

# the Stand

## south side news

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Syracuse, NY

OCTOBER 2016

Issue 53

FREE

### CRISIS READY

Neighborhood violence spurs vice principal's research, trauma plan

### Union is strength

Students spend summer establishing collective voice

### write it down

Workshop helps get youth passionate about writing

### Service tribute

Medical students honor 9/11 through volunteering

### DAD: MAKE TIME FOR KIDS



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S.I. NEWHOUSE SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH**DEAN LORRAINE BRANHAM,  
DEAN BEA GONZALEZ,  
JULIANA WALSH**CONTACT US**SOUTH SIDE NEWSPAPER PROJECT  
(315) 882-1054  
ASHLEY@MYSOUTHSIDESTAND.COMTHE STAND IS BASED OUT OF THE  
SOUTH SIDE COMMUNICATION CENTER  
2331 SOUTH SALINA STREET  
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IN KEEPING WITH COMMUNITY STANDARDS.

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- Cover photography by Tony D. Curtis of Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey

**EVENTS | OCTOBER**

**What:** Farm Stand  
**When/Where:** 8 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at the farm, 150 Ford Ave. or 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays through October, at B&G Auto on Midland and Ballantyne  
**More details:** The Brady Faith Farm is a project of the Brady Faith Center that turned vacant city land into a vibrant urban farm.  
**More info.:** Contact Jessie Lyons at jlyonsbfc@gmail.com or (315) 420-4521 or contact The Brady Faith Center at (315) 472-9077

**What:** I-81 Viaduct Project Open House  
**When:** 3 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6, with a public presentation at 6 p.m.  
**Where:** The Oncenter, 800 S. State St.  
**More details:** Staff with the New York State Department of Transportation will provide updates about the I-81 Viaduct Project and will answer residents' questions. Attendees will also have the opportunity to submit written comments.  
**More info.:** Visit I81opportunities.org. If you require translations or have special needs, contact Gene Cilento at (315) 428-4351.

**What:** Spooktacular at Burnet Park  
**When:** 6 to 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays Oct. 21-22 and 28-29  
**Where:** Burnet Park, at Coleridge Avenue and Burnet Park Drive  
**More details:** This annual Halloween celebration sponsored by the City of Syracuse Department of Parks, Recreation and Youth Programs will be held two weekends this month. Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. For those who prefer treats to tricks, there's a Halloween Carnival, with games and activities for children up to the age of 16. Treats will be awarded. The event will be held rain or shine.  
**More info.:** Call (315) 473-4330

The Stand continues to work toward its long-term vision: to one day be self-sustaining and not dependent on Syracuse University, which fully funds it today (aside from the community's advertising dollars).

To start this journey, the Stand board applied for a \$3,000 grant from the Central New York Community Foundation to hire a consultant. Her mission is to help The South Side Newspaper Project explore various sources of money besides SU, scout out possible partnerships, and map a strategic plan for the future.

The board received the grant this summer and hired local consultant Beth Leibrick. She has more than 20 years' experience working with nonprofits. Leibrick has completed CNYCF's program called Advancing and Developing the Assets and Value of Nonprofits in Syracuse (ADVANS). That makes her well-qualified at assessing nonprofit lifecycles. She's also well-connected to other nonprofits engaged in the Syracuse community.

Leibrick and the board will be working through this process over the next year to see how feasible it is for The Stand to be run, and financed, wholly by the community.

Or perhaps there are other models. It is an exploration.

If you have partnership ideas or would like to serve as a financial sponsor, please reach out to the board by contacting me.

Ashley Kang



## UN Sung HEROES

Syracuse University's Martin Luther King Jr. 2017 Celebration committee seeks nominations for the **Unsung Heroes Awards**, which will be presented during the evening celebration in the Carrier Dome on Jan. 29, 2017.

The awards are presented annually to people who have made a positive difference in the lives of others, but who are not widely recognized.

Nominees should not have been previously honored for their efforts, which should be ongoing and outside their normal job/student expectations.

Nominations are sought in the following categories:

- Youth/Teen
- Adult
- Student at SU or SUNY-ESF
- Faculty/staff at SU or SUNY-ESF

**Deadline:**  
**Oct. 10**

**To learn more:** Visit [mlk.syr.edu](http://mlk.syr.edu) or contact Sylvia Langford, Unsung Heroes Award Committee, at [stlangfo@syr.edu](mailto:stlangfo@syr.edu) or Ginny Yerdon, with Hendricks Chapel, at (315) 443-5044 or [gyerdon@syr.edu](mailto:gyerdon@syr.edu)

## NEW OFFICE

The Stand's office is now located upstairs in the South Side Communication Center based at 2331 S. Salina St. The South Side Newspaper Project has been a part of the center since it opened in 2011 by using the site as a local venue to conduct interviews, hold community workshops and board meetings. But now it will be a permanent fixture in the property. Office visits are by appointment only. To set up a time, contact Ashley Kang by email at [Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com) or phone at (315) 882-1054.

| Dominique Hildebrand, Staff Photo



## BIG EVENT THIS YEAR

**What:** Annual conference, which is a daylong writing event

**Who:** Students in middle school and high school, grades 6-12

**When:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12

**Where:** William Nottingham High School, 3100 E. Genesee St.

**Cost:** Free

**More info.:** Visit [writingourlives.syr.edu](http://writingourlives.syr.edu) for registration and more information

# WRITING THEIR LIVES

*Workshop inspires students to communicate through creative writing*



> Alison Ryan, 22, left, a graduate student in SU's School of Education, works on critical thinking questions during the Writing Our Lives Fall Kick-Off Workshop — along with Nadia Joe, 12, and Craelle Hinds, 14. | Dominique Hildebrand, Staff Photo

By | Liam Sullivan  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

### Volunteers organize event to promote writing through personal reflection, activities

One by one, students in a group pondered a question a volunteer put to them: What do you want your career to be? One girl wanted to be a teacher; another student wanted to be a writer. Finally, the last student at the table asked someone to beat a drum roll on the table before he delivered his response.

“And I want to grow up to work at Burger King,” the student said, grinning, as his peers burst out laughing.

“I’m just kidding,” he said, struggling to contain his laughter. “I want to be a technologist and a game creator.”

The scene took place at the Writing Our Lives Fall Kick-Off Workshop, which organizers say provides an opportunity for middle- and high-school students to jumpstart an interest in writing.

