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PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

## FRED JORDAN SAVING MINORITY CHILDREN USING MARTIAL ARTS

Nicholas Short



Fred Jordan

Fred Jordan, the founder and CEO of the American Martial Arts and Science Association (AMASA) and head instructor of Tornado University of Martial Arts, is planning something special this holiday season for Chicago's minority children: an opportunity to become stronger, more upstanding human beings. The martial arts have saved his life and he hopes that, starting December 19th, it will do the same for several other children.

On that date, a student exhibition

and holiday reception will be held at a brand-new facility on 3065 E. 93rd Street. The event will feature a student workshop and class, individual points sparring and resumes, a student promotion ceremony, and a family floor time/holiday reception. Jordan, a former U.S. marine who has been in the martial arts for 22 years, hopes that the event will be a starting point for not only his school, but for children who live in dangerous, impoverished areas.

For the event, Jordan and The Jordan Martial Arts Mentoring Initiative are preparing to provide 10,000 scholarships city-wide in 2010 to children from less fortunate families. "Money should not be the reason younger people do not get good leadership," he said.

Providing guidance and discipline for troubled children is a top priority for Jordan, who lived at 90th & Bishop since he was 11 years old. The area was—and still is—a stamping ground for street gangs. Many of his childhood friends became gang members, despite that fact that they, he recalled, were not "gang material." Jordan decided to follow a more enlightened path. "Someone couldn't take my God-given right to have peace," he said. Two of his friends were killed and another one is in jail.

The fate of his friends still upsets

him. The same people he used to play ball with in grammar school ended up shooting at each other. He refuses to let the same thing happen to any other child, so he uses his wisdom and fighting skills to provide leadership to as many of them as possible. And he encourages others in his age group (ages 29-40) to do the same. "I blame a lot of my age group," he explained, "for not providing more leadership now to a generation behind us that's calling for leadership. In my opinion, they're asking and begging for help." A male influence, to him, is especially important for children. "Men in our age category can help deter what's going on in our community if we gave more leadership," He said.

Growing up with his mother, his grandmother and his older sister, Jordan did not have a father figure that provided the leadership he needed. But when he was 13 years old, he met Gregory Jaco, who founded Tornado University. Young Jordan first become interested in the Martial Arts for the same reason that most children become interested in it: He saw it on television and in movies and thought it was cool. Jaco, however, taught Jordan that the Martial Arts can offer so much more. Jaco, Jordan explained, was not interested in winning tournaments and collecting first-place trophies. He wanted to use the Martial Arts to teach younger people "how to

survive in their society." "I was fortunate to have met a person to teach it from a human development perspective," he said.

Jaco also used his teachings to guide his son, Wasalu Muhammad Jaco, better known to hip-hop lovers as Lupe Fiasco. Lupe, who once lived in the Lawndale area, started taking martial arts classes at age 3 and became a black belt at age 10, according to Wikipedia. Jordan believes that Gregory and the martial arts did for Lupe what they did for him: it provided him with focus and integrity. "We are very proud of him," Jordan said.

Jordan provided similar lessons for several children. "Seventeen of my students," he said, "graduated from high school with full scholarships. And they all came out of college with either two degrees or number one in their class. And it's because they learned about focus." He takes pride in the 70 students he teaches, and he hopes to expand his teachings to 10,000 more with help from the student exhibition. "In order for us to save lives, we have to provide opportunity and give leadership by account. And that's what we strive for everyday," he said.

For more information about AMASA, Tornado University, and the holiday event, please contact Rachel Maynie at (773) 530-0056 (email: info@amasainc.com) or go to www.amasainc.com.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**CPS Changes  
Admissions  
Policies for  
Magnet and  
Selective  
Enrollment  
Schools**  
**PAGE - 3**

**AT THE FLICKS**  
**PAGE - 4**

**FROM SISTA TO  
SISTA**  
**PAGE - 5**

**THE TRUE  
MEANING OF  
CHRISTMAS**  
**PAGE - 6**

## LANE CHANGE: Lawsuit Could Enable Stroger To Turn Tables on His Detractors

A Commentary by Travles R. Lane - the1tlane@yahoo.com

Wounded by the recent override of his tax cut veto, struggling against rock bottom voter approval ratings and threatened by the insurgent candidacies of a pair of black women and a white man that could ultimately spell the end of his administration, it's easy to imagine what Cook County President Todd Stroger would ask of Santa if he sat upon the Big Guy's lap this Christmas season.

"Todd has about six weeks to completely remake himself," a childhood friend and local political operative told me in a recent conversation. "He has to totally transform his image if he is to have any chance at all (at winning the Feb. 2 Democratic primary)."

Well, before he sits on Santa's knee and starts asking the jolly old elf for some yuletide miracle that will help him keep his late father's job come February, Stroger may better sit down with

his lawyer and sue the state over the constitutionality of House Bill 4625, the veto override law Governor Pat Quinn signed to specifically curtail the power of Stroger's office.

Stroger also has to quit allowing his opponents the luxury of defining him by their perceptions of him as a weak, petulant and corrupt little boy unqualified to fill his daddy's large political shoes. And he needs to make his enemies on the board take ownership of their share in the tax increase/tax repeal mess that provoked a lightning quick change in state law to weaken the presidency.

