

The Graces

The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

MAY - JUNE 2021



A Message from the Vice President

GET MORE DONE IN 2021

By GM Sharon Harleston

Even though we are six months in the year - we could all benefit from a fresh start in 2021! Using the following strategies, we can all plan for productivity and get back on track in the new year.



1. Keep your Workspace Neat - To be more productive in work and life, find an organizational method that works for you. Minimize desk clutter by sorting reports, random papers in a magazine holder, and shred any items you do not need. Aim consistently declutter your space one to two times a week.



2. Make Every Minute Count - Remember that to-do list you created? Well, now is the time to check off some of those much-needed tasks. You will be surprised how much you can accomplish when you optimize your downtime.



3. Get Focused - Keep your goals front and center, block out any distractions when you are in your zone. You will become more motivated and get more done by doing this.



4. Reset and Recharge - We all need to practice self-care to commit more of ourselves to our career, family, friends, and organization. For some "Me Time," choose a hobby, take regular walks and schedule some days off.

As you plan your fresh start for 2021, ensure you commit to these productivity strategies to keep you organized, motivated, and energized. When you do, you will be ready to hit the ground running and deal with any obstacles that might come your way.

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CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

By GM Sharon Harleston

Juneteenth, also known as Juneteenth Independence Day, Jubilee Day, Freedom Day, and Black Independence Day, is an American holiday celebrated on June 19 to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States. On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Still, it took almost three more years before the total emancipation of African American slaves was completed.

A historic moment came June 19, 1865, when General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to issue General Order No. 3, officially freeing America's final slaves. This date, known as Juneteenth, has been celebrated as Black Independence Day by African Americans across the United States.

In 1866 on June 19, the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas. The original observances included prayer meetings and the singing of spirituals, and celebrants wore new clothes to represent their newfound freedom. Within a few years, African Americans in other states were celebrating the day and making it an annual tradition, celebrating the culture and achievements of African Americans. Celebrations have continued across the United States and include prayer and religious services, speeches, educational events, family gatherings and picnics, and festivals with music, food, and dancing. Strawberry soda pop, a tradition that symbolizes perseverance, honors African-Americans' bloodshed, and barbecues have become closely associated with Juneteenth celebrations.

In 1980, Texas became the first state to make Juneteenth a state holiday, although celebrated informally since 1865. Since then, all but four states recognize the holiday. Those states are Hawaii, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana.

As for its status as a national holiday, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution in 2019 recognizing "Juneteenth Independence Day" as a national holiday. Still, pending in the House of Representatives.

5 WAYS to Celebrate Juneteenth

1. Virtual Museum Visit: As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, many are still not comfortable heading out and about. Well, why not tour a museum online? To honor Juneteenth, the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture will host an online presentation about the importance of the holiday. This is a must-see for all ages and races.
2. Get Involved: Opportunities to speak up and speak out have never been so prevalent as they are at this moment. Join a walk for justice or check out what types of events your city will host for the day. This is a time to let your voice be heard, but make sure to do it safely and follow recommended CDC guidelines to stay healthy.
3. Ask an elder whether it is a family member, black vet, etc., grandparents, preachers, teachers, educators, historians all have a story to share. Ask them their opinions on what is going on today. Ask them to tell you about what things were like when they were your age. First-hand oral histories are the best way to learn about our history.
4. Read a book: Many books can help broaden not only knowledge about Juneteenth but Black History overall. Many bookstores have posted online resources and recommendations of catalogs geared towards not only Black History but written by black authors as well.
5. Binge-Watch Netflix and Amazon Prime Video are among the streaming services curated by the Black Lives Matter series. Selma, When They See Us, 13th, The Hate U Give, Remember The Titans, or others, there is something for everyone within these collections. Whether you are a documentary buff or just want to watch a movie, there are plenty of choices. Yet, beware, you may realize that you have sat and binged all night.

This year, make sure to celebrate Juneteenth uniquely. If this is your first year celebrating, make it a family habit and build on tradition for generations to come.

CELEBRATING BLACK MUSIC MONTH

Pioneer Women in Jazz - Quick Facts

By *Gracious Melody, Anita Gillespie-Wallace*

In honor of Black Music Month, celebrated annually in June, we honor some pioneering women in jazz with some quick facts. These women have made history and paved the way for many women in the music industry.