Meetings take place Sunday afternoons with discussion, brainstorming and self-reflection activities. Twelve students from various Syracuse schools recently gathered at the South Side Communication Center on South Salina Street to participate in the free interactive

writing workshop, which promotes a wide range of skills — poetry, comics and illustration, digital composing, storytelling, college writing and fiction writing.

Students ranged from sixth-graders to high-school sophomores. Adult volunteers and students from the Syracuse University School of Education worked at the event, inspired by Marcelle Haddix, the program’s founder and director. Haddix, an associate professor at Syracuse University, organizes the event each fall to raise awareness for the program’s upcoming workshops.

“As a community member and a parent myself, I’ve been attending a bunch of events and programs, and I talked a lot about different opportunities for children in this community,” Haddix said. “There was a sense that children aren’t receiving the best education in terms of literacy, and being a professor of literacy with an area of expertise in writing, I wanted to give something back to the community.”

Haddix started the Writing Our Lives program in 2009, a year after moving to Syracuse. The program isn’t about teaching writing skills, she said, but rather exposing students to different genres of writing and showing how writing can relate to many different career paths and opportunities. In essence, the program allows students to write about their lives in authentic ways that are not so

formal as they can be in the school system.

“This program means a lot to this community,” said Charles Pierce-El, president of the Southside Community Coalition. He also serves on the board of directors for The Stand. “To see young people coming out here to learn on a Sunday means someone is doing right,” he said. “We’re empowering our young people.”

The program is linked with a course Haddix teaches at Syracuse University called “Teaching 21st Century Writers, In and Out of the Classroom.” She said the course helps facilitate an after-school program at William Nottingham High School every Monday afternoon. Outside the classroom, there is also a community aspect of the program, rooted on the South Side; it runs every Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m. at the South Side Communication Center.

Writing Our Lives also hosts an annual conference, its biggest event of the year, Haddix said. The all-day writing event will take place Saturday, Nov. 12, at Nottingham High School.

“I’ve always liked writing stories and stuff, so this wasn’t the first one I attended,” said Craelle Hinds, a freshman at West Genesee High School. “It was good to get to know things about other people, and I think it

was good to get some of the younger students who were looking up to us older ones involved and started with writing.”

Hinds said she liked that each activity began with a personal reflection and writing activity, then transitioned into an opportunity to learn about the other 11 students seated in a circle around the cluster of tables. In one activity, the students wrote different things they liked and disliked about themselves, their families and their neighborhood before being encouraged to jot down and present a solution to those problems.

In its eighth year, the program is established and recognized throughout the community, Haddix said. It’s easier for the program to accomplish its goals of encouraging young writers because more students attend, and it has become easier to bring in engaging, knowledgeable moderators to help out, she said.

Haddix said she believes that her program isn’t much different from others around the country. But the work it does in helping challenge stereotypes, fight injustices in the education system and inspire students make it invaluable, she said.

Hinds added: “The program’s a great way to expand our horizons and see just how much we can do.”

*“We’re empowering our young people.”*

— Charles Pierce-El



> Phil Haddix leads a group of students in an introduction exercise at the Writing Our Lives Fall Kick-Off Workshop at the South Side Communication Center on Sunday, Sept. 11. | Dominique Hildebrand, Staff Photo



> Zion Edwards, 11, left, and Tahlib Thomas, 8, listen closely to Writing Our Lives instructor Phil Haddix as he discusses their similar interest in video games. | Dominique Hildebrand, Staff Photo

*“I wanted to give something back to the community.”*

— Marcelle Haddix

## CENTER OFFERINGS

### South Side Communication Center

**Location:**  
2331 S. Salina St.

**Hours:** Open weekdays from 3 to 7 p.m.

**Programs:** Chess, sewing, poetry and afterschool activities

**More info:** Contact site coordinator Rachielle Scrivens to learn more (315) 314-6303

## PLANNING AN EVENT?



If you have a special celebration

organized in honor of this spooky holiday, send details to The Stand's director at [ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:ashley@mysouthsidestand.com) to have the event added to our online calendar.

# TRICK OR TREAT

*Family-friendly offerings for ghouls and goblins of all ages*



> Nearly 250 children waited in line for last year's Eighth Annual Halloween Spooktacular held Oct. 29, 2015 at Beauchamp Branch Library. | File Photo

**WHAT: Pirate Dave's Halloween Magic Show**

**WHEN:** 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22

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

**COST:** Free to attend

**DETAILS:** Join Pirate Dave (aka magician David Moreland) for his family-friendly, not-at-all-spooky 45-minute Halloween magic show. Audience members, young and old, will shiver their timbers laughing at the magic, balloons, puppets and audience participation. All ages welcome.

**WHAT: Halloween Spooktacular**

**WHEN:** 4:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 27

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

**COST:** Free to attend

**DETAILS:** This is a fun-filled night of games, crafts, food and activities for the entire family. Come in costume. For more information, call the library at (315) 435-3395 and ask for Christine.

**WHAT: Haunted Gingerbread House Competition**

**WHEN:** 3 to 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 28

**WHERE:** Betts Branch Library, 4862 S. Salina St.

**COST:** Free to attend

**DETAILS:** This competition will allow tweens and teens to compete with their peers to see who can create the creepiest gingerbread house. All supplies provided.

**WHAT: Symphoria Kids: Halloween Spooktacular**

**WHEN:** 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 29

**WHERE:** Inspiration Hall, 709 James St.

**COST:** Adult \$15, senior \$10, college \$5 and children 18 and under are free. For tickets, call (315) 299-5598.

**DETAILS:** Costumes encouraged for this concert, featuring frightening sounds of the season.

**WHAT: Halloween Movie and Treats**

**WHEN:** 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29

**WHERE:** Betts Branch Library, 4862 S. Salina St.

**COST:** Free to attend

**DETAILS:** Enjoy a spooky movie and a Halloween treat.

For The Stand's full event listings, visit [mysouthsidestand.com/events/](http://mysouthsidestand.com/events/)

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ON THE SIDE

## WANT TO JOIN?

The **Syracuse Student Union** meets every other Saturday at noon on the third floor of Central Library on South Salina Street.

If you would like to get involved with the organization, contact:

**Alexandra Brooks** at [Alex\\_Brooks99@yahoo.com](mailto:Alex_Brooks99@yahoo.com) or **Alexander Veranes** at [Alexanderv.Rodriguez@gmail.com](mailto:Alexanderv.Rodriguez@gmail.com)

# STUDENTS UNITE

### Syracuse high-schoolers address education, community issues



> Members of the Syracuse Student Union organized and attended a peaceful rally, which coincided with the Black Lives Matter protest in July. | Photo Provided

By | Aline Martins  
*Staff reporter*

## Teens revive student organization focused on vocalizing social justice and youth affairs

Once summer began, high-school students would naturally rejoice in the freedom that came with the end of classes and assignments. But for students of the Syracuse Student Union, the end of school meant a chance to organize, network and establish their group as a voice for all high-school students in the city of Syracuse.