And when Tony Peraica and the rest of the dirty dozen Cook County commissioners who voted last week to roll back half of the county's 1-cent sales tax over Stroger's veto try to tout their underhanded victory as a triumph for local reform, Stroger should be armed with the lawsuit he has threatened to file challenging the middle-of-the-

game-changing law that made it possible.

Because that lawsuit would perhaps help explain to the voting public why it all of a sudden became so necessary to so quickly change a law that was authorized in 1970 when the present Illinois Constitution was ratified. That was three county presidents ago, probably before anyone here could envision a brash, young and inexperienced black son replacing his late father in a job that had before been the exclusive province of white politicians.

Anyway, as has been widely reported those who pushed for the law to lower the Cook County veto override threshold from 14 to 11 commissioners included "some suburban Cook lawmakers who may be vulnerable in next year's election" because of the one-cent tax increase passed by the board in 2008. In other words, the increase was a shared board decision, not a presidential dictate.

With his lawsuit Stroger could also assume the role of the people's champion, pointing out that as the chief executive of the people, his power should be commensurate with the final authority that is the people's in the conduct of county business. Weakening the presidency weakens the people because the president alone on the board is elected by all the people of the county.

This issue alone could generate the gravitas he needs to shed his Steve Urkel image if he can muster the command presence and passion needed to overcome the big money and Chicago Machine forces aligned against him next year. All Todd has is the people, and they alone are his best hope.

Because despite all the demonizing from much of the major press and the Peraica crowd, Stroger can cite fiscal soundness, decent services and decisive actions to fire people when necessary as accomplishments of his administration.

He is helping those who most need help.

In the end, my friend and I also agreed Stroger may not be as easy to pick off next year as the pundits are prognosticating. He has his base and the power of incumbency. He has shown he will fight long and hard.

A lawsuit would demonstrate his resolve to fight even beyond defeat whenever ultimate victory is a real possibility.

One thing's for sure—Toni Preckwinkle and Dorothy Brown notwithstanding—with Stroger in the midst of a constitutional fight against reducing the power of an entire executive office merely to weaken the incumbent, black chief executive, no one in Cook County would have any trouble next year of deciding who the black candidate in the contest truly is.

Visit us on our website at [www.nlcen.org](http://www.nlcen.org) for more articles, photos, information and more.



## North Lawndale Community News Winner of the 2005 SBC Beyond the Call Award

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# NLCN 2009 FOCUS HEALTH & THE ECONOMY

One of the major issues of the recent presidential campaign was health care. Health care costs have become an escalating burden for employers and consumers alike. Research has shown that total health spending is reduced when consumers bear more responsibility for their health and the expenses related to it. One of the best ways to increase life expectancy while reducing disability is to encourage a culture of self-care practices.

Self care is personal health maintenance. It is the care taken by individuals towards their own health and well being. Self care includes the actions individuals take in their role as care givers for their children, their families, and others to stay fit and to maintain good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Extreme self care means making choices and decisions that honor our soul in everyday living. It means feeding ourselves whole foods, moving our bodies every day, balancing silence with activity, and surrounding ourselves with supportive, like-minded people who are committed to improving or restoring health and uplifting the quality of their lives as well.

More than 75% of people surveyed in the United Kingdom said if they had guidance or support from a professional or peer they would feel far more confident about taking care of their own health. Research shows that supporting self care can improve health outcomes and increase patient satisfaction. Our intention is to support individuals, families, institutions, and communities in their efforts to practice extreme self care. During 2009, the North Lawndale Community News focuses on cost-effective ways you can improve your health by practicing self care.

The Economy has made itself the number one issue with gas prices reaching almost \$5.00 per gallon and having a domino effect on everything else sold, except housing stock which experienced a terrible decline with the high rate of foreclosures. The Chicago metropolitan area reported 5,821 new foreclosure filings in December, a foreclosure rate of one new foreclosure filing for every 499 households — more than twice the national average. That brought the area's fourth quarter foreclosure total to 16,949 and its 2006 foreclosure total to 57,706, according to Realty Trac.

Even transportation on the CTA went on the rise with one day passes increasing by seventy-five cents and monthly passes increased by \$10.00 from \$75.00 to \$85.00. Those are just a few of the increases.

The North Lawndale Community News this year is expanding on last years financial focus to give attention to its broader parent the economy. Saving and making smarter shopping decisions will help stop us losing through wasteful choices. Finding new ways to increase our income is a necessity for many in an area where gentrification is not going to stop.

One of the hardest things to change is behavior. Modifying behavior seems to be easy when it comes to pain. Social pain lack of money has to be extreme for many to change. 2009 should be different for many and of course many will continue toward economic mistakes and financial ruin.

But in today's information society there is no excuse for not making smart choices. Financial literacy alone is not enough. Look what happened to Lehman Brothers and what's happening to many other financial institutions let alone individuals, families, and small businesses.

Solutions come to the internet, books, economic experts, financial counselors and experts, the media and your economical neighbors.

The North Lawndale Community News will tap into resources and share them with you, our reader. So to help you improve your health and your economy keep reading The North Lawndale News. We say yours because some may not modify their behavior, except when the pain comes and still some won't change.. Your input is also welcome If you have some information that is beneficial please submit it. Let's make smarter health and economic moves for life in 2009.

## THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

The North Lawndale Community News is now published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform our community on resources, events, and issues relevant to them and our neighboring communities. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of our community members.

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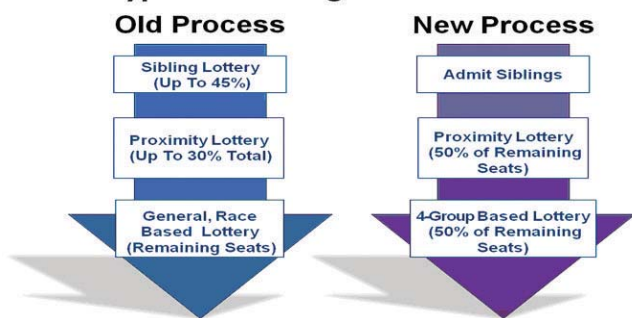
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# CPS Changes Admissions Policies for Magnet and Selective Enrollment Schools

Valerie F. Leonard

## Hypothetical Magnet School Process



CENSUS TRACT 250300		SCORE
Median Family Income	\$43,580	.63
Adult Educational Attainment	Less than HS = 1,009 HS = 746 Some College = 904 College degree = 104 Graduate Educ = 93	.46
% of Single-parent Households =	60%	.31
% of Owner-occupied Homes =	43%	.54
% Non-English Language =	11%	.62
TOTAL		2.56
Composite Score		$2.56 \div 5 = .51$

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The Chicago Public Schools Desegregation Consent Decree of 1980 was vacated in September, 2009 after CPS successfully demonstrated that they have been in compliance over the past 29 years. During a recent press conference, Chicago Public Schools CEO Ron Huberman stated that a 2007 Supreme Court ruling makes it unlawful to use race as a determining factor in school admissions.

The American Civil Liberties Union, Chicago (ACLU) disputes CPS' interpretation of the Supreme Court decision as barring any consideration of race in K-12 school admissions. The court ruled that while race cannot be the "sole" factor, it can be included as one of many factors in the admissions process. The Louisville school district — one of the two school districts involved in the critical 2007 Supreme Court decision — actually is using race as part of its admission plan after the court's decision. (Chicago Tribune)

The CPS proposal is similar to models used in San Francisco, CA; Charlotte, N.C.; and Cambridge, Mass.. Each school district experienced less diversity after they implemented similar plans that used only socio-economic factors.

It should be noted that the new proposal represents a significant reversal in CPS' position regarding the use of race in admissions. In 2005, a blue-ribbon commission of educators and citizens examined the admissions policies at magnet schools, including gifted, classical and selective enrollment elementary and high schools, and made recommendations for the future. The commission concluded that "unless race continues to be a selection factor, there is a danger of losing diversity in some schools." (Chicago Tribune)

It is against this backdrop that CPS must revamp its admissions policies for magnet and selective enrollment schools in time for the 2010-2011 school year.

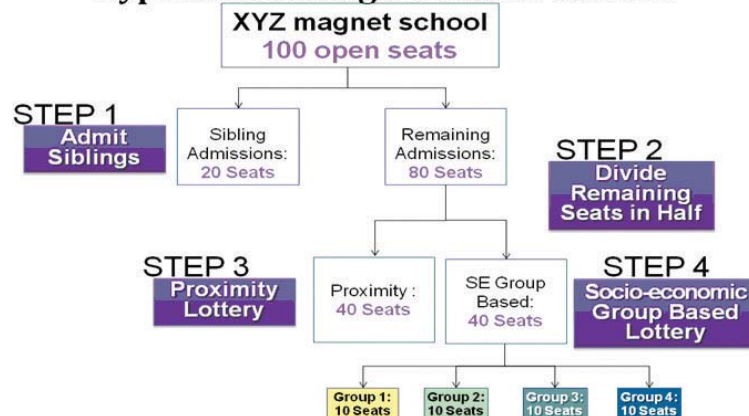
### Magnet Schools Admissions Policy

For magnet schools, all siblings of current students will be admitted providing seats are available, with 50 percent of any remaining seats going into a proximity lottery. Proximity is defined as living within 1.5-miles of an elementary school or a 2.5-mile radius of a high school. Any additional remaining seats will be filled via a citywide socio-economic group-based lottery. Previously sibling admissions were capped at 45 percent and proximity preference was given only if the entire school had less than 30 percent proximity enrollment. (CPS website) The diagram below compares the current admissions ("Old Process") process with the new proposal ("New Process").

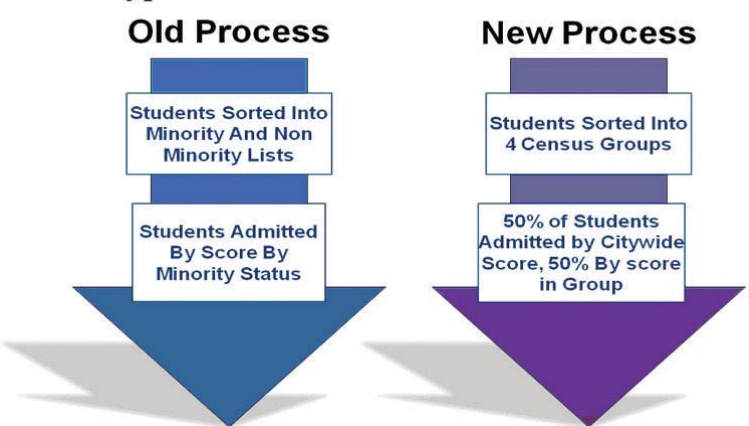
Given that siblings would be automatically admitted into magnet schools (if there are enough slots), and 50% of the remaining seats would go to students living within the local community, CPS utilized a 5-step process to establish 4 groups from which to draw the remaining students.