BESSIE SMITH / Blues singer

Bessie Smith was known as the "Empress of the Blues." She was the most popular female blues singer in the 1920s and 1930s. She made history as the highest-paid African American musician.



ELLA FITZGERALD / Jazz singer

"The First Lady of Song" is known for her vocal range & amazing scattling. Ms. Fitzgerald sold over 40 million albums & won 13 Grammy awards.

BILLIE HOLIDAY / Singer & civil rights activist

Nicknamed "Lady Day," she is best known for her songs "God Bless the Child" and the impactful "Strange Fruit," which is a protest song of the lynching of Black Americans.



SARAH VAUGHAN / Singer

Sarah Vaughan's rich baritone voice earned her 4 Grammy awards, including a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. Her career spanned nearly 50 years.

NINA SIMONE / Singer, songwriter, arranger & civil rights activist

Nina Simone recorded more than 40 albums. She used the song "Mississippi Goddam" to address racial inequality in the United States.



HAZEL SCOTT / Pianist, singer, actress, activist

In the 1930s and 1940s, Hazel Scott performed at a variety of venues, including on Broadway. She made history with "The Hazel Scott Show" in 1950, one of the first American network T.V. shows to be hosted by an African American.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS / Pianist, arranger & composer

With more than 100 recordings under her belt, she also wrote and arranged hundreds of songs. Some of her arrangements were for Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman. Ms. Williams earned a nomination for a Grammy in 1971.



BETTY CARTER / Singer

Betty Carter had incredible technique with her vocal skills. One of her hit songs was "Baby, It's Cold Outside," a collaboration with Ray Charles.

LIL HARDIN ARMSTRONG / Singer, pianist, composer & big band leader

Not only was Lil Hardin a gifted musician and bandleader, but she discovered a young Louis Armstrong, whom she later married in 1924.

ANNA MAE WINBURN / Vocalist & big band leader

She is best known as the bandleader for all-female "International Sweethearts of Rhythm" in the 1930s and '40s.



Is there such a thing as "Toxic Positivity"?

By Melody Bibi Chaterpateah

Many of us have probably heard someone tell us "look on the bright side of things" or "think happy thoughts only," or we may have said those exact phrases to someone else while they may have been expressing feelings of frustration or sadness. Our intentions behind such responses are simply to provide comfort to the person or make them feel better. We mean no harm.

However, by doing so, we are unknowingly creating poor habits and suppressing emotional healing.

Toxic positivity is the excessive and ineffective overgeneralization of a happy, optimistic state that results in denial, minimization, and invalidation of authentic human emotional experiences. Toxic positivity denies all negative experiences that make life the way it is, making us humans. By saying such phrases as "stop being so negative," we deny authentic emotions that are part of the human experience and allows us to grow and heal as individuals. A study from 1997 shows that suppressing our feelings can lead to more internal psychological stress. Especially living through a global pandemic, toxic positivity is even more harmful to the human emotional experience.

So, how exactly do we deal with toxic positivity? Here are some tips to help us develop strong habits to engage with our emotions healthy

- **Avoid ignoring or stifling your emotions.** Acknowledge your feelings, sit with the feeling, talk it out if need be, or seek professional help.
- **When engaging with others, listen, acknowledge and validate their feelings.** You must express support by validating other's feelings when engaging with them, even if their feelings are different from yours.
- **Recognize toxic positivity messages and behaviors.** Remember, it is OK not to be OK. Recognizing when you are engaging in toxic behaviors will help you to acknowledge how you are feeling. In our daily lives, we experience a spectrum of emotions, all of which make us human and authentically ourselves.

Sip & Chip Film: "Black Men in White Coats"

Gracious Melody Anita Gillespie-Wallace

On March 26, MMSI hosted our second film as part of our "Sip & Chip Film Series." This documentary was "Black Men in White Coats." The documentary addressed why only 2% of American doctors are Black men and how that impacts our society. After the documentary, we had a great interactive panel discussion with our Malik Brothers in the medical field. It was beautiful to hear about our Brothers' experiences and milestones. To view the panel discussion, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aso09Kg66Zk&t=1s>

Our Malik Brother panelists were:

- **Dr. Oscar Alleyne** – P.H., MPH, Chief of Programs & Services for the National Association of County & City Health Officials.
- **Mr. Umaru Barrie** – M.D./Ph.D. candidate at the Univ. of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
- **Dr. Jeffrey Marable** – Chief Clinical Officer at PrimaryOne Health & Director of Women's Health & Family Services at Columbia Public Health in Ohio.
- **Dr. Brandon Small** – Doctor of Physical Therapy & Member of the American Physical Therapy Association.