The Syracuse Student Union is a coalition of high-school students from Corcoran, Henninger and the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central (ITC) who meet biweekly at the Central Library to discuss social issues. Their goals are to advocate for student rights and provide all Syracuse high-school students with a platform to voice their concerns.

In order to achieve this, they have been working throughout the summer to get their name out and recruit new members. On the morning of two Black Lives Matter protests in July, they held their first rally.

“The goal was to send a message to promote our group,” said Alexandra Brooks, one of the group’s lead-

ers. “We had students give some information about us and touched (on) some issues that are going on in the district.”

Alexander Veranes, a Henninger High School junior, started the group. He had heard about the original Henninger Student Union, which was organized in 2013 by Caleb Duncan, a current Syracuse University student and a graduate of Henninger.

Veranes reached out to Duncan and worked with him to re-establish the group. The word then spread to other high schools. Brooks, a Corcoran High School junior, started the Corcoran Student Union at her high school. Solomon Lawrence brought the idea to ITC.

Duncan has remained involved with the organization by attending meetings, giving the group guidance on their plans, teaching them about community organizing and connecting them with community leaders.

During one of the meetings over the summer, Duncan and Veranes were late because they had been at a National Action Network meeting together.

“A lot of them are going through the same situations that I’ve been through, so I really try to treat them like siblings,” Duncan said. “Once I know that someone becomes involved, I hook them up with different places or different people that I know.”



**“We have to start advocating ...”**

— Alexander Veranes

Joyce Suslovic, a teacher at Henninger who is leading the Two Miles is Too Far initiative, is one of the community activists supporting the Syracuse Student Union. Since last school year, her group has been advocating to get bus passes for all students, regardless of the distance they live from school.

“They are not a single-issue group,” Suslovic said of the Syracuse Student Union. “So through it all, they will continue. They are totally committed.”

Besides partnering with Two Miles is Too Far on the issue of universal transportation, Syracuse Student Union also is partnering with David Chaplin, the administrator of the Citizen Review Board — a civilian oversight group — to train students on what to do during a police encounter.

“We have to start advocating for that,” Veranes said. “How important it is for people to know their rights and what to do if they are stopped by the police. If they file a complaint, we can provide further training on that.”

The rest of their goals for the year include hiring a paid administrator for the organization, instituting a dues system for members, fundraising, applying for grants, creating a scholarship fund, starting a marketing campaign and creating a training program on suspensions and restorative justice.

“We are all about rights,” Brooks said. “Our mission statement is to educate the youth on systematic issues, encourage involvement in social progression and to promote unity.”



> Alexandra Brooks and Solomon Lawrence, two founding members of the Syracuse Student Union, stand together during the group’s summer rally. | Photo Provided



> Alexandra Brooks, center, marches in the Black Lives Matter protest this past July. | Aline Martins, Staff Photo

## SCSD MEETING

The Syracuse City School District will hold its next **Board of Education meeting** at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, at the SCSD Board Room, 725 Harrison St.

Please note that while the meeting will begin at 4 p.m. with a call to order, the Board plans to immediately enter into executive session at that time. The **regular portion of the meeting** and consideration of all remaining agenda items is expected to take place after the executive session concludes around 5:30 p.m.

**To speak at the meeting,** let the district clerk know in advance by filling out the appropriate paperwork, available near the entrance door to the board room. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to no more than three minutes. Attendees are expected to show respect for all speakers.

**District Clerk Eileen Steinhardt** can be reached by email at [esteinhardt@scsd.us](mailto:esteinhardt@scsd.us)

ON THE SIDE



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## VISION SCREENING

**When:** 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 10

**Where:** Mary Nelson Resource Center, 2849 S. Salina St.

**Details:** AURORA of CNY will offer a free vision screening for those ages 55 and older. There will be free hearing aid cleaning, and people with sensory loss also can receive information on resources that are available to them.

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

**More info.:** Donna Reese (315) 422-7263

# PAINT TO REMEMBER

*On 15th anniversary of 9/11, students volunteered at local Salvation Army*



> A first-year medical student from SUNY Upstate Medical University paints a family bedroom baby blue at the Salvation Army, located at 749 S. Warren St. | DeArbea Walker, Staff Photo

By | DeArbea Walker  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

## SUNY Upstate students spent their 'Day of Service' revamping three family bedrooms

For years, local medical students have honored the memories of men and women who died in the Twin Towers terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, by engaging in a special "Day of Service" to Syracuse. The solemn 15th anniversary last month prompted students from State University of New York Upstate Medical University to help out at the Salvation Army, 749 S. Warren St.

They arrived with paint cans and brushes to spruce up and revamp the bedrooms of clients.

Mariah Gillum, a two-week resident of the Salvation Army, expressed pleasure. "This is the first time I've seen students come through here, so that's good."

Annually, the nonprofit Center for Civic Engagement arranges for 100 Upstate students to volunteer their time and effort around Syracuse.

"We're really hoping this will get students interested in seeking out ongoing opportunities to serve," said Carol Recker-Hughes, a faculty representative for the SUNY College of Health Professions.

"They might not go to this specific place" arranged by the medical school, she said. "But we're trying to say, 'there are all different ways to serve, check them out.'" She added that given that medical students may be in Syracuse for up to four years, they are encouraged to find something that has meaning to them and then "commit to it on a regular basis."

On the Sept. 11 anniversary, medical students arrived at the Salvation Army on buses. Staff members assigned them to paint three family bedrooms. They painted the rooms rustic green and baby blue.

"I chose to do this, to be introduced to the Syracuse community, since I'm not from the area," said Christina Marcellus, a first-year Upstate student. "It was an opportunity to be in the community, since I'm always in class."

Ellen Aldrich, resident manager supervisor at the Salvation Army, said other volunteer groups in the Syracuse area want to make an impact on the South Side community.

Although the first-year medical students were new to their tasks, Upstate officials said the school has more than 40 community-service organizations affiliated with it. Some students will do an after-school program at the Southwest Community Center. They go every week for 12 weeks for three hours for an after-school exercise

program. “Other students do after-school tutoring. There are opportunities that exist and have already been established,” Recker-Hughes said.