1. Identifying socio-economic factors that seem to have some correlation

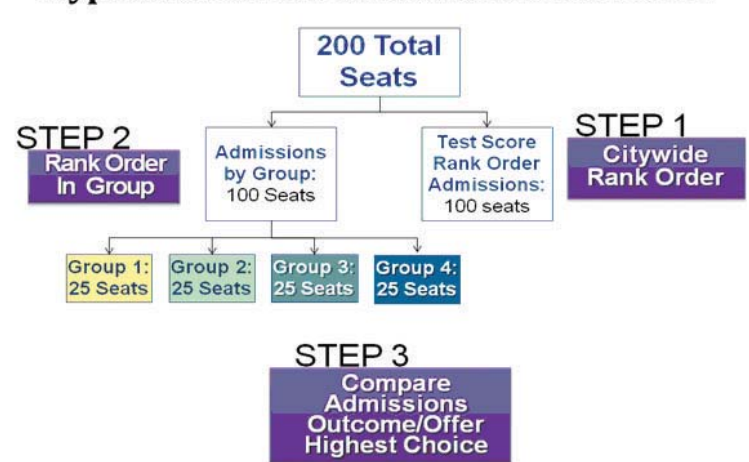
## Hypothetical Magnet School Process



## Hypothetical Selective Enrollment Process



## Hypothetical Selective Enrollment Process



(evidence of cause and effect) with students' academic performance.

2. Analyzing and scoring each of the factors at the Census tract level for each of Chicago's 874 Census tracts and assigning a composite score for each

3. Rank ordering each of the Census tracts by composite score

4. Determining the number of school age children in each tract

5. Dividing the 874 Census tracts into 4 groups of approximately equal size, based on the number of children in each group. The median income for Group 1 is \$22,959. The median income for Group 2 is \$32,120. The median income for Group 3 is \$44,500. The median income for Group 4 is \$61,862.

The following chart, using data from Census Tract 250300 in Austin, provides an example of how each of the Census tracts was analyzed and scored. This Census tract, with a median family income of \$43,580, would

higher or lower, depending upon the school.

### Selective Enrollment Schools Admissions Policy

For selective enrollments, half the students will be admitted on pure test score rank order and the other half by test score rank order within the socio-economic groups. There are no apparent provisions for siblings or community residents. Selective enrollment applicants will now receive one offer that best matches their qualifications and the preference they indicated on their application. (CPS website) Another point of difference between the two policies is the fact that the current admissions process takes race into consideration. The new system will not. The diagram below summarizes the differences between the current system ("Old Process") and the new proposal ("New Process").

The diagram below summarizes a hypothetical selective enrollment process. It assumes a class of 200 seats. It should be

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be in Group 3.

Outlined below is a hypothetical magnet school admissions process prepared by CPS. The example assumes that there are 100 slots available, and that 20 siblings would be admitted. It should be noted that the actual numbers could be

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noted that actual numbers could be higher or lower.

### Next Steps

The enrollment policies for magnet and selective enrollment schools will be discussed at the CPS board meeting on December 16 at 10:30 a.m., at 125 South Clark Street, in the Board Chamber on the 5th floor. Registration for Public Participation will be held from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. on the 1st Floor of the Clark Street Lobby. Public Participation for these meetings will begin at approximately 10:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m., and will be followed immediately by the Business Meeting.

Visit <http://www.cps.edu/Pages/MagnetSchoolsConsentDecree.aspx> to download court documents regarding the Consent Decree. To download a copy of the CPS Post Desegregation Consent Decree Plan, visit <http://www.scribd.com/doc/22414754/Chicago-Public-Schools-Final-Desegregation-Plan>



# AT THE FLICKS

David H. Schultz, film critic

**ME AND ORSON WELLES** (\*\*1/2) Life is about possibilities that a young aspiring actor feels when he has this opportunity to be part of the rag tag cast of stage performers that would become the infamous Mercury Theater players led by their young competitive and egomaniac actor-director Orson Welles in this entertaining and insightful inspired true story that becomes more than just one's person's brush with fame.

In a worthwhile change of pace role that might not appeal to his "High School Musical" fan base, Zac Efron plays Richard Samuels, a bored school student with a desire to become an actor who train ride to New York in 1937.

An amazing presence and gifted talent at such a young age; The young Welles was forming what would be his troupe of stage players to open in a stage production of "Julius Caesar" that would later be behind the "War of the World" radio hoax on



Halloween and his 1941 movie masterpiece, "Citizen Kane".

While this is more than a brush with fame for Richard who felt his destiny was here, accepting a meager role assigned by Welles who strides for perfection in every aspect and person.

Welles is also enormously competitive that was

forewarn to the young lad by lovely staff member and bit performer, Sonja Jones (Claire Danes) who herself was awaiting her big break from a letter that would bring movie producer/studio owner David O Selznick (the man behind the movie "Gone With The Wind" a couple of years later) to catch her performance.

