshop

**When:** 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 10

**Where:** South Side Communication Center, 2331 S. Salina St., Syracuse

**More Details:** The Syracuse Poster Project, which aims to create a sense of place through a series of illustrated poetry posters displayed throughout downtown, will join The Stand to lead a poetry workshop for teens. Youth ages 12 to 19 are encouraged to attend and write love-themed Haikus for Valentine's Day. Attendees can enjoy a cupcake and turn their poem into a Valentine's Day card. Registration fee is \$1.

**More Info.:** To register, visit [www.posterproject.org](http://www.posterproject.org) or call 424-8099.

## NEXT GENERATION

Mercy Works, Inc., a nonprofit organization based on the South Side, provides a plethora of programs to children — from computer literacy classes and internship placement to family relationships and how to improve them.

Gina Rivers, program director, says the group's mission is to identify and meet the social needs of the community and to empower urban youth. "I think the best thing we do is clarify vision for this young generation," she said.



Read a full story about this group by going online to [mysouthsidestand.com](http://mysouthsidestand.com)



>Teen Tech teacher Seth Crossman helps Aliyah Kirkpatrick, 11, with her project at The Vision Center in December. Aliyah, a sixth-grader at Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School, will receive a PC if she successfully finishes the class. | Jim Tuttle, Staff Photo

## LOCAL ACHIEVERS

The South Side Achiever is a feature in The Stand that highlights an accomplished person in the community.

## DIABETES DISCIPLINE

After being diagnosed in 2005, Jameel Shareef was asked to be part of a National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases study called "To2Day" that has provided him medication and equipment free of charge, given he goes in for updates.

This past year he was chosen out of 700 case studies to be featured in a professional journal article to come out this month that looks at Shareef as a poster child for how to tackle diabetes the right way, by taking his medication 95 percent of the time — an extraordinary feat.

For more information, visit <http://www2.niddk.nih.gov/>

## NOMINATE SOMEONE

Do you know a South Side Achiever? Nominate that person by contacting Ashley@mysouthsidedstand.com or (315) 882-1054



SPECIAL ACHIEVER

# Jameel Shareef

**Student uses scholarship to pursue broadcast career**

By | Natalie Caceres  
Staff reporter

Aspiring sports writer, student and Type II diabetic embraces every opportunity

When Jameel Rahim Shareef walks up to say hello you are immediately overcome with a sense of gentility, kindness and warmth. The Syracuse native who grew up living in Pioneer Homes (a part of Syracuse Housing Authority), has overcome challenges far and wide in order to make it where he is today: a young man on a full-ride scholarship who is making his name in sports journalism.

He is also a hard-working steam plant employee, and most of all, a passionate and grateful son who credits both parents as his backbone. If there's one thing Shareef is certain of, it's that one day he will help to give it all back.

"I credit anyone who gave an effort to support me," Shareef said. "Giving me different opportunities that I didn't really have."

Shareef's mother, Tina, describes her only son. "He's a very humble person," she said. "I always wanted my kids to be better than myself. If they want to do better themselves, they need to seek someone they could see as a positive role model to look up to."

It was through the help of mentors and positive influences like Shareef's mother and father, along with The Stand's own board member and music columnist, Reggie Seigler, that Shareef was made aware that he could apply for the Co-Generation Steam Plant Scholarship. A total of four applicants applied, according to Shareef. The requirements for an applicant are to be a resident of the Syracuse Housing Authority.

In late April 2010, Shareef was notified that he would be the recipient of the four-year scholarship that would pay tuition and housing. It also offered him a chance to work at the plant, which is just down the hill from the university.

"I was really excited," Shareef said of the moment he found out that not only was he accepted into SU, but that he would be attending free of charge. At the time, the Henninger High School senior was a football player and thought he would continue his athletic career while



> Jameel Rahim Shareef, a junior at Syracuse University, is a Say Yes Scholar and recipient of the Co-Generation Steam Plant Scholarship. His career goal is to become a sports broadcaster. | Jason Greene, Staff Photo

in college. However, that idea began to take a different path when he was placed into the Communication and Rhetorical Studies program. After what Shareef describes as a "difficult" first year adapting to the academic rigor, he began to find solace in his program and decided to buckle down.

