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Spike Lee Interview

## Lee Delivers Truth about Chicago's South Side in 'Chi-Raq'

by: LaTrina Antoine ~ Washington D.C. Editor ~ (AP Photo/Frank Franklin II)



Cleo Pendleton, below, is comforted by Rev. Al Sharpton as Spike Lee, second from left, and Nick Cannon, left, listen to her speak during a rally for the prevention of gun violence on Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2015, in New York. Pendleton's daughter, 15, was fatally shot in January as she and her friends shielded themselves from rain under a canopy in a Chicago park in what police say was a case of mistaken identity in a gang turf war. (AP Photo/Frank Franklin II)

Spike Lee's film "Chi-Raq" displays the inadequacies of the American prison system, racist authority figures and Black on Black violence in communities across the United States. However, the motion picture has drawn criticism from various individuals, including Rahm Emanuel, the mayor of Chicago, for highlighting the negative aspects of the city.

"Chi-Raq" opened nationwide on Dec. 4. The motion picture, based on the ancient Greek play "Lysistrata," is a satire by Aristophanes, which uses feminine sexuality to solve the mounting homicide

rate in Chicago's south side.

"I understand people being leery of the homicides that continue to plague the south side Chicago," Lee said during a roundtable discussion with reporters on Nov 20. "People become numb to it, people can't keep up and therefore, you have a defense mechanism where you're not going to acknowledge what is happening."

The director, accompanied by the film's star actress Teyonah Parris, emphasized that the See **ANTI-GANGISM, page 2**

McClellan, the former head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, will work on health policy reform initiatives with colleagues at the medical school and across the UT campus. Dell Medical School leaders see this as a critical focus to realizing the school's vision of a vital, inclusive health ecosystem that improves health outcomes, reduces health care costs and creates more efficient and effective models of care.

"Mark has been a national leader in conceptualizing how to build a better health care system,

### Leading Health Policy Reformer Joins Dell Medical School

AUSTIN, Texas - Dr. Mark McClellan, a nationally known health policy expert who has led two federal health agencies, is joining the faculty at Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin to advance the school's mission of re-designing health care around value — providing better care at lower cost.



Dr. Mark McClellan

## GLOBAL SUPERSTAR RIHANNA ANNOUNCES THE ANTI WORLD TOUR

Naomi Richard | Tour Press Release

Austin, Texas – Global superstar, Grammy Award®-winner and multi-platinum selling artist, Rihanna, announced the ANTI WORLD TOUR, which includes a stop at the Frank Erwin Center on Friday, March 4! The tour, produced by Live Nation, will kick off in North America on Friday, Feb. 26, 2016 at Viejas Arena in San Diego, CA with nearly 40 shows lined up in New York City, Los Angeles, Toronto, Chicago, Vancouver, Washington, DC and more. Samsung is the presenting partner on the North American leg of the Rihanna tour, while PUMA is a supporting

partner. Travis Scott will be the special guest on the North American dates. Tickets for the Frank Erwin Center performance are on sale on now at TexasBoxOffice.com.

Global sports brand PUMA has been a partner of Rihanna's since December 2014. The superstar has rocked the fashion and sneaker world with the launch of the FENTY PUMA by Rihanna label and coveted PUMA Creeper sneaker. As part of the ANTI WORLD TOUR, PUMA will create unique on-site activations and retail programs in select North American tour venues to support and drive

awareness of the upcoming launches within Rihanna's collection.

Rihanna has become a modern music, entertainment and fashion icon. As an accomplished performer, she has sold 54 million albums and 210 million digital tracks worldwide making her the top-selling digital artist of all time. She's released seven albums in seven years, achieved 13 Number One singles and won eight Grammy Awards. She is the most viewed artist on Vevo/YouTube with over 7 billion views and 23 Vevo certified videos, the most of any artist. She is also one of the biggest art-



Media Image from Rihanna's Dior Campaign

ists on Facebook with over 81 million friends.

In addition, she's successfully launched six fragrances, two capsule collections with Armani, as well as four River Island collections and is currently the spokesperson for MAC & Viva Glam and the new face of Dior's "Secret Garden" campaign. Rihanna is

### INSIDE



Chicago police under fire for pattern of racial violations. See **JUSTICE Page 2**



Legislation holds key to profound impact on Texas schools. See **PASSAGE Page 5**



Prominent business leaves central Texas headquarters. See **HAIR Page 6**

and now he can really accelerate the pace in putting that system in place," said Dr. Clay Johnston, inaugural dean of the Dell Medical School. "Mark's work will support efforts here and nationwide to revolutionize the way people get healthy and stay healthy."