"Me and Orson Welles" is a wonderfully backstage story built around personal impression and ambition that is one of the best films ever. While through Zac Efron's character's involvement; we get a glimpse at the famous before they were that is smartly directed by Richard Linkletter. PG. 115min, A Freestyle Releasing Co Picture Release - Presented at selected theaters

**Disney's THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG** (\*\*\*) Disney's "The Princess and The Frog" is an animated offering with several distinctive and important factors: It is an energetic and dazzling gumbo style mixture that emulates familiar traces and elements from the old and new animated classics that this studio built its animated reputation on long before Pixar reworked the genre.

Nearly a decade since "Home on The Range" This movie also marks the studio's return to hand drawn 2D animation But this movie is considered a big gamble for Disney in that this film represents their first full fledged black lead heroine animated feature brought to life by Disney veteran animation directors-co-writers, John Musker and Ron Clements, the team that brought Disney out of its last animation funk while setting new standards that began with 1989's "The Little Mermaid".

The film opens with black and white childhood buddies, Tiana and Charlotte playing together inside a wealthy estate. Tiana is the daughter to black seamstress, Endora (Oprah Winfrey) employed by southern rich magnate Big Daddy LaBouff (John Goodman) who is the father to spoil rich daughter, Charlotte (Jennifer Cody) who wishes upon a bright evening star for her "prince charming" to arrive when she's older.

Then news arrives that Prince Naveen (Bruno Campos) is coming to New Orleans, seeking to marry into a wealthy family to retain his high living style that been cut off by his own wealthy royal parents. Tiana is hired to cater the affair that would provide



Prince Naveen and Princess Tiana

her with enough funds to purchase an abandon building for her restaurant, only to learn she's been out-bid for the property.

Soon after Tiana is shocked and confronted by a talking frog who claims to be the Prince who wants Tiana to kiss him to turn him back human into Prince Naveen. Instead, Tiana becomes a frog herself. The duo begin to share an adventure with Louis the gator (delightfully voiced by Michael Leon Wooley) who wants to play trumpet (done by Terence Blanchard) in a human jazz band and a heroic firefly, Ray (Jim Cummings) who helps the pair reach a voodoo high priestess, Mama Odie (Jenifer Lewis) to help the duo break the spell to return human again.

Colorful and magical, under its quick pace and flashy sense of humor that stands on its own without stinging the film with the use of hip, cultural references. The animation is remarkably brilliant cinematic treat. Whatever side effects within the story and characters one might pick over does seem to ruin the fun and fantasy. With the lead characters being interesting and adventurous. There's even a sacrificial death that gets a heavenly reference for life after death that's somber yet brief. Randy Newman's song contributions are less than memorable beyond a few minor exceptions like "Almost There" or the soul stirring "Dig A Little Deeper".

With the mixture and energy in this film, "The Princess and The Frog" is seems rather overdue in

See Flicks page 6

Bert  
Proprietor

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## 2009 Microsoft Office Training Schedule

Date	Class
11/21	Word 2007 Basic To Advance
12/5	Excel 2007 Basic To Advance
12/12	PowerPoint 2007 Basic To Advance
12/19	Access 2007 Basic To Advance
1/9	Computer Fundamentals Windows Vista
1/16	Word 2007 Basic To Advance
1/23	Excel 2007 Basic To Advance
1/30	PowerPoint 2007 Basic To Advance
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## Letter to the Editor

Hate

There is a growing number of violent acts in the Lawndale Community between some say is rival gangs it is so sad to see this violence and anger I don't understand what could make teens and young adults have so much anger in their hearts for each other. What they don't seem to understand is that if you shoot or even murder someone not only do you take their life, but you also end yours; Even if you don't go to jail for the crime you will pay. We see these things on the news ever night: like the young man from Fenger High School that was beaten to death, the only differences is these children and young adults aren't fighting their shooting each other. In the summer time there were a few marches but we need all parents, teachers, police, and especially preachers, before more end up dead, paralyzed, and in jail then we go marching. I

don't live in the Lawndale Community but my family does and my child attends school in the Community. So please let's help our youth because once they pull these triggers they can't change what happens after that.

Hate

Anger

Tired

End

Sheila Gresham

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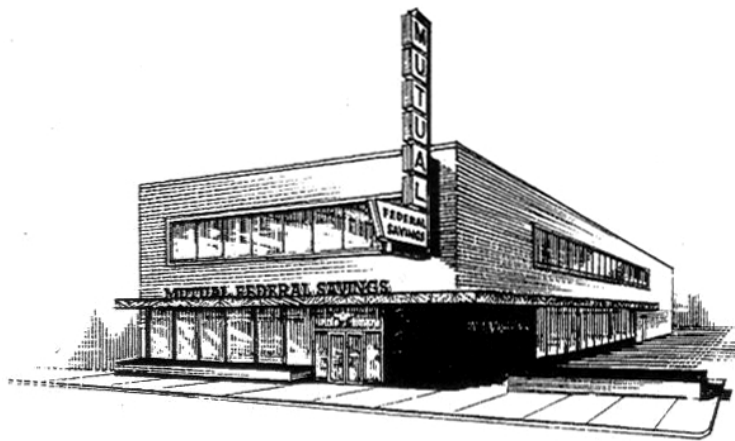
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## From Sista To Sister: The Children of Anthropophobia, Without A Place To Go: Traveling our World for Academic Success Part II