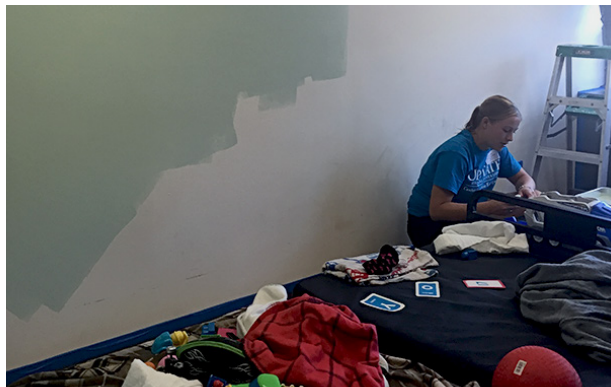
Recker-Hughes describes the two-fold mission. “We wanted to give them an opportunity to get to know each other and also to find out about the Syracuse community. What are the needs and opportunities? And how can we better connect with the community?”



> The Center for Civic Engagement arranged for students to take part in a “Day of Service.” | DeArbea Walker, Staff Photo



> Students painted the Salvation Army family bedrooms baby blue and rustic green. | DeArbea Walker, Staff Photo



> The Salvation Army sees a host of volunteers come through to better the South Side. | DeArbea Walker, Staff Photo

## HEALTH FAIR

**When:** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 19

**Where:** Toomey Abbott Towers, 1207 Almond St.

**Details:** Syracuse Housing Authority will hold a health fair for residents to learn tips on healthy living. The “She Matters” program will offer rides on the Mammo Shuttle for women to get a mammogram within 15 minutes. The event will also feature door prizes and light refreshments.

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

ON THE SIDE

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration



Department of Transportation

Please Join Us at the

# I-81 Viaduct Project

## Open House

to update the public on the latest developments in the project.

Thursday, October 6, 2016, 3:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.

The Oncenter, 800 South State Street

Staff will be present to explain the project and answer questions. You will have the opportunity to submit written comments.

If you require translations or have special needs, please contact Gene Cilento (NYSDOT) at (315) 428-4351.

For more information, visit the project website:  
[www.I81opportunities.org](http://www.I81opportunities.org)



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ON THE SIDE

## DETAILS OF THE STUDY

Seven Syracuse City School District students who graduated between the years 2008-2014 were interviewed.

Main questions posed to graduates:

1. In what ways did your experience with community violence impact you in high school?
2. How did the school respond to your experience?
3. In what ways should schools respond?
4. How did you respond to the school's response?

The city's Trauma Response Team and Mother's Against Gun Violence helped recruit participants.

After completing in-person interviews in two phases, participants received a \$20 gift card.

# SURVIVING TRAUMA

*Vice principal brings crisis plan to Dr. King Elementary School*



> Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey shares a moment with students at Dr. King Elementary School. She instituted a crisis plan to help students at the school cope with trauma. | Tony D. Curtis, Staff Photo

By | Ashley Kang  
*The Stand* director

### Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey based the plan on her doctoral research, own experiences

Quiet is the way Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey was described when she was taking her first course toward earning a doctorate in education. Others in the room were already top executives in their fields. She had little experience with literature reviews or conducting qualitative research. Even her professor recalls that by the end of that evening, he thought Jennings-Bey might not be ready to pursue such a prestigious degree.

But as she pursued her research on neighborhood trauma, a personal connection emerged. Her professors started to see the unique perspective only Jennings-Bey could provide because as a teen, she — herself — had been affected by homicides and violence.

As classes continued, Jennings-Bey stood out among her peers. She even represented her class as a speaker during graduation this past May.

“In the end, she didn’t just survive the program — she became a leader within it,” said Dr. Michael Robinson, her thesis adviser and site director of the Ed.D.

Program in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College.

Many classmates revealed to Robinson how Jennings-Bey changed their perspectives by serving as an ambassador for her community and showing the strengths that exist within it. “She didn’t simply bring the community to the class,” he said. “She really took the class to the community.”

And the local community has shown strong support for her as well. Jennings-Bey drew the largest crowd to ever attend a dissertation defense since the program began in 2006, Robinson said.

“There were at least 32 people there,” he said, noting that on average a defense draws three to eight attendees. “There are many in the community following her work.”

The sentiment is not lost on Jennings-Bey.

“Me being from the inner city and going to school to be a doctor — it’s big,” Jennings-Bey said. “I’m living in the same neighborhood and experiencing the same type of community violence exposure as others. To see me overcome, it was joyous for my community.”

### HER RESEARCH

Over the summer, Jennings-Bey released her thesis

as a book, “Urban Violence and Schools: Perspectives of High School Graduates,” to share students’ perspectives on how exposure to neighborhood violence affected their cognitive functioning in the classroom. Her qualitative study focused on seven Syracuse City School District graduates who had experienced the homicide of a friend, relative or close community member. The study gives voice to these students, who felt that their school’s response after a tragedy lacked support, sympathy and understanding.

“I want people to know this research is not what Dr. Jennings-Bey thinks; this is what your students are saying,” she emphasized. “Their feedback can be used to help teach the teachers and administrators on how they can better serve our students.”

Another finding from her study: A gender difference exists in the way students grieve. Females shared that they want to be able to talk in groups, while males didn’t necessarily want immediate discussions.

“Females across the board said it would be most therapeutic to be pulled from class and to have a place where they could collectively go to grieve,” Jennings-Bey said. “The boys just wanted you to acknowledge that something has happened, ask them if they are OK and when they are ready, provide an opportunity to talk.”