"I had planned on playing football here," Shareef says, "... but I decided to focus on my grades and look into reality." The CRS program provides him an opportunity to fuse his passion for sports with his newly discovered love for writing.

Christopher Perrello, an SU professor in the CRS program, finds that students like Shareef are the ones who excel both in and out of class.

"I've witnessed Jameel's growth over the semester in regards to his interpersonal communication and writing skills," Perrello said. "Perhaps most impressive is (his) dedication to his course work, which illustrates his value in higher education."

In addition to being a full-time student, Shareef has worked the past three summers as a part-time entry supervisor at the steam plant. He monitors maintenance workers on the field with a gas monitor when they are entering manholes on the SU campus. The responsibilities and work ethic are things Shareef says he'll hold with him.

"I've learned to be consistent and wake up at a decent time," he said, "...to find people that I can connect with both in and outside of the workplace, people you can talk to."

Tim Winterfield is Shareef's supervisor. "He's a great worker, always smiling and upbeat," Winterfield said. "You know he's just one of those guys that is going to make it."

Those he works alongside during his work week in summers have become some of his many supporters.

"They ask how I'm doing and about school," Shareef

said. “When I was writing articles during the summer, they would ask me about it and then go and read it.”

The articles Shareef refers to are those he has written for national sports websites Football Nation and Pro Player Insiders. He found them through SU and decided to submit articles for both — positive that his lack of professional writing wouldn’t give him a chance to write for either. Now on his 10th article for each website and more than 4,000 article views on Football Nation, Shareef is on a path to his dream career as a sports journalist.

“I’d like to see myself at ESPN or working with some NFL network affiliate or a local broadcast company,” Shareef said. The Bengals mega-fan also wouldn’t rule out working for his dream team in Cincinnati if the opportunity were to arise. In fact, Shareef is hopeful he can help inspire others from the South Side that such opportunities are not out of reach if, according to him, “you stay focused.”

“You have to surround yourself with people that have the same goals as you,” he said, reflecting on the guidance he received in his youth. For example, through the Tenant Assistance Program, he realized the right path to take.

Shareef is determined, as his mother describes him, to help others as he has been helped himself.

“He’s a gift,” she said. “Wherever he ends up in the long run they’ll end up loving him just like the others because you can’t help but like and want to have him in your company, that’s just how he is.”



> While studying at SU, Jameel Rahim Shareef also writes articles for Football Nation. In this photo, the steam plant is visible in the distance. | Jason Greene, Staff Photo

## LISTEN IN

Jameel Shareef has a newfound passion for radio.

This past year, along with a friend, Shareef has co-hosted his own college radio show called “Straight-A-Radio” that looks at and talks about SU culture and promotes awareness about on-campus organizations.

The duo plays a mix of different R&B and hip-hop selections.

For more information about Straight-A-Radio, visit [http://thecollegesound.com/werw/all\\_shows/](http://thecollegesound.com/werw/all_shows/)

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## HOW IT GOT ITS NAME

Explaining the store's distinctive name, Craig Davis says the number seven has recurred in his life.

He was the seventh child in his family; seven years before buying this business, he owned a different business; and that business was seven blocks away from his current store.

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND

7 Styles Deli includes a small deli, allowing customers to buy meats and sandwiches.

## BUSINESS SENSE

"Our store is a small Mom and Pop store. You don't want to get a case of something, because it will sit on your shelf for months, you want to get a half or a quarter of a case. So that way when they fall short, you restock."

## LOYAL CUSTOMER

"Craig is a good person. He tries to be positive in the community, not negative. He is one of the people that you can come talk to. He has bettered his store and helped the community."

— Customer Bianca Jones

# CUSTOMERS FIRST

7 Styles Deli relies on community feedback to stay in business



> Craig Davis bags items at his 7 Styles Convenience Store and Deli on South Salina Street. The slogan he uses for his store is: "Home of the famous Craig Burger." | Leroy Mikell, Staff Photo

By | Elizabeth Doyon  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

## Putting the community first is a priority for owners Craig Davis and Cheresse Torrence

A distinction of the 7 Styles Convenience Store and Deli at 2030 S. Salina St. is that it is believed to be the only African-American owned convenience store in Syracuse, according to Khalid Bey, the Common Council member whose Fourth District incorporates much of the South Side.