MALIK MELODIES SISTERHOOD, INC.
PRESENTS
Chip & Sip Film Series
DOCUMENTARY & PANEL DISCUSSION

BLACK MEN IN WHITE COATS

A documentary exploring why only 2% of American doctors are black men and what that means for society.

Anita Wallace
Moderator

Dr. Oscar Alleyne Mr. Umaru Barrie Dr. Jeffrey Marable Dr. Brandon Small

FRI. MARCH 26, 2021
SCREENING 7:00 PM (ET)
PANEL DISCUSSION 8:30 PM (ET)

Free! Register At: https://black_men_in_white_coats.eventbrite.com

Melody on the Move

GM Michelle Taylor

Michelle Taylor is a native of Port Chester, New York. She attended Long Island University/C.W. Post campus and received her B.A. in 1982. Michelle has great memories of the Malik Family and the wonderful camaraderie between the Melodies and the Brothers.

Michelle has a deep love for music and artist management. Throughout Michelle's career, she has worked at the following record companies: Blue Note Records, EMI, Verve, RCA, and Atlantic. Over the years, she has worked as a manager and director in marketing and promotions, with most of her career working with jazz artists. Some of the jazz artists she's worked with are Diane Reeves, Roy Hargrove, Bobby McFerrin, Shirley Horn, Delfeayo Marsalis, Gerald Albright, and R&B and rap artists: Natalie Cole, The O'Jays, SWV, Martha Wash, and the Wu-Tang Clan.



While at Atlantic Records, Michelle made history as the only woman and the only African American to head the Jazz Division at a major music label.

In 1996 our sister founded her own company, "NIA Entertainment. Ltd." but changed the name in 2016 to "Passion Music Group, LLC." As founder and managing director, Michelle oversees entertainment marketing, event production, project and artist management for her clients. She is delighted with her newest artist, the phenomenal 19-year-old blind pianist Matthew Whitaker who many of you have seen on The Apollo and various news programs.

Currently, Michelle serves as co-chair of the Jazz Advisory Council for the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and is a member of five other professional music organizations.

We applaud you, Michelle, for her prominent female presence in the music industry, a trailblazer, and for representing our treasured jazz artists.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**MMSI's Third Annual
2021 WE LEAD: Empowering Our Girls Conference
Saturday, October 16, 2021**

Virtual Platform

United Nations International Day of the Girl Child

Event Coordinator

GM Lisa Rodriguez

Student Advisors

Raven Taylor (8th Grade) / Urban Assembly School for Leadership and Empowerment

Sophia Connellan (11th Grade) / School of the Future

Quiamani Tyler (11th Grade) / New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math & Science



WE LEAD
EMPOWERING OUR GIRLS
MALIK MELODIES SISTERHOOD, INC.

Congratulations!

Reneé Franklyn & Brandon Peterson

2021 Recipients of the Angela Pauling Memorial Scholarship!!



Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc. is excited to announce the recipients of our 9th Annual Scholarship and our first year awarding multiple scholarships!

This year's selection was again a difficult one due to our outstanding candidate pool. We look forward to the continued expansion of our scholarship program.

We thank everyone for your contributions and investment into our Scholars' success!



[Click Here](#) to learn more about our

2021 Angela Pauling Scholars

Reneé Franklyn & Brandon Peterson,

along with our other amazing scholars!

We look forward to your continued support!

**2021 Comité Noviembre Scholarships:
CELEBRATING PUERTO RICAN HERITAGE!!!**

Established in 1987, Comité Noviembre is the only collaboration of its kind in the United States. It brings together the strength and talents of key Puerto Rican organizations which make up its member agencies. The mission of Comité Noviembre is to plan and promote events and forums that highlight the contributions Puerto Ricans have made to this country.

Since its inception, Comité Noviembre has placed special focus on volunteerism and educational excellence as the key to the future of the Puerto Rican Community. In November of 1996, in celebration of the tenth anniversary of Puerto Rican Heritage Month, the Comité Noviembre Scholarship Awards Program was established.