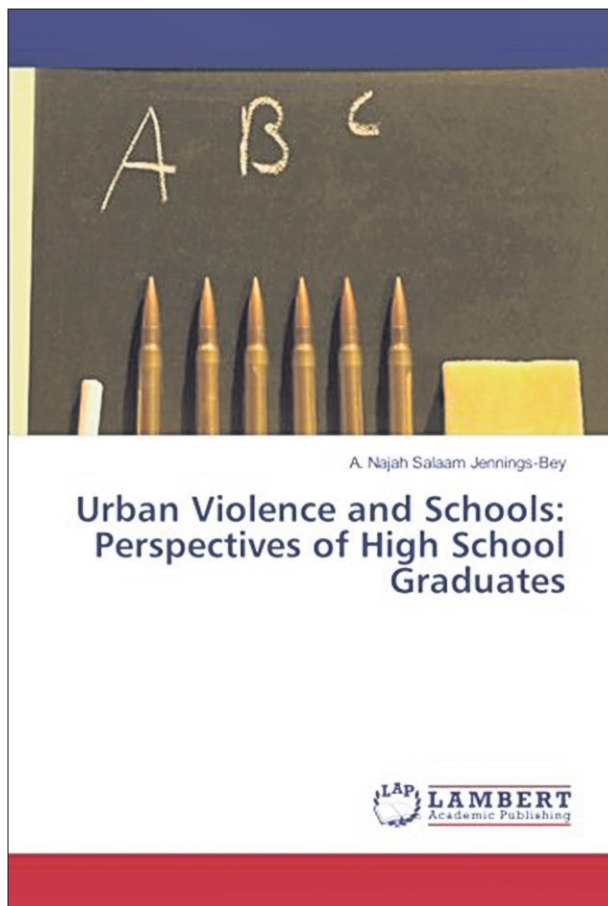
Because her study focused on graduates of the district, she asked all participants what helped them complete school despite having experienced one or more traumas. She found four major contributing factors: having a support system, self-determination, staying active and memorializing the deceased.

What the students meant by memorializing is that completing high school was in memory or in honor of their friend — doing what they thought the friend they lost would have wanted. One female shared in the study: “When a person really close to you pass(es), it’s like what am I continuing for, and then you think about it ... You do it because you think it would make that person happy and proud of you.”

### FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE

Growing up in a neighborhood rampant with crime and gang violence, Jennings-Bey experienced similar traumas as the students she interviewed. In high school, a friend was murdered. She herself has been shot (as a bystander at a party while in college) and stabbed (in the hand during a fight at a bar). While in college, her close friend was murdered by a boyfriend. In her foreword, she lists the names of friends she lost and also acknowledges those she calls “fallen angels,” whose deaths touched her participants. She even knew many of those victims personally.

“When students found out who was doing the study, it made it a lot easier for that population to be open and sit down with me,” she said. “I wasn’t just somebody coming from Syracuse University or Le Moyne (College), and they knew I understood what they



> The research conducted by Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey was released as a book over the summer. | Photo Provided

were going through.”

As she sat with students, hearing their stories and even shedding tears with them, she says their feelings were the same as those she had 15 to 20 years ago. When fellow classmate Alex Williams was fatally shot in the back in Jennings-Bey’s freshman year of high school, she says she felt her school offered limited comfort.

“We would crack up on the bus every single day on our way to school,” she remembers. “Then one day, he was gone.”

When she arrived at William Nottingham High School the day after her friend was killed, she says then-principal Granger Ward held a moment of silence during the regular announcement.

“But that was it,” she said about the school’s response.

No conversations were held in the classrooms; no directive was given for students to seek out a counselor if they felt the need to talk or discuss their feelings, she said.

“It was almost as if nobody cared,” she said about how she interpreted the school’s reaction.

“There was no direct process for me to talk about and receive help for what I was going through,” Jennings-Bey said.

“Thus I suppressed it.”

Like her participants, she found support from her family and said staying busy with school helped her carry on.

## MORE INFO ON STUDY

Here is more about the participants:

- For confidentiality purposes, each participant took on a pseudonym based on their genders
- Three were male
- Four were female
- One identified as bi-racial (African-American and European American)
- Six identified as either African-American or black
- Six were raised in a single-female household
- One was raised in a two-parent household

The most common terms students used to describe their feelings after a traumatic event:

- Darkness
- Loneliness
- Sadness
- Confused
- Disappointed
- Alone
- Numb

### Study’s findings:

- Students need to feel the school’s staff are emotionally invested in their well-being
- Students want staff to show empathy
- Staff must have knowledge about the community
- There is a cultural disconnect between staff and students

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Learn more about the background of Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey:

- A longtime resident of Syracuse's South Side with roots in New York City
- Graduate of William Nottingham High School
- BA in English/communications, Le Moyne College
- MS in teaching, Le Moyne College
- Ed.D. in Executive Leadership, St. John Fisher College
- President of Kappa Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc.
- Served as an educator for more than 15 years
- Taught Spanish at Corcoran High School
- Served as academic dean at Jordan-Elbridge High School, where she oversaw student discipline
- Currently is vice principal at Dr. King Elementary School



> Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey, author of “Urban Violence and Schools: Perspectives of High School Graduates,” is a vice principal at Dr. King Elementary School. | Tony D. Curtis, Staff Photo

### BIOLOGY OF TRAUMA

When one experiences trauma from a sudden loss of a close friend or loved one, that stress is stored physically in the body, says Kate van Ingen Kelsen, a licensed therapist with more than 25 years of experience.

“It’s how our biology works,” she said. “Experiencing a trauma sets off an alarm system in our brains. Our heart rate increases, our blood pressure rises — your body gets ready for fight or flight. You’re not always conscious that this is happening. That’s just how our bodies are built to react.”

Kelsen has a private practice and works with Head Start as the educational center’s mental health coordinator. She also leads Community Resiliency Model trainings through the Trauma Resource Institute, whose mission is to help individuals understand the biology of traumatic stress and learn specific skills to return themselves to balance.

“Those that have completed our training have told me they felt relief after learning what they were feeling was normal — that this is the way their body is intended to work,” she said.

Trainings are offered by request, and she has led groups of fellow Head Start employees, mental health workers, first responders and even police officers. During the training, attendees don’t have to talk about the actual trauma. The focus is on learning how to recognize the body’s response and implement techniques to re-regulate

one’s nervous system.

Kelsen says symptoms of exposure to trauma may include loss of concentration, acting out, aggression or withdrawal and hyper vigilance, which is an enhanced state of sensory sensitivity accompanied by an exaggerated intensity of behaviors to detect threats. This state also causes an increase in anxiety.

“Creating a sense of safety and connection is key,” Kelsen said. “Once these needs are met, for example, a high-school student could return to normal coursework and perform what is asked of them, but not until they have come back into their resilient zone where they can better handle ups and downs.”

### ACKNOWLEDGING PAIN

Participants in Jennings-Bey’s study reported that teachers with whom they had close relationships offered emotional support individually, but that overall the school’s response was never unified and often insensitive.

One female shared in the study that when a student athlete was murdered, the school gave comfort to its students for the day. But previous student homicides received little attention. The student stated in the study: “I think that after student X, they [administrators] should continue to do it ... don’t do something once when you’re not going to do it for other people.”

In further discussions on how that student athlete’s homicide was observed, Jennings-Bey heard from some

participants that it appeared the school valued that student over others.