In 2013, co-owners Craig Davis, 44, and his fiancée, Cheresse Torrence, are starting their 10th year together in the business.

"It has been up and down," Davis said. "We started out with a concept, trying to put things into the community that were lacking."

When they launched the business, in October 2003, the couple hoped to add to their income, said Davis, because at the time he was unemployed. "We started with \$6,800, borrowed from several family members. That was first and last month's rent and the rest went to supplies. My concept of business is you have 30 days to try to develop money for the next rent month."

The seed money proved enough for the couple to

buy a stock of small items — necessities such as ketchup, hot sauce, cans of soup, and salt — that most people would not want to drive all the way to a grocery store to buy, Davis said. Now, 7 Styles carries cigarettes, beer and other drinks and snacks. "We accommodate the small needs of the community. We get the product that they need to have, without going out of the community."

As a new business owner, Davis built up his stock by relying on customers telling him what they wanted.

"When I first got here, I had a clipboard that said, 'Things to get: please help me with supplies.' So a lot of people came in and wrote down things that I needed to get," he said. Davis added that he always tries to get the community involved. Over the summer, he created a personalized grocery shopping program for customers.

"I set up a program in the summertime where we shop for you," he said. "We take a list of items from people, and we take the chance and spend our money to buy the stuff, then bring it back to the store and box it up and retail it back to our consumer."

Bey, who chairs the Council's economic development committee, said, "One of the biggest challenges is determining what the demand is, and that is different in the South Side than other areas, so that he provides the right product."

# BULLY BUSTER

Student works to 'Stamp Out Bullying'

By | Durrie Bouscaren  
Staff reporter

Thirteen-year-old Jaelyn Turner knows what it's like to be bullied. An aspiring poet with a love for the band Rise Against, Turner wears her curly hair cropped short. She says she can't grow it out because of an autoimmune disease, and she used to wear wigs to cover it up.

"I used to get bullied all the time," Turner said.

Turner's experiences inspired her to organize a bullying awareness event at her school, the Southside Academy Charter School. She enlisted the help of the student council — known as the Principal's Advisory Committee. Together, they planned events with the help of teachers and administrators and created Stamp Out Bullying Week.

Nearly 700 students participated in class discussions, signed a "No Bullying Pledge" and marched in an awareness walk along Onondaga Creek Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue.

"Anytime they can have a week and have ownership of it, as a principal, I just try to get myself out of the way and guide them through the process," said principal Delvin Vick as he pinned blue ribbons to be sold during lunchtime. "I just love it."

The proceeds from the ribbon sales will go toward Stand for the Silent, a national campaign to raise awareness and support victims of bullying.

"Everybody in our class has one," said Briana Jett, a fifth-grade PAC member, about the ribbons.

Eighth-grader Zacqueline Baldwin helped to organize a school-wide poetry contest so students could write about their own thoughts and experiences with bullying.

"Sometimes they can't say it, but it's easier for them to write it out," Baldwin said.

For Turner, the week was something she hopes she can leave for younger students when she attends Corcoran High School next year.

"I think I inspired something," Turner said.



> Eighth-graders Jousalind Thomas, Zacqueline Baldwin, Egyptiona Edwards and Jaelyn Turner each planned events for the bullying awareness week. | Durrie Bouscaren, Staff Photo

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# Honoring a Legend



> Khalid Bey was joined by Mayor Stephanie Miner and members of the Syracuse City Council to unveil the newly renamed Martin Luther King Street at the corner of State Street and the street formerly known as East Castle on a snowy Martin Luther King Jr. Day. | Allison Milligan, Staff Photo

By | Keith Muhammad  
*Community correspondent*

## South Side becomes home to city's first street named in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King

Just in time for Martin Luther King Day, the South Side's Castle Street was renamed in his honor during an unveiling ceremony held at the corner of State Street and East Castle on Jan. 21.

A road crew from the Department of Public Works did the majority of preparatory work a week before the annual holiday. By Friday, Jan. 18, all new road signs at the 12 intersections of East and West Castle streets had been updated to Dr. Martin Luther King East and Dr. Martin Luther King West.

Fourth District Councilor Khalid Bey sponsored the resolution in the Syracuse Common Council.