McClellan directs the Robert J. Margolis Center for Health Policy at Duke University. Leading a col-

See **FIRST IN 50 YEARS, page 7**

Other exciting events of the season are the holiday parties and the long awaited for Christmas Dinner. And after dinner, the annual sports events that happen on Christmas Day. These events make up the celebration. Then, we have to get ready for the New Year.

For me it is a time to give thanks for all of the support that we have received over the year that enabled us to survive another year in business. Many people are saying that the print media is dead, giving way to social media. While that may be coming, it is not here yet. Media today consist of print, broadcast and social media. We are proud to be involved with all three. But, we could not do it without our supporters. So, we are excited about rapping this year up and getting started on the new one.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

PUMA's global ambassador for Women's Training and now - more - serves as the Creative Director, bringing her styling sensibilities and innovation to PUMA's collections. As of July 2015, Rihanna will also serve as Contributing Creative Director and Punk & Poet brand ambassador for Stance.



# THE COMMUNIQUE

## Lee views 'Chi-Raq' as a vessel of anti-gangism to counter documentaries that glorify gang violence

continued from page 1

movie gives people a genuine dose of the reality that young urban Black men and women face in cities across the country.

"By dealing with Chicago, which is the apex of this, you also talk about Bodymore Murderland (Baltimore, Maryland), kill-a-dephia (Philadelphia), D.C., Dodge City, New Orleans, Los Angeles south central, Brooklyn, Bronx — boogie down — but Chicago is the zenith for this," Lee said.

He said his primary motivation for making a movie and not a documentary was because he felt the culture was best told through satire. Lee has done documentaries before. His 2006 release of "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts," told the story of the devastation in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina through the resident's experiences.

"I saw some documentaries about Chicago, what was happening, and a lot of them were glorification of that, especially [the] one done by Vice [Media LLC], so that was not our approach, we didn't want to glorify that, we didn't want to make any more gang bangers, that's the opposite of what we're trying to do," he said. Vice Media, which released a documentary called "Welcome to Chiraq" in 2014 did not respond to the AFRO's

request for comment before publication.

Lee's depiction hits at a racial tension inbred in American society that switches the highly publicized conversation of White on Black violence to Black on Black violence. However, he said his purpose in creating a film on the murder culture in south side Chicago was meant to tell the truth.

"I think that many times in this film, where you even talk about Black Lives Matter, you give the list of black people who've been killed by private citizens and cops, but here is where I'd like to expand it," he said. "I'm in support of Black Lives Matter, at the same time, I'm not going to be silent when a nine year old Tyshawn Lee gets executed after being lured into an ally way, so I don't think I'm doing Black Lives Matter if I'm only going to talk about the cops and George Zimmerman and not talk about what we are doing to ourselves. It's even handed. It's not one or the other."

Instead, the racy movie, often showing massive spans of nudity, uses feminine sexuality and abstinence as a way to help women fight for the lives of their sons and men.

"It goes global because it is something that is a basic human desire and I think Spike does a great job in



The Rev. Al Sharpton, center, and Spike Lee, second from left, lead a march to Times Square for the prevention of gun violence on Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2015, in New York, following the premiere of Lee's new film "Chi-Raq." (AP Photo/Frank Franklin II)

giving you [sex] and at the same time he is masterful in the way in which he does it," Parris, the female lead, said. "It is class. The women are using their power by withholding the sex."

### Department of Justice Investigating Racial Practices by Chicago Police

Announcement wins applause from Congressional Black Caucus

By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com)

- Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced this week that she will launch a "pattern or practice" investigation into whether the Chicago Police Department has engaged in racially discriminatory conduct in arrests, use of force, and other police procedures.

"Today, I am here to announce that the Department of Justice has opened an investigation into whether the Chicago

Police Department has engaged in a pattern or practice of violations of the constitution or federal law," Lynch announced at a press conference Monday. "Specifically, we will examine a number of issues related to the Chicago Police Department's use of force, including its use of deadly force, racial/ethnic disparities in its use of force, and its accountability mechanisms such as its disciplinary actions and its allegations of misconduct. This investigation has been requested by a number of state and local officials and community leaders, but has been opened only after preliminary review and careful consideration of how the Justice Department can best use our tools and our resources to meet Chicago's needs."