“I think the school districts should be taking a look at what students are saying because their story is the same story across the country,” Robinson said. “Administrators need to ask themselves: ‘What is our school’s response when there’s a tragic incident that takes place in our community?’”

### HOW TO RESPOND

At Dr. King Elementary School, where Jennings-Bey has served as vice principal since 2015, she developed a crisis intervention team to first alert the staff that an act of violence has occurred in the community. Next, staff can work to identify any students who might be affected.

“Any time I hear that there’s been a homicide, I’ll alert the administrative staff and all the social workers and psychologists based at the school,” she said. “Then when we come to school the next day, I make sure staff and teachers are greeting students at the door, that we do a moment of silence, and I say the name of the family impacted to personalize it.”

By incorporating the students’ suggestions, the crisis plan she devised helps the school district be sensitive to students’ needs, she said, adding that schools should suspend regular coursework and provide avenues to address grief.

“After a neighborhood tragedy, teachers should be

**“Creating a sense of safety and connection is key.”**

— Kate van Ingen Kelsen

directed that the school is suspending regular day-to-day activities,” she said. “And as a vice principal, my expectation (of teachers) is that you have some kind of conversation with your (classroom) children.”

She says it is not her expectation that teachers serve as trauma counselors, but acknowledging that a tragedy has happened and asking students if they are OK is a simple way for teachers to show compassion.

“I think unfortunately, in education, we’re starting to depersonalize everything. We forget we’re in the human service business,” she said. “We don’t treat our children in the urban environment as if they were our own. Because if a child was your own and you knew that somebody they knew had been murdered, everything else would be secondary. Your first priority is to make sure that they are psychologically stable.”

## TRAUMA TRAINING

Kate van Ingen Kelsen is a local trainer for the national Trauma Resource Institute.

One offering is Community Resiliency Model training, which is a set of skills that ordinary people can use for their own benefit and for the benefit of their community to respond to the impact of traumatic experiences.

### Goals of the training:

- To learn simple biologically based skills, based upon current neuroscience, to help individuals get back into balance in body, mind and spirit after a traumatic event
- To reduce symptoms related to stressful/traumatic experiences
- To create “trauma informed” and “resiliency informed” individuals and communities

### Trainings are by request:

Contact instructors **Bill Cross** at (315) 559-0224 or **Kate van Ingen Kelsen** at (315) 247-8869

Find out more about the **Trauma Resource Institute:** [traumaresourceinstitute.com](http://traumaresourceinstitute.com)



> Dr. Najah Salaam Jennings-Bey was voted by her peers at St. John Fisher College to represent the class as a graduation speaker this past May. | Photo provided

## CENTER OFFERINGS

### F.A.C.E.S.

F.A.C.E.S. works in providing HIV awareness and quality prevention services focusing primarily on communities of color. This confidential program provides education and distribution of supplies for people, including access to HIV testing and follow-up support services.

#### Director:

Juhanna Rogers, MSW

#### Contact Information:

(315) 474-6823

### HEALTHY START FATHERHOOD

Healthy Start Fatherhood supports expecting fathers and fathers with children under 2 years old. A goal is to engage participants in learning about the physical and emotional impact of pregnancy on relationships. The program aims to teach new fathers parenting skills and provide them with support in accessing medical, legal and social services.

#### Program Coordinator:

John Akins

#### Contact Information:

(315) 671-5821

# SETTING A VISION

Meet Syracuse Community Connections — a new name after 41 years



> Local jazz band UAD plays a variety of classics to energize the room and get guests out on the dance floor during the gala celebrating a special evening for newly named Syracuse Community Connections. | Riley Bunch, Staff Photo

By | Riley Bunch  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

## Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility celebrates anniversary, name change in style

On a recent Saturday night, one of Syracuse's longtime service organizations threw a party — inviting everyone from its board members to local residents — to celebrate a double benchmark, the organization's birthday and its name change.

As the music played in a crowded room, the Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility, Inc., marked its 41st anniversary and also reintroduced itself as Syracuse Community Connections.

Held in the CNY Philanthropy Center in downtown Syracuse, the fundraising event provided a look into the inner workings of one of Syracuse's best-known human services organizations.

Sharon Owens, the organization's chief executive officer and master of ceremonies that night, said the idea behind the rebranding has been in the works for the past year.

"We are 41 years in business as Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility," Owens said. "Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility doesn't quite roll off the tongue."

The event is among the first in a series of introductions to the city under the new name, backed by new strategic goals for the organization. A vision statement is in the works, along with a new three- to five-year strategic plan, Owens said.

"We attempted to be all things to all people and we cannot be that," Owens said. "We are strategically looking at what we do well, looking at some other opportunities to serve our community, and making sure we make the connections to provide the best service."

Chairperson Susan Stearns said the night was about "making a splash in the community" and aiming to address poverty on a multitude of levels. "We envision this to put us in the spotlight of Syracuse," she said. "Eradicating poverty by prevention, education and intervention."

Terrence Carguello, a board member, said he hoped the event would highlight the organization and also offer an atmosphere for guests to have a good time. "It's more of a 'fun raiser' than a fundraiser," he said.

Owens agreed, telling guests: "When you bought your ticket, you didn't read the fine print that you have to dance to at least one song."

The evening's speaker, Calvin Corridors, told the crowd that the organization helped him to become





> Calvin Corridors, vice president of Pathfinder Bank and life-long patron of the Southwest Community Center's programs, spoke as the keynote at the 41st anniversary gala of the Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility, Inc. | Riley Bunch, Staff Photo

the first black vice president of Pathfinder Bank. "The Southwest Community Center has served thousands of families and kids, and I am no exception," he said.

He and his brother learned to swim through programs at the center, and its work-training programs aided in his journey from popcorn-stand vendor to high-ranking bank official.

"I grew up in a place where I didn't see a lot of people who emulated what I could be," Corridors said. "The programs at the Southwest Community Center were a refuge for me. I would take my kids there even as an adult because it is, and always will be, a safe haven."

Owens said she was proud that the annual celebration "is really gaining a reputation in the larger community" as a way for people to support a community organization and also have a good time. "We do a couple formality things and the rest of the night is just networking, kicking back and enjoying yourself."

A silent auction included a basketball autographed by Jim Boeheim. All profits from the evening went to the organization and its programs, Owens said.

The ceremony ended with a call for action. "Our poverty is an opportunity to look at the way we do business," Owens told the guests. "We cannot forget our native sons and daughters. I'm asking you to look for them and include them in the fabric of this community."