"I think it demonstrates the progress we've had since, and to keep in mind the progress we have to do," Bey said.

After a unanimous vote by the Common Council and a public hearing by the county's planning agency, the county voted Dec. 27 to approve the renaming.

Prior to this resolution, a public hearing to discuss Bey's proposal took place. During this Dec. 19 meeting, many residents attended and all welcomed the proposal with open arms.

The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency held the public hearing at the Dunbar Community Center to provide residents and businesses of Castle

Street the opportunity to oppose or support the proposal.

Transportation Superintendent Jim French estimated the project will cost \$1,250.

Robert E. Antonacci II presided over the hearing and explained that the agency wanted to ensure that every resident got the chance to be heard.

“If the County Board approves the proposed street name change, the legal name of Castle Street becomes Martin Luther King,” he said. “Castle Street residents will receive a letter announcing the official effective date and when the name will be changed.”

The Planning Agency will make official notice of the change to various public agencies, including the U.S. Postal Service, National Grid and the Board of Elections.

At this meeting, Bey shared a brief sketch of the history of the proposed name change.

“The idea came up in 2009. Some residents initially looked at giving Salina Street the honorary name,” he explained. “However, they felt that it would be too difficult since Salina Street contained many businesses and was part of State Route 11. They later decided to target Castle Street.”

“[In 2011], we turned our focus to Castle Street because it has Martin Luther King School ... and the street is a gateway into the community,” he added.

“[Last] January, we started to put more effort into it. We sent out notices, petitions and fliers announcing the coming name change.”

Following the petitions, they learned that residents overwhelmingly supported the change.

“We turned in 250 signatures. All the residents and two businesses agreed one hundred percent,” he said.

Carmen Harlow, former Onondaga County Legislator, owns Harlow Park, which is located at the corner of

### WHAT MUST RESIDENTS DO?

If you are a resident, you will need to notify the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles to change the address on driver's license or vehicle registrations.

You will also need to make address changes for bank accounts and other personal business. The official notification will include more details about what you may need to do.

The Planning Agency will help any resident or business through the transition from the old street name to the new.

You can contact the Syracuse Onondaga County Planning Agency at (315) 435-2611 for more information and assistance.



> Literacy volunteer Geneva Hayden reads to a student at Beauchamp Library Jan. 15. | Durrie Bouscaren, Staff Photo

Castle and Renwick. He expressed concern about the cost of the proposed change for businesses located on the street. “I support the proposal,” he said. “But my question is: Who pays for all of this?”

Southeast Gateway Director, David Rufus, whose family once lived on East Castle Street, questioned the monetary impact of the change to residents who reside on the street.

Antonacci recognized Common Councilor at Large Helen Hudson, who shared her thoughts on the proposed name change. “It’s long overdue. Whatever city you go into, there is a Martin Luther King Boulevard or Drive,” she said.

Councilor Bey thanked the county for its assistance and for making the process easy. “They took care of everything including the fliers. And they do all the followup,” he said.

According to cultural geographer Derek Alderman, there are an estimated 900 streets in America that bear the name Martin Luther King. The city of Syracuse would be the first of the four major cities in upstate New York to honor his legacy with a street bearing his name.

Last month in celebration of the retirement of news anchor Jackie Robinson, an honorary naming of a portion of James Street was acknowledged with additional street signage reading “Jackie Robinson Way.”

“An actual street name change hasn’t happened in Syracuse in 30 to 50 years,” Bey said. “We have the opportunity to memorialize him – permanently.”

Castle Street is the perfect street to commemorate the legacy of Dr. King not only because it is the home of Dr. King School. Renwick Castle (Yates Castle) was located on the site now occupied by Syracuse University’s Weiskotten Hall — just east of Renwick Avenue. Castle Street borders Renwick Avenue. Both streets are presumed to have been located within the 40-acre estate of Renwick Castle.

This makes Castle Street literally a “Street Fit for a King.”

— Additional reporting by Durrie Bouscaren

## YOUTH CELEBRATE

In preparation for Martin Luther King Day, Geneva Hayden planned an activity at Beauchamp Branch Library to teach children about Dr. King and his message.

“Every time you learn your culture, you grow stronger,” Hayden said.

A gaggle of sixth- and seventh-graders busied themselves making paper doves and writing about what being a peacemaker meant to them.