The announcement received widespread applause in the national civil rights community, seeing the move as a signal for justice in long suffering Black communities across the country.

"The Congressional Black Caucus has asserted for years that African Americans are treated unfairly and disproportionately in the criminal justice system," Congressional Black Caucus Chairman G. K. Butterfield, in a statement. "The multiple shooting incidents involving police in Chicago and across the country serve



Attorney General Loretta Lynch

as further proof that bias and excessive use of force by law enforcement are real in the African American community."

Butterfield said Chicago Rep. Bobby L. Rush, just last week, sent a letter to Attorney General Lynch, requesting the investigation. "These incidents are not isolated and reflect a pervasive pattern of racial bias in policing," Butterfield said.

Lynch says the Department of Justice's investigation will look into years of practices in Chicago. She also signaled that investigations in other cities could ensue with a goal of improved police-community relations.

"The Department of Justice is committed to upholding the highest standards of law enforcement throughout the

United States. Every American expects and deserves the protection of law enforcement that is affective, that is responsive, that is respectful and most importantly—constitutional. And each day, thanks to the tireless dedication of men and women who wear the badge, citizens from coast to coast receive just that," Lynch said. "But when community members feel that they are not receiving that kind of policing. When they feel ignored, let down or mistreated by public safety officials, there are profound consequences for the well-being of their communities. There are profound consequences for the rule of law, and for the countless law enforcement officers who strive to fulfill their duties with professionalism and integrity."



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### Hold on to your new blue voter registration certificate

**AUSTIN, TX** – If you're a registered Travis County voter be sure to watch the mail for a new, blue voter registration certificate, which identifies you as a registered county voter through December 2017.

The previous certificate, which was orange, expires at the end of this month.

"It is important for voters to check the mail for their new certificate," says Travis County Voter Registrar Bruce Elfant. "If you are registered to vote and your certificate does not arrive or is incorrect, we want to help you make the necessary changes before the next election."

Mailing voter registration certificates – often referred to as the voter registration "card" – every two years provides an opportunity for voters and the county to update their records. Voters can return the certificate with corrections noted on the back, and a new one will be mailed in 30 days.

The most common reasons registration cards need correction are because the voter: Address or name changed, Moved out of the county, or Died.

If you moved and provided a forwarding address at the post office, the tax office will mail you an address confirmation card. If you do not respond with an updated address, you are placed in a suspense file noting your address cannot be confirmed. **This action does not prevent you from voting but may cause a delay at the polling place on Election Day.**



# CHURCH & TOWN BULLETIN

## Playing the 'Trump' Card: Embattled Virginia Pastor Says He Will Endorse the Republican Candidate After Clergy Meeting

*Omarosa Manigault said apologies from Trump would not be "Trumpesque"*

By Joey Matthews ~ Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Richmond Free Press

(TriceEdneyWire.com)  
- Stephen A. Parson Sr., the embattled senior pastor at the Richmond Christian Center who is on leave as his South Side church tries to emerge from Chapter 11 bankruptcy, was among a contingent of 100 African-American ministers who met with Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump at Trump Plaza in New York City.

Pastor Parson, a long-time Republican, is endorsing Trump. He also told the Free Press he is leading a group of African-American and Latino ministers who are supporting Trump's candidacy. He said that his work with the Virginia Black and Latino Leaders Coalition is being done on a voluntary basis and that he is not being paid to lead the group.

The Free Press contacted the Trump campaign to confirm that, but received no reply by press time Dec. 2.

"As a billionaire businessman, [Trump] knows how to create wealth, and he can help bring much-needed jobs to African-Americans who are struggling for economic security in the inner city," Pastor Parson said of his backing of Trump during a phone interview Dec. 1 after the New York meeting concluded.



Pastor Stephen A. Parson shakes hands with presidential hopeful Donald Trump backstage after a black clergy meeting last month. Photo courtesy of CBS 6 NEWS, Richmond, VA.

Parson appeared Tuesday morning in an interview with Roland Martin, host of TV One's "NewsOne Now," where he struggled to identify specific policies that Trump had provided at the meeting that would bring more jobs to African-Americans, address educational inequities or improve relations with police in the light of the continued killings of African-Americans by White police officers.

Pastor Parson and

Richmond Christian Center, the church he founded in 1983, have undergone financial troubles tied to the church's bankruptcy that began in 2013.

Earlier this year, Parson was forced off the board of trustees and required to cede control of the church's checkbook as a court-appointed trustee sought to help the church survive. His pay as pastor was cut off, and the court-appointed trustee also sued him in trying to recover funds the trustee al-

leged that Parson mis-spent.