This year, Comité Noviembre will award \$1,000 scholarships.

Applications Due: Friday, June 11, 2021

Note: These scholarships are open to graduating HS seniors and college students. Please read each scholarship criteria for eligibility.

All Scholarships are administered by Comité Noviembre.

ERNESTO MALAVE SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE ARTS: This award will recognize Puerto Ricans pursuing a higher education majoring in the Arts.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf5kQXWazREGg7sjzrW8oS3p5XLSfxAwwB2snUOPcEPLy7pBw/viewform>

THE RICHIE PEREZ SCHOLARSHIP: This award will recognize Puerto Rican youth for their commitment, activism, and achievements in any of the areas of human rights and social justice.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfiVTnub5-PmuntLXf9LgqIrv-YCr9bz5ATWH3biQ3G8MsAQ/viewform>

COMITE NOVIEMBRE SCHOLARSHIP for Community Service: This award will recognize exceptional Puerto Rican youth who are making a difference in their community.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdeRt3TB4cMXXEqwbcuPYUHsDMtYvgZsjMwKtkTUjBkoaUdEA/viewform>

THE JOSEFINA AGUADO SCHOLARSHIP FOR SINGLE PARENTS: This award will recognize single Puerto Rican parents pursuing a college or a graduate degree.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeO9EnqYPDQ5flqLoS_EvJvtTqj6ug3jXMbWKCuFEaGWepysQ/viewform

Questions may be directed to Scholarship Co-Chairs:

Lisa M. Rodriguez

(347) 693-6893

cn.scholarship@gmail.com

Elba Cabrera

ecab910@optonline.net

Congratulations! Graduates!



Congratulations to our Sister Dawn Cotter-Jenkins received her Master of Science in Healthcare Informatics from Adelphi University College of Nursing and Public Health, Garden City, NY.

Congratulations to our Sister Juceliz Batista received her Master's in Business Administration from Simon Business School, Rochester, NY.

Congratulations to our Sister Darlene Hudson received her Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY. She graduated Magna Cum Laude & Program of Honors in Accounting.



Congratulations to our Brother Buokem Ikwuazom on graduating from NYU Grossman School of Medicine! Buokem will be starting his residency in orthopedic surgery at SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

Congratulations to our Brother Schneeh Heshima received his Master's in Medical Informatics. He attended SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Brooklyn, NY.

Congratulations to our Brother Brandon Small attended Mercy College DPT at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY. He achieved his Doctorate in Physical Therapy and successfully passed his Board exams! Congratulations, Dr. Brandon Small!!

Congratulations

Melody Brittany S. Johnson



Congratulations to Brittany S. Johnson, Social Media Chair of Tri-County Women's Club Inc., of The National Association of Colored Women's Club (NACWC), for being highlighted as a Fed In-Service by this national organization.

The National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. (NACWC) is an American organization with a long history of raising African American with its motto, *Lift As We Climb*, promoting equality for African American women.

Gracious Melody Sasha Powell



Sasha is currently a 6th-grade reading teacher at Excel Charter School in Canarsie, Brooklyn, New York. She has been teaching since 2014 with the Teach For America program in Buffalo as part of the chartering corps. After two years in Buffalo, Sasha relocated to Brooklyn and continued teaching students with special needs focusing on ELA. In 2018 she transitioned into teaching 6th-grade reading and had the highest student growth in her network.

Currently, Sasha is in her 7th year teaching and is the 6th Grade Team Lead, meaning she is the liaison between the teachers and leaders of the school and serves to lead the entire 6th grade team of teachers and an advocate for the grade team. Her principal saw her tremendous efforts and nominated Sasha for what used to be called "Master Teacher" and is now named Excellence in Teaching Designation. As such, for the next two years, Sasha will be working with the principal to uncover and make structural changes in the network and her school to support scholars across Brooklyn.

Sasha's ultimate goal is to make powerful changes for students of color, to help them feel empowered with who they are and their interests.



Nina Bosco, MMSI's 2017 Scholarship recipient, graduated in December 2020 from CUNY Herbert H. Lehman College (Bronx, NY) with a B.S. in Biology,

Nina has decided to do missionary work for her church as her next step in life and relocated to Washington, DC, for the next 15 months.