“I would help stop violence in the world,” said Juan Ocasio, 12, busying himself with the neon green wings of his dove. “I want to be a police officer so I can help people, I would save people’s lives.”

For 12-year-old Aryanna Gartrell, Martin Luther King Day is a time to remember the Civil Rights Movement.

“It was a day that somebody tried to change the way the world was,” Aryanna said.

— By Durrie Bouscaren



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



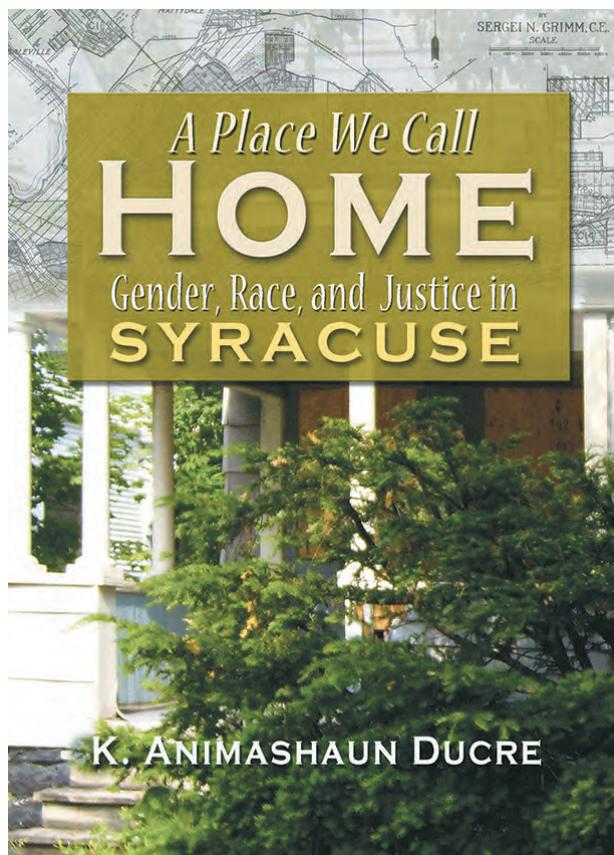
**Kishi Animashaun Ducre**, Syracuse University professor of African-American Studies, is a committed advocate for environmental justice and 2011 Fulbright Scholar at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at The University of the West Indies — St. Augustine.

As part of her Fulbright Scholarship, Ducre spent seven months in Trinidad conducting small group workshops to help women capture images of their surroundings. Ducre relies on Photovoice — a process by which people use images to tell their stories — and community mapping to study issues of environmental racism.

To purchase a copy of Ducre's book, "A Place We Call Home: Gender, Race, and Justice in Syracuse," visit [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

# STROLLING *the* SOUTH SIDE

*The greatest story seldom told has now been published*



> Cover of a Syracuse University professor's book, published by Syracuse University Press in fall 2012. | Photo provided

By | Keith Muhammad  
*Community correspondent*

## New book shares stories of South Side women, uncovers broader picture of social injustices

February is Black History Month — a time set aside to remember the significant contributions by people of the African Diaspora to America and the world. Yet, there are those who argue that black people have had little or no positive impact.

As I reflect on our many contributions, I recall an old African proverb: "Until the lions become the historians, the hunters will always be the heroes."

The lesson: a people that have no voice will always be depicted as the losers. We must find our own voices, capture our own visions and tell our own stories.

In her book, "A Place We Call Home: Gender, Race, and Justice in Syracuse," K. Animashaun Ducre

shares the stories of 14 black women as they struggle to survive in an impoverished neighborhood on the South Side of Syracuse. Using Photovoice methodology and community mapping, she captures their voices, visions and stories. Ducre chronicles the role of race, gender, environmental justice and space in the city of Syracuse. In doing so, she uncovers a bigger story about "the policies of social institutions ... that prohibit the physical and social mobility of the poor and communities of color ..." denying black and poorer residents "access to affordable, safe and clean housing" for 70 years.

"A Place We Call Home" is the first book-length presentation using the Photovoice process — a concept developed by Caroline Wang at the University of Michigan in the early '90s.