## CENTER OFFERINGS

### WORK TRAIN

This recruitment and referral-focused program aims to give residents career opportunities. Participants are given access to training targeted at obtaining careers that pay family-sustaining wages through assisting businesses.

### Coordinator:

Terrence Byrd-EI

### Contact Information:

(315) 671-5841

(315) 317-3941



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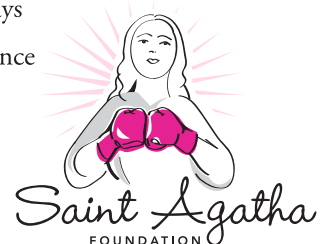
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## ABOUT 'SELF MADE'

Shamroc Dancil's film "Self Made" premiered Nov. 21, 2014.

The film discusses drug trafficking issues within the South Side of the city.

DVDs of "Self Made" can be purchased on the movie's Facebook page: Syracuse's "Self Made" Movie.

# DIRECTING CHANGE

*Tyrone Jackson, Shamroc Dancil use filmmaking to inspire others*



> Tyrone "Tizak" Jackson is a jack-of-all-trades in his company, All Grown Up ENT. | Photo Provided

By | Tammy Reese  
*Community contributor*

Meet two men who are breaking stereotypes while making their dreams come true

In times of violence and crime, two talented black men stand out in our community as role models who are breaking stereotypes. Tyrone Jackson and Shamroc Dancil have made their visions of filmmaking come true, and they are inspiring others.

### TYRONE 'TIZAK' JACKSON

Jackson is the CEO of All Grown Up ENT. He can do it all. Jackson is a music artist, editor, director, writer, actor, producer, camera technician and more.

Since childhood, he has loved movies, especially "Little Shop of Horrors" and "Harlem Nights." He eventually began making his own movies by teaching himself the ins and outs of the film business. Jackson is currently producing a film he wrote, stars in, directs and edits. The title is "I Got This." You can also check out his acting skills and music in "Loving The Same Man" — a film written by me — when it is released.

Jackson understands that it takes hard work, patience, sacrifice and dedication to succeed. His creativity is mind blowing, and he is ready to show the world. To contact Jackson, email him at [tizak7@gmail.com](mailto:tizak7@gmail.com).

### SHAMROC DANCIL

Dancil is a self-taught director and writer who made a Syracuse movie classic with Nykeace Bachus. The title is "Self Made." This film features many local talents on cast and crew, with great writing, locations, editing and acting. "Self Made" inspired many local writers, such as myself, to make movies. When the film premiered, hundreds of people came out, and many more got personal copies. The response was stellar. Dancil, who has been making films for a few years, has drive and passion.

He explained that he originally got a camera to promote his music and make his own music videos, but then decided to make films. He is making a film called "The People's Champ." He wrote it and directs it, operates the camera and edits. A lead cast member recently passed away, but Dancil still has the motivation and courage to film in his cast member's memory. That's perseverance.

Making a film can be stressful, he says, with a lot of behind-the-scenes work that people don't see, but it also is fun and rewarding to share a message through film. His advice to anyone wanting to pursue film: Pray and grind. Just go get it. Don't quit. And without God, you can't do anything. To contact Dancil, email him at [Shamrocdancil@gmail.com](mailto:Shamrocdancil@gmail.com).

*Tammy Reese is a CNY award-winning writer and actress. She can be reached at [Tammyreese7@gmail.com](mailto:Tammyreese7@gmail.com)*

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# Erin D. Smith

*Nominated by both Victoria Coit and his wife, Simangaliso Smith, for being a supportive father to a blended family*

By | Ashley Kang  
*The Stand director*

**Q: What did it feel like when you became a father?**

A: I always knew that I wanted to be a father. When my son was born, I felt in that moment like I had become a man. I knew that my responsibilities had shifted from being self-centered to all-encompassing. The labor made me appreciate what a woman goes through.

**Q: What can you share about your children?**

A: I'll start from oldest to youngest. My son Jabari Smith is 19. He is a sophomore in college and is my artistic child. He's won many awards for his art and is very creative. Kai Smith is 18 and a freshman in college majoring in biology. She wants to be a doctor. She is my super hard worker — always on task, scholarships to school, very focused. Next is my 15-year-old stepson Isaiah Johnson. He's the one that challenges my patience and that is super independent. He's also a great dancer. Then there are two 11-year-olds: Jayda Johnson, my stepdaughter, and Sanaa Smith, my daughter. Jayda is just like her mother. She is very organized. She's the first one up every morning; she's the little mother of the house. Sanaa is a straight-A student who loves to sing and dance. She currently wants a set of drums. Lastly is our baby, Erin Smith, who is 6. She has a bombastic personality and is just like her dad — a ham, a talker and a people person.

**Q: What was your relationship like with your father?**

A: He was an awesome father. Everything he did with us I always wanted to emulate. Everybody in the community looked up to him as well. He was a star athlete and had a master's degree in education. When I was in high school, he served as the president of my school's PTO, which was unusual because it's usually a mom. He was very involved with our education and stressed the importance of education. He worked for the Federal Department of Education, and my mother was a teacher. They also kept us busy with sports and enrolled us in any extracurricular activity that was available and inexpensive.

**Q: What wisdom did your father share with you?**

A: First: Don't place value on the things that you can buy for your children, but place value on the experiences that you can give them. We never had a lot of money growing up, but we always had a good place to live that was clean, and we always spent a lot of time together as a family — vacations, summer camps, church. He also instilled in me the value of hard work. They didn't buy us brand-name sneakers or video games. When it came time to buy new school shoes, he'd say the lawn mower is out back, go ask the neighbors to cut their grass or offer to shovel snow. I learned, if you want something, you have to put the extra effort in yourself to go get it. And he taught me to serve my community.



**MEET FATHER Erin:** Smith, 46, has six children. He works as an electronic engineer and is involved in the community. He serves as banquet chair for the 100 Black Men of Syracuse, Inc., president of the local Alpha Phi Alpha chapter and has helped Mary Nelson over the years with her annual Back to School Backpack Giveaway. | Marianne Barthelemy, Staff Photo

**Q: Why are fathers important?**

A: Fathers set the tone and expectation. Nothing can make you feel better than a father's reassurance from a pat on the back, and nothing can make you move faster to correct yourself than a father's grip on your shoulder. Also, dads provide a sense of security that everything is OK. If a dad is relaxed, everybody in the house is relaxed.