Our nation is full of inner city communities with children that are faced with the condition "Anthropophobia," which is the fear of people or society; the fear of the diversity that society brings forth. Locked up in the boxes of their inner city communities with out a clear understanding of the great world that awaits their entrance. Inner city children feeling trapped in their own communities due to the violence that covers the streets of their playing and liberation space. Not able to come out on the porch to play, or to their neighbor play grounds to share and have fun with the other community kids. Where one child's only freedom is to go straight to school and come straight home from school and into the house, another child's only freedom is to walk to the corner store for the groceries and back home, in a community which is labeled "a food desert." Unknowingly cursed by the results of anthropophobia, cenophobia, agoraphobia, eleutherophobia, ideophobia, and many other phobias that clutter the mind sets of many inner city children—whom are being held hostage in their own communities without the awareness or conscious ability to move out of such a dark place, because no one has helped them to identify the problem that they are dealing with. When asked a question about travel, new ideas, and diversity, the feed back from the child is a response of wanting to understand the question but too afraid to even respond, just a shrug of the shoulders to indicate that travel, diversity, and new ideas aren't really that important in the hood. This is the story of many young children in the ghetto's of cities nation wide who feel trapped in their own neighborhood's without a place to go.

For many young children in the inner city of Chicago, and many great cities around the world the only thing that they know outside of their neighborhoods is what they see on TV. Never understanding "The making come true a dream." Their hopes are built on the vulgarity and sexually explicit images that they come into contact with on TV. As one young girl's dream of being a leader is to be the lead character of the TV series called, "I Love New York," where derogatory language and belittling sexual behavior becomes the tyranny of a child's dream. But as an anthropophobian, without

a place to go this dream seems to be the only one that is able to be fulfilled due to the circumstances—or perhaps to become a drug dealer or exotic dancer would be the other alternatives. Too many times has it been seen that a child's ability to comprehend what is reality outside of their inner city communities as being unimaginable. With such low standards being put in place by the media, and inner city schools not having the proper amount of funding to take the youth on trips inside and outside of their own communities a child's dream could easily be diminished.

It's program like Ayual Community Development Association which Peter Magai is the President that connects our youth and people nation wide to awareness of traveling abroad to different countries in Africa to gain knowledge of world history and to gain a since of the significance of education. Specifically, the Ayual Community Development Association's attention is focused on travel to Sudan to help rebuild, and as well to allow the youth to understand how the children of Sudan can help the children here in the United States comprehend how important it is to get an education. Currently in South Sudan and in many countries around the world many children suffer due to the inability of receiving a quality education. Peter states "it is important for the youth to travel not only for the beauty of travel but as well for knowledge, history, inspiration, and encouragement." Peter, speaks about the building of two new class rooms in the school that he founded called Pongborong, he makes mention that the only phobia that a child may have during his/her time of being educated in Sudan during school hours is a militia group coming to attacked their village—a fear that somewhat corresponds with the children in the inner cities nation wide of being trapped in their own communities, afraid of being attacked by gang or drug violence. But as each child begins to move out of the darkness of the phobia, it becomes clear that those who are victims of gangs and drug violence and trafficking are in need of an education too. But how is it that the

bondage, the distraction and oppression that leads one in to such a life style break—especially due to the financial aspect of responsibilities within their homes being far greater than the accountability of staying in school?

Peter Magai goes into depth about how the travel to Sudan is about peace, love, education and unity, helping people to understand how to live together with diversity. Peter understands that it is the lack of communication that causes strife, and if we are not able to communicate with all—without understanding many people will fall by the wayside. Over in the South of Sudan, children don't carry guns just for the fun of it, or for show and tell but it is only those who are given the privilege to carry a gun, such as the army or law enforcement that take on this responsibility. However, according to case studies, guns in general bring about another phobia/fear factor and leads to the understanding of the hurt of war that we all face when we deal with the reality of bearing arms. When guns are made legal for people to buy, they become major attachments for means of protection for illegal activities, which lead to major crimes where many inner city youth become victims world wide.

The phobias that have taken over the mind sets of the youth have left them in a trance of not being able to imagine positive things, but creating a world of negativity around them due to the many young lives that have been lost on the streets in their neighborhoods. Not able to understand the struggles fought many years ago by their ancestors in order that they may receive an education. Not understanding that a life was lost because of the wanting to know and understand what was/is in a book. In comparison, where books here in the United States are given free to the students because they are paid for by the Public Schools Systems, Peter has to raise funds in order to try to find funding for books, clothing, food, materials to further build class rooms and to purchase other school utensils. After Peter raises the funds he has to wire the money to Uganda in order to have the supplies paid for and shipped to South Sudan, which is quite a strenuous task when a village has full dependence on the support that Peter sends

over to Sudan on the daily basis and the exact needs are not being met. Even if it is the small change of his other fellow "Lost Boys" who are in college and working small wage jobs here in the United States, he finds ways to support a village and more in South Sudan. If the children of the United States would just take one trip to the Sudan and see what the children of Sudan are faced with in order to receive a proper education, they will begin to appreciate what they have and strive harder for an education. They would get rid of the phobias in order to rise higher than statistics has labeled them as, and begin to feel the freedom that will be released due to receiving a proper education. Peter feels that travel does all of this. But, without fully understanding the significance of allowing our youth to travel abroad for academic success the chances of Chicago Public Schools or Public School Systems nation wide providing funding may be slim as of now however, if the administrators would only take a look at the social and learning fundamentals that will be put in place, and as well the confidence, esteem, the decrease in the crime rate, and open lines of communication that will come about, perhaps in the near future funding will be made available and a whole new world will be made visible not only for the youth in Chicago but other youth that they come in contact with abroad and in other inner cities nation wide.