"Photovoice is basically giving cameras to folks who have been underrepresented in their community's planning process to understand what they think and value," Ducre said. "The photographers meet periodically to present their images to one another as a means to discuss their community [or] issue."

At the end of the process, an exhibition is held and the selected images are presented to the larger community for debate and discussion.

Volunteers from a local community health center helped Ducre recruit the women for the Photovoice project. Ducre randomly selected 14 women from an initial list of 34. Each participant received a digital camera, memory card, rechargeable batteries, camera bag and \$40 per Saturday for participating.

Ducre assigned each woman pseudonyms to protect their identity. She gave them the names of black female icons to honor them. For example, she named one of the women after artist Faith Ringgold.

"Like the artist, Faith's deep creativity came out in her photography," Ducre writes. Her work was so creative that Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor featured one of Faith's photos in a public address.

One of Faith's photos featured in the book is titled "First Thing I See." It shows an abandoned house that is located across from her home.

"It's been like this for years. I just wonder when they're going to fix it up ... it's right here every day when I come outside — it's the first thing I see," she writes. "I just call it the Homeless House 'cause it's a house that nobody fixes up."

## SUGGEST A LOCATION

To submit an idea for Strolling the South Side, contact Ashley Kang at (315) 882-1054 or Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com

*“I grew up in neighborhoods very similar to ... the South Side.”*

— Kishi Animashaun Ducre

Abandoned and deteriorating houses are nothing new to the South Side. Through community mapping and Photovoice, Ducre uncovers a story about the designation of a particular area “for racial and ethnic minorities as a means of containment and social control.”

“As a sociology scholar, I think my role is ... to link

historic injustices to contemporary social problems related to inequality. As an activist, I feel it is my duty to confront injustice and challenge inequality. I am motivated by a sense of fairness and equity.”

Initially, the women saw Ducre as an outsider. She identified with them, but they saw her as a professor from the SU hill. She felt uncomfortable revealing so much about them without revealing herself. “I felt that I had to be down with them in sharing my story,” she said.

Through their stories, she discovered her own.

“As far as the social aspects, I grew up in neighborhoods very similar to the demographics of the South Side,” she shared.

Her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother raised her in predominantly black and low-income neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., and Maryland.

She recalls the time the family was evicted and their “belongings being tossed out and littering the entrance of the complex,” she writes. “I recall feeling complete devastation, looking at my mother’s black-and-white couch and other pieces of our lives sitting on the curb.”

### IF YOU GO

**What:** “Our Community, Our Vision, Our Voices”

**When:** 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7

**Where:** Community Folk Art Center, 805 E. Genesee St.

**More Details:** Photo exhibit offers a glimpse into the lives of women in Trinidad. Book signing by Kishi Animashaun Ducre follows.

**Cost:** Free and open to the public

# ANNUAL CUT-A-THON A HIT



> Local youth received haircuts in time for the upcoming Christmas holiday during the Southwest Community Center’s annual Christmas Cut-A-Thon. Al Lyda, of Ebony Paving, has organized the event for the past 19 years. He invites local barbers to give free haircuts. Left: Barber Ed Perry cuts the hair of Josh Maddox, 9, of Syracuse. Center: Barbers donated their supplies and time. Right: Barber Darrin Mitchell tends to Antwan Green, 7 of Syracuse. | Mikaela David, ITC High School Media Student



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# BLACK HISTORY EVENTS

## BEAUCHAMP LIBRARY TO PRESENT SEVERAL PROGRAMS IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**WHERE:** All events will be held at Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St. For more events, visit The Stand's online calendar at [www.mysouthsidestand.com](http://www.mysouthsidestand.com)

### 'The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness'

**WHEN:** 3 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7  
Facilitator: Mary Schweitzer-Burgmeier of Jail Ministry  
Book discussion on Chapter 4 of "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander.

### What is Black History Month in 2013?

**WHEN:** 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9  
Facilitator: Syracuse University's Pan African Graduate Students  
A panel discussion will be offered on "What is Black History Month in 2013?"  
Event will also include an arts and cultural night that is open to the public to present various forms of art relating to the theme.

### Dream Boards: Reclaiming Your Destiny

**WHEN:** 3 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 19  
Facilitators: Brenda Jones and Dream-Team1  
Event will focus on living your purpose, photo making, making the most of life's journey, how to step into one's inner destiny and discussion on your next five years. Door prizes, raffles, snacks and much more. Open to those 14 and older.