**Q: Is there anything you do as a father that would surprise people?**

A: With a household with four girls, by default, I end up doing a lot of girls' activities. I end up seeing a lot of movies you wouldn't necessarily think of a guy going out to see and listening to music you would not expect a 46-year-old black guy to be grooving to — the teen musical genre is big at our house. But that's what they love, and I want to stay close so I can understand what they are engaging in and what their influences are.

*“Make the most of every moment.”*

**Q: What's your opinion about commonly held stereotypes of black fathers?**

**A:** No. 1 is that we're not here and that we're not accountable. But I guess it depends on who is in your circle. When I look at my circle of friends, they are all amazing fathers — and not just to their own children, but to other children by serving as mentors. They are responsible fathers that support and spend time with their kids and ensure their children have the things that they need and some of what they want.

**Q: Any advice for dads?**

**A:** Time moves quickly, and your children will be out of the house, be adults and may not have much time for you. So make the most of every moment and put in the time now.

**Q: What is one of your favorite moments with your kids?**

**A:** We no longer buy Christmas gifts — instead we travel. Each holiday we take a major vacation as a family. Last year we went to Mexico and saw the Mayan Ruins, spent time on the beach and visited several historical sites. The kids had fun, and it was a memory they will never forget. This year, we will be taking a Caribbean cruise.

**Q: Final thoughts?**

**A:** Reach out and reach down. This means that every father has a responsibility to reach out and be a father figure to children outside of his own household. Then every father also has a responsibility to reach down and mentor younger fathers on what to do and what not to do.



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SU Class of 2015

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## 5 TIPS TO MOTIVATE

George Lynch's top five motivational tips:

1. You can overcome anything you undergo
2. We all have greatness within
3. Your passion should help you decide your dreams and goals
4. It's OK to fail — failure is not a person, it's an event
5. You must have a vision. Those who see their dreams are able to live their dream.

# GET MOTIVATED

Real estate agent values role as motivational speaker, book co-author



> George Lynch works as a motivational speaker, a teacher at the Southwest Community Center and a real estate agent. He recently contributed a chapter to a book, “The Change 11: Insights into Self-Empowerment.” | Rachel Gilbert, Staff Photo

By | Rachel Gilbert  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

George Lynch's goal is to share life tips, career advice that he didn't have growing up

George Lynch has been teaching cursive writing to youth at the Southwest Community Center, training them to write the big, loopy letters normally associated with birthday cards from grandparents. Many kids no longer are taught this art, and Lynch feels that's a big problem.

“I was telling them, ‘Hey, one day you’re all going to be successful, and people are going to want your autograph, so you need to know how to put that thing together,’” Lynch said. “So I had them sit down and do some cursive, and they really enjoyed it.”

Lynch, 24, is a motivational speaker who works at the Southwest Community Center, located at 401 South Ave. He travels to speak to groups of all ages and recently contributed a chapter to a motivational book. Lynch said he wants to offer advice that wasn't available to him when he was growing up.

Lynch was born in the Bronx to a single mother. He played basketball throughout high school, using the sport as a vehicle to leave the neighborhood and attend college.

When he didn't make the cut for the basketball team at Farleigh Dickinson University, he transferred to Tompkins Cortland Community College. There, Lynch played basketball and soccer, while taking classes in entrepreneurship.

After his graduation in 2015, Lynch moved to Syracuse, looking for a different environment.

Before figuring out what he wanted to do, Lynch bounced around among various jobs. He described how, when working in retail, he was staring at a pair of jeans when he realized that temporary jobs weren't going to help him achieve his dreams.

“I told myself, ‘I’m done,’ and from that day forward, I called myself an entrepreneur and have been going ever since,” Lynch said.

He submitted his two-week notice at the retail job and continued working toward his real estate license. Soon, he was working in the field.

Lynch works to help the community in everything he does. Whether he is helping a family find a dream home, inspiring someone to pursue a dream, or helping kids learn to write cursive, Lynch says he pours his full energy into the job.

Dressed in a snappy suit one early weekday morning, Lynch says he works seven days a week, trying to be a

positive effect on as many lives as possible. This could be in the form of a casual conversation with a stranger, or an organized presentation to a group of people.

Lynch landed his job at the Southwest Community Center after speaking to a group of kids there.

“We saw that he’s motivated, he’s well put together,” said Halston Canty, a youth counselor and substance abuse specialist for the center, who was so impressed that he offered Lynch a job.

“He had a vision, and that’s very important,” Canty said.

Lynch now works with groups of 15 to 45 at a time. He said a program such as this is vital for the South Side community. He wants to show the kids he works with that their lives don’t need to be dictated by whatever situations they are in right now.

Many of the youth Lynch works with believe the way to success is through being an athlete or a rapper. He wants to show them there are more options, such as becoming a doctor or lawyer.

“I feel like some of the kids have no vision, and with no vision, you have no direction, and with no direction, you have no purpose,” Lynch said. “So just educating them on things that are often tucked away from them is what I feel the issue is, education.”

Canty explained further. “We live in an economically disadvantaged part of town, so a lot of people don’t have access to healthcare, they don’t have access to food, they don’t have access to housing, they don’t have access to education,” Canty said. “Being that the Southwest

Community Center provides that, it’s very, very important for that to be there.”

Russell Robinson III said he has known Lynch for many years and has tried to act as a father figure. Lynch participated in a basketball program run by Robinson that changed Lynch’s life. Robinson said he always knew Lynch was right for public service and that he took the right route in life.

Lynch has “an innate leadership quality in him,” Robinson said.

This year, Lynch teamed up with Robinson to buy and provide more than 50 bookbags and sets of school supplies for children in Lynch’s hometown, the Bronx.

Lynch works tirelessly to improve his home and his adopted community. In Syracuse this fall, Lynch could be spotted smiling and clapping as he welcomed children back to school.

The community aspect of Syracuse is what drew Lynch to the city. He said a favorite characteristic is how everyone is interconnected. People who attend his speeches often reach out to him, asking for further advice.

That, Lynch said, is his mark on the community.

“It can be enlightening that person or helping them to overcome an obstacle or just sharing some advice with them that will keep them going,” Lynch said. “I don’t want to motivate people for just five minutes. If I can enlighten you or share some gems with you that can help you prepare yourself for life, that’s the best thing in the world.”

## READ UP ON IT

Get an extended version of George Lynch’s motivational advice in the book he co-authored

**Title:** “The Change 11: Insights Into Self-Empowerment”

**What:** 20 co-authors contributed to this motivational book

**Length:** 262 pages

**Cost:** \$19.95 on Amazon.com

**Details:** The book teaches how to weather changes and take a journey of self-discovery, according to Amazon.com

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