For more information about phobias log on to <http://www.phobialist.com>

For more information on donating, traveling to Sudan to help or for youth travel log on to <http://www.aycda.org/home.html>. or contact Peter Magai at 773-306-3983

For more information about The Lost Boys log on to <http://www.lostboyschicago.com/>

For more information about Ponborong School in Sudan log on to <http://www.pongborong.org/>

For more information about Hope of Sudan log on to <http://www.hopeofsudan.org/who-we-are.php>

For more organization that help the youth to travel abroad for academic success go to <http://www.greenhearttravel.org>

To contact Talibah Bakhit email me at [educatedexaminer@yahoo.com](mailto:educatedexaminer@yahoo.com)



# "The True Meaning of Christmas"

Renita V. Walker



The staff and youth of "Lift him up productions" at the Greater Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church located at 1725 S. Kildare.

Santa Claus is a Mythical figure his creation is based in part on a great Christian Man named Saint Nicholas of Myra who lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century. Nicholas was born to Christian parents who left him and inheritance when they died. He distributed to the poor.

He became a priest at a young age and was well known for his compassion and Generosity. He had a reputation for giving gifts anonymously, and he would throw bags of money into people's homes, sometimes down their chimneys under the cover of night to avoid being spotted. Nicolas passed away on December 6 sometimes around 340 AD and the day of his death became an annual feast in which children would put out food for Nicholas and a straw for his donkey. It was said that the saint would come down from heaven during the night and would replace the offerings with toys and treats but only for the Good boys and girls. There are many versions of the legend of Saint Nicholas,

But all are the inspiration for the jolly red, suited gift giver. Parents must use their own judgment in deciding to include Santa during the holidays.

We live in a society that believes lying for the "right reason is acceptable, as long as it doesn't hurt anyone. People believe that this is not a problem. But contrary to what the bible tell us. "If you want to live a happy life and good days keep your tongue from speaking evil, and keep your lips from telling lies (1st Peter 3 & 10) Children look to their parents to tell them the truth. When we as parents break the truth children will not believe the more important things we tell them, especially the truth about Christ, whom They cannot physically see.

So congratulations, to the children of the "Lift him up productions" at the Greater Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church located at 1725 S. Kildare. These children have worked really hard rehearsing and memorizing lines for their parts in the Play entitled "**The True Meaning of Christmas**" which will take place on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. At The Greater Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church on the Westside. For these children and many of the parents they know that Christmas is not

About fancy gifts, or how much money you spend during the holiday season. These

Children have learned that Christmas is about Jesus Christ and love for all mankind.

They are aware that this is the time to think about others especially those less fortunate than themselves. We have all received the most precious gift of ALL- and that is the

**Gift of life!** This gift has nothing to do with race, religion, sexual preference or status,

It's about love and respect for all of humanity its' about families loving and supporting each other, it's about looking out for one another and not just our biological sisters or brothers. As we are faced with these tough economic times we must think on this, our forefathers, and ancestors who have gone on before us endured tougher times than these.

But they survived; they managed to stay alive because they were determined to strive.

So we must remember we are standing on the shoulders of those who have gone on before us, so we must never give up, no matter what. Therefore, as we celebrate the

Holidays let us keep in mind "Christmas" is not about who buys the biggest gift, or name brand outfits it's not about how many toys parents can buy their kids, it's not about feeling Sad because you can't give or receive. Christmas is about Christ.

Our Sincere thanks to the pastor of Greater Mount Pleasant M.B. Church and Saint Paul Church for opening his doors and his heart to allow the children and parents to present the play "The True Meaning of Christmas." If you'd like more information about the Greater Mt. Pleasant M.B Church or Saint Paul church where the Reverend Dr. Joel D. Taylor is the pastor; you can reach the church at: 773-522-2337.

Have a safe and merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

## Flicks from page 4

breaking Disney's racial taboo. While Clements and Musker make "The Princess and the frog" into an enjoyable movie full of effervescency based on their new wave animation. It doesn't really breaking any new ground. While at the same time, the movie can't stand alone without seeing references that recalls Disney's original glory. Still, this film is a noble first step in going back to the inkwell that may be questionable on how black enough it really is. While watching this film that is like watching the resurgence of an old friend and rebirth a legacy. G; 97min. A Walt Disney Pictures Release – Presented at selected theaters

**INVICTUS** (\*\*1/2) Director Clint Eastwood continues to amaze in the challenges he undertakes in his diversity in films. This time around Eastwood does what he made out of controversial black musician legend in 1988's "Bird", to now make a human story out of a recent black historic event. (This might irritate Spike Lee as before). But "Invictus" is not the conventional biography movie. Eastwood masters a very good story that feels natural yet poignant in its mission.