### Chili With Black Firefighters

**WHEN:** 1 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20  
Facilitator: Brenda Jones, MS. Ed.  
Spice up your day with a session of chili and a movie as well as career information with Syracuse Black Firefighters.

### Children's African Craft

**WHEN:** 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22  
Presenter: Katie Hayduke, Children's Librarian  
Children can have fun creating African jewelry to celebrate Black History Month.

### Pan African Exploration

**WHEN:** 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23  
Facilitators: Syracuse University's Pan African Graduate Students  
The audience will be enlightened on the complexities, similarities, histories and cultures of the African Diaspora and the Pan African world. There will be various geographical stations that can be visited and each will have an activity and brief lesson plan. Intended for children.

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## SUPER STARS

Join the library in the Search for a Syracuse Superstar in a reality singing and dancing competition where a panel of judges will critique the contestants' performances. The winner will be determined by the audience, and prizes will be awarded.

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

**Competitions:** 3 to 5 p.m. Saturdays Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23

**Grand Finale:** 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 28

**Anchor:** Brenda Jones

**Judges:** Sparkle1 and Brown Skin

**How to participate:** Call (315) 412-4362 to set up a meeting with Brenda Jones

## BEHIND THE NAME

Reggie Seigler's "A Friendly Five" column is named in memory of a singing group in which his two uncles — Mango Gray and George Gray — were members.

The group was called "The Friendly Five," and his uncles moved it from Clarksdale, Miss., to Syracuse in the 1950s.

# BLACKLITES HISTORY

Two members explain the back story of a group still relevant today

By | Reggie Seigler  
A *Friendly Five* columnist

Emmanuel Atkins and Eddie Brown bring back memories of their legendary time together

For this column, I thought it would be a good idea to write about a musical organization with some local history since this is Black History Month. I wanted to write about an organization that could take us back a few years but still have relevance today.

This led me to set up a conference call with a couple of my old friends, Emmanuel Atkins and Eddie "Wallstreet" Brown. Emmanuel and Eddie are longtime members of Syracuse's own "The Legendary Blacklites." I asked them to share their story in their own words, and they obliged. Our conversation was lively and sometimes off point, but we did manage after an hour or so to extract a few facts for the purpose of this column.

Eddie told most of the story with a few words sprinkled in from Emmanuel for clarity and good measure, and I managed to throw in a few "nah wait a minutes" too, because as I said, we go waaaay back and I thought I remembered some things, too. LOL.

Anyway, the following is the history of the Blacklites as was shared by two of its longest-running members.

## THE STORY BEGINS

The Blacklites group was founded in early 1972 by Keith Broome, guitar, and Mike McBride, bass. They were recruited by Bill Goode to perform at the Goode Family Reunion at the old Mayflower Inn on South Salina Street near Burger King. After performing the reunion, the band dissolved, as a couple of members enlisted in the service and some took up other activities.

By late '72 Bill Goode (now deceased) had decided to pull the band back together — this time, though, with some new members. The new members were made up of youngsters from all sides of town. Bill's vision was to build the band modeled on the structure of a family. He wanted each member to look upon each other like siblings. Bill became manager and father figure, while his wife, Mrs. Delores (Dee Dee) Goode (recently deceased, Nov. 30, 2012) accepted the role of the band's mother. "That was a role that she held dearly until she passed," said Eddie "Wallstreet" Brown, percussionist and front man for the band since that time, and also her son.

Together the Goodes opened their home for the Blacklites to practice and explore their musical talents, and Bill booked gigs for them. During those early years the band grew to become as large as nine musicians and

singers with a road crew of six. Some, although not all, of those early members included Pam Patterson, Lagreer "Sister" Cummings and Connie Edwards and the road crew was Twan Guyder, Sam Dixon, Wayman Godley, Donald Parker, Eddie "Fluid" Alford and Earl "Gator" Darisaw.

## TAKE IT ON THE ROAD

By 1975 the Blacklites had become a household name on the local landscape. They were performing regularly at school functions and parties and were doing a regular Saturday afternoon matinee at Debs' (club now defunct) on Erie Boulevard. People young and old would come from all parts of the city to see them perform. The band's appeal was universal, and the music was good. Bill saw at that time that the band was ready to advance to the next level so he sought out a larger market where they could perform.