GM Vanessa Miller- Congratulations on the birth of your 1st grandchild. May your granddaughter - Luna Soleil, provide you with love, smiles, hugs, and entertainment. Enjoy your grand-bundle-of-joy!

Calendar of Events



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC

Black Music Month

Celebrate Black Music Month and the impact Black music has on global culture where Black Music Has a Home, at the National Museum of African American Music.

CELEBRATION OF LEGENDS
a benefit concert
THURSDAY, JUNE 17

STATE OF BLACK MUSIC
Summit
FRIDAY, JUNE 18

MUSEUM DEDICATION & JUNETEENTH
Black Party
SATURDAY, JUNE 19



A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM FOR THE COMMUNITY BY THE COMMUNITY

JUNETEENTH FREEDOM FEST
CHARLESTON, SC

June 19th

Image of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King Jr.

<https://www.juneteenthfreedomfestchs.com>

The festivities begin Friday, June 17, with the virtual Celebration of Legends Benefit Concert.

This year's Rhapsody & Rhythm Award recipients are:

- The legendary Fisk Jubilee Singers.
- Grammy Award-winning songwriter and recording artist Lionel Richie.
- Grammy Award-winner and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame member, Smokey Robinson.
- The Maestro, Grammy Award-winning songwriter, arranger, and producer Quincy Jones
- The amazing Grammy Award-winning Chaka Khan!



Free Virtual Celebration

Juneteenth Freedom Fest
Charleston, SC

Sat, June 19, 2021

2:00 PM – 10:00 PM
EDT



STEP AFRiKA!



REGISTER TODAY



Calendar of Events

**Step Afrika! 's
Juneteenth Virtual Celebration
Saturday, June 19, 2021, at 8 pm E.T.**

Juneteenth (short for "June 19") marks the day in 1865 when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to control the state and ensure that all slaves were freed. While their arrival was nearly two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, each year, African Americans honor the day as the end of slavery in the United States.

Premiering three unique works, Step Afrika!'s Juneteenth Celebration honors the determination, resilience, and reclamation of freedom with newly filmed choreographic masterpieces inspired by the African American experience.

Register for this free event:

<https://www.stepafrika.org/events/step-afrika-juneteenth-virtual-celebration-2/>



**The Brothers of
MALIK Fraternity, Inc.
Will Host Their 2021
Virtual National
Indaba from
July 16 to July 18, 2021**

The Graces



The Official Newsletter of the Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.

MAY - JUNE 2021

\$20/21 Scholarship Fundraising Campaign

A tremendous thank you to all our donors who made it possible for MMSI to issue 2 scholarships for the first time! Our Angela Pauling Scholars are so deserving and are incredible young adults. Your investment in their education is an incredible gift, and we are so thankful.

We fell short of our fundraising goals for 2021 and still need your help to ensure 2022 is even more successful than 2021! [Please consider donating](#) as we gear up for our 10th Annual Scholarship in 2022 and surpass this year's two scholarship awards. Together, WE CAN!

Thank you for your generosity.

Angela Pauling Memorial Scholarship

\$20/21 Scholarship Fundraising Campaign

We Need Your Help
To Ensure Bright Young Minds
Can Fulfill Their Dreams Of
Attending College.

Please Support
Malik Melodies Sisterhood, Inc.
Annual Angela Pauling Memorial
Scholarship



DONATE ON-LINE with [PayPal, Credit or Debit Card](#) at
<https://www.malikmelodies.org>
OR Via Zelle at MalikMelodies@gmail.com

WE ARE THE
SHOULDERS OF TODAY
FOR TOMORROW'S
FUTURE!

MALIK MELODIES
SISTERHOOD, INC.



MMSI



MMSI MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Executive Board – 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8:00 pm
Professional Branch – 3rd Tuesday at 8:00 pm
The Graces Newsletter Staff – Last Wednesday at 8:00 pm

The Graces Staff

Kim J. Bright
Bibi Chaterpateah
Jillian Gibson
Sharon Harleston
Lisa Rodriguez
Anita Wallace

Executive Board

Kim J. Bright, Co-Founder
Nathalie Lilavois, President
Sharon Harleston, Vice President
Mary Richardson, Parliamentarian
Lisa Rodriguez
Anita Wallace

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