"Invictus" details the efforts in the unification of South Africa through a sporting event after the fall of apartheid. Nelson Mandela's been freed from prison and wins the election to become President who seized upon the idea of hosting and winning the 1995 rugby world cup. There's some irony that mirrors Obama's electoral win with Mandela's victory. As the whites were expected payback or worse under black rule amidst the cheers of pride and excitement from the black natives and children.

Mandela's first order of business starts out cooling down racial fears and notions within the old and new staff suggesting their work for the country is more important than their color. Until Mandela enlist the service of several, intimidating white secret service-type Afrikaners assigned into Mandela's all black security force led with initial rejection and concern by Jason Tshabalala (Tony Kgoroge in a noteworthy performance) that start out as an uncomfortable fit.

Freeman gives an Oscar worthy performance because he embodies and verbal expresses the nuisance of a remarkable yet human and dignified Nelson Mandela that goes beyond being an impression or caricature. Making the transition from imprisonment to leadership that could have easily crippled the country into a civil war climate. Mandela is fully aware in how his country is fragile and divided into social and economical disarray. Facing numerous obstacles and problems plaguing his country that some are not uncommon to what's been happening stateside here. Yet Mandela shocked key staffers by his interest in sports as a tool that he intended to help unite his country, He



MNorgan Freeman and Matt Damon in Invictus

attends a rugby game in which the South Africa team the Springbok led by its captain, Francois Pienaar (Matt Damon) takes a crushing defeat from England. Afterwards, further shock and concern are expressed by his staff, in particular chief aide Brenda Mazibuko (Adjoa Andoh); When Mandela travels to a hotel to overturn a vote from the National Sports Council over the public stigma of the present uniform colors and the team's name that represents apartheid.

Periodically, the film shifts over to Francois who lives at home with his parents, sister and a black maid. A quiet stress Francois endures under each loss, trying to find whatever it would take to lift his team out of his current mediocrity, along with the televised criticism and his racially bias father at home.

Until Francois is suddenly summons for tea with President Mandela; Where Mandela in an undramatic approach, implies inspiration toward the team to renew themselves in a physical campaign to win the World Cup in 1995 on their home turf. Even instructing the team after the brutal workout sessions, to become good will ambassadors traveling into the ghettos to improve public image of the team and the sports.

For his part, Matt Damon delivers quite a physical performance here that resonates. While offering an acting approach that consider how the majority of people that may not be knowledge of the sport, Eastwood capture the scope and the physical impact of the sport. When the Springbok have to play against an unbeatable New Zealand team led by their difficult top player, Jonah Lomu (played by former rugby player Zak Feaunati)

Given the movie is filmed on location in Cape Town South Africa; Eastwood delivers "Invictus" with uncompromising conviction that rises above the usual inspirational standard of the story.

It is a movie that addresses conditions, racial and moral issues that avoids cliché elements and manipulation through its balanced story about forgiveness and growth.

While covering enough ground through the characters to reflect their human side. Even the absent presence of Winnie Mandela is referred to as a divorce and broken home life that left Nelson with the country remarked as his only family now. An impressive and pow0erful achievement from Clint Eastwood and Morgan Freeman that is worthy of some Oscar buzz.

PG-13; 134min. A Warner Bros. Picture Release – Presented at selected theaters

**EVERYBODY'S FINE** (\*\*1/2) Robert De Niro is the centerpiece given limited range to make the most out of this Americanized remake of the 1990 Italian movie about an ill-health, recently widowed father-husband, Frank Goode who anticipated and prepared his empty suburban home for a family reunion gathering. Only to receive last minute cancellations by his seemingly successful, grown siblings that make the retired phone line coater become an inquisitive road traveler. Frank sets out seeking answers from secretly troubled siblings, who are jointly withholding a secret from their dad that they discuss among themselves over the phone lines.

The siblings have common concerns for their absent brother, David, a N.Y. artist in a Mexican hospital for a drug overdose. While their father, Frank makes impromptu visits with the other siblings who knows there is something wrong in their lives while he worries about David.

Rosie (Drew Barrymore), a struggling Vegas dancer who's a lesbian with a baby. Amy (Kate Beckinsale) allegedly living outside Chicago as an ad agency co-partner with a fractured married with a resentful teen son's outspoken demeanor over his father's infidelity. Robert (Sam Rockwell) who turns out to be the orchestra percussionist than the conductor expected and promoted by his father.

Along with each personal woe from their childhood of their hard working father who expected more and pushed too hard for them to succeed in their careers. And ultimately witness the end result.

Through the course of Frank's travels, there's a stumbling block that occurs when Frank tries to help, only to be physically assaulted by a homeless youth in the subway who crushes his prescription medicine He rather leave himself vulnerable to a minor heart attack, by scooping up the remains and never thinks of going to a Walgreens –like store for a generic refill on his prescription.

Considering the caliber presented here, "Everybody's Fine" is just okay. It's lightweight and familiar human angles don't have enough drama and depth to warrant an average effort from DeNiro and company. PG-13; 95min. A Miramax Films Release – Presented at selected theaters

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' Lanre O. Amu  
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