Donald "Raz" Ransom (now deceased) who was the group's keyboardist provided a lead in to that market. He had relatives in the Boston area who had confidence in the band's talent and opened the door for them to go to Boston to pursue their dream and Bill's vision.

By that time the band had evolved into a solid unit that consisted of Mike, Emmanuel, Donald and Eddie; vocalists, Rod Little and brothers James Patterson and Jerry Patterson; Rick Woods, guitar; and Dexter Dixon, drums. Bill knew that the band would have to be slightly revamped in order to pursue the vision because some of the young men now had other commitments, such as to jobs and families. He also knew that the band would need to be contracted to him, so contracts were signed and in early '77 the band moved.

Upon their arrival in Boston they immediately jumped on the college circuit and secured a regular spot in rotation at the Parker Street Lounge. While performing at the Parker Street Lounge, the band came in contact with Maurice Starr. He acted in the movie "American Hot Wax." Maurice took a keen interest in the Blacklites and wanted to sign them onto his label.

"We were the first ones to lay down the tracks for the song Candy Girl," Eddie said. Candy Girl is a song popularized by the group New Edition. Maurice Starr is also associated with the success of that song and the group New Edition, and he also was associated with the New Kids on the Block.

Maurice wanted to purchase Bill's contract with the band and designate him as their road manager. His responsibility would have been to act, basically, as a patrol to keep them on schedule and in line. When

Bill refused the offer, the band's cohesiveness began to crumble.

The situation left some unanswered questions and ill feelings of animosity between some of the band members, Bill and others, so by 1981 when the contract expired the band completely disbanded.

From that point all of them retreated into their own lives. Some quit performing completely while a few others continued on in other organizations. However, none of their new organizations were as focused and closely knit as the Blacklites had been.

For nearly 18 years the band's members had continued on their own paths. They raised families, got tenure on jobs and had done all the things most people do in life. The Blacklites had become only a memory.

### JUNETEENTH OPENER

In 1999 the band SOS was booked to perform at the Juneteenth Celebration. For the community this was a "big thing" because it marked the first time that a national act would headline the celebration. It was an exciting time for many and sparked many creative ideas. That creativity really got going in the mind of Mike Atkins, Emmanuel's brother.

"Mike had been riding me and some of the other guys for a couple of years trying to get this thing back together. At the time I had a full-time job and was working at my father's business so I didn't have a lot of time.

But I said if everyone else comes to the table I'll be at the table," Emmanuel explained. "He sent us all certified letters and we all had to sign for them," Eddie added. "He wanted to make sure that everybody knew that we were having a meeting and what it was about.

"When we had the meeting Mike didn't even want us to talk about business at first. He just got us all talking about our lives and what we've been in to," Eddie said. "Then he hit us with the Juneteenth thing. He wanted us to open up for the SOS Band," Emmanuel added. "We hadn't performed together in nearly 20 years, and I hadn't even picked my guitar up since I don't know when. Somehow or another we all agreed to it, though. You know how my brother Mike can be when he wants something," Emmanuel said with a little chuckle.

So here they are now 15 years later. It's 2013 and it's been just over 40 since that first Blacklites gig at the Mayflower. They've been back together now for more years than they were during their first run and are even stronger now as a unit.

Emmanuel said, "Before every gig now we all come together and pray. James Patterson usually says a few words." Eddie added, "We always acknowledge Bill and Raz, and now Mommy. This is the way we keep our focus."

It has been said that a family that prays together stays together. Syracuse's own, the legendary Blacklites — they're a family.

## HOW TO BOOK THEM

To book the Blacklites, contact Michele Rourke, public relations and booking manager, at (315) 395-9507 or via email at [michelerourke@gmail.com](mailto:michelerourke@gmail.com)

VISIT THEM ONLINE  
[www.theblacklitesband.net](http://www.theblacklitesband.net)

*Have A Friendly Five suggestion? Contact Reggie at [reggie@softspokenband.com](mailto:reggie@softspokenband.com) or (315) 479-9620*

Photos are shared online at  
[www.mysouthsidestand.com](http://www.mysouthsidestand.com) in slideshows



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