However, church members have indicated that Pastor Parson would be invited to take over the pulpit if the church can emerge from bankruptcy, which is still questionable.

During his interview with Martin, Pastor Parson said Trump has written books about "why we want you rich."

"He's going to encourage the Black American, especially, to entrepreneurship," he told Martin.

Bishop Orrin Pullings of United Nations Church International in South Richmond, who identified himself as a Democrat, also attended the New York meeting, but told the Free Press Tuesday he is not backing Trump.

Bishop Pullings said he left the meeting unsatisfied with Trump's tepid responses as to why he has used inflammatory rhetoric against African-Americans, women, immigrants, handicapped people and others during his campaign. He also wanted an account from Trump as to why some of his campaign supporters roughed up a Black Lives Matter demonstrator while removing him from a recent rally in Birmingham, Ala.

## Why Black Millennials Can't Seem to Get Ahead

By Nicholas Muiruri

You could call them Millenials, Generation Y or simply Millennial Generation. These are terms referring to people born between the early years of 1980s and 2000s. Compared to their white counterparts, colored millenials are at a disadvantage as far as wealth creation is concerned.

Mel Jones, writing in the *Washington Monthly*, explains the reasons behind the wealth gap prevalent in young black Americans notwithstanding the fact that they are more educated than their fellow white peers. Jones also says that black Americans have more work opportunities than whites. One would therefore be at pains to understand why millenials of color do not become wealthy.

Jones attributes the widening gap to the direction of money flow. White millenials depend on their parents to provide them with financial help. This is the kind of assistance that helps these Americans, who are now in their mid thirties and early forties, to own assets.

Aside from not owning assets, black Americans give financial help to their parents and other family members. According to Tom Shapiro, a sociologist, black and brown millenials do not own a lot of transformative assets. Home ownership is one of the best examples of transformative assets.

Jones notes that there are no signs of changes in this scenario. Blacks and Hispanics do not expect to

See **EVEN AFTER DEATH**, page 7

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# YOUTH BRIGADE



## Youth of Today Hope of Tomorrow



### Crockett Christmas



**Malakhi Washington**  
Cunningham Elementary

This year at my new school I have been really busy. I have been involved with dancing and singing for plays. The 2nd grade will be singing with Crockett high school and I am very excited to have a

chance to be performing with a high school.

My favorite thing to do in this world is sing! I lead songs at church and I will also be in a Christmas play at my church this year. I have been singing since I was a baby and hopefully when I grow up I can become a professional singer and become famous! I love performing and becoming the center of attention!!! I am really excited to meet all of the singers at Crockett high school. I really enjoy the program at my new school, it seems like everyone can sing. This is going to be AWESOME!

### Blue Santa



**SaNaya White**  
Ann Richards

December 5, my church (Simpson United Methodist Church) and I volunteered at the Blue Santa Austin police operation. Most people rode on the church van and a few drove their own vehicle. My cousin, mom and myself were part of the few people who drove their own vehicles. We were a little late because we had a sport and cheerleaders award ceremony to go to. As soon as we arrived and walked in, the man at the desk said

"Hello welcome to Blue Santa are you with the United Simpson group?" My mom corrected him saying "Simpson United actually". He directed us through the main door and into the workshop room. We immediately noticed our group right in front of us and got the information on what we were supposed to do. We grabbed a paper bag, put toys, stocking stuffers, a book and a stuffed animal in each bag labeled boy 5-7. After filling all the bags, we placed them on tables to be taped closed. Once all the bags were taped we went to the wrapping station. All the bags was wrapped in pretty blue paper with the Blue

Santa logo, once we completed wrapping the gifts they were placed at the front desk to be packed in Santa's bag for delivery. I really enjoyed helping in Blue Santa and cant wait till next time!

### That Time of Year



**Latrice Lipscomb**  
Manor High School

The time of year has come again where holiday cheer is in the atmosphere. Everyone is getting ready for the big day and kids are ready to get out of school. During this break I look forward to relaxing and spending time with my family. Unfortunately, my break gets cut short due to practices for

our cheerleading competition coming up real soon. I am excited for all of the things that I have going for myself this December.

The college application process is going good for me and I've gotten feedback this month. I also have the trail of lights I am volunteering for with the College Forward program at my school. I can't wait for the Christmas party's that I've been invited to with my job and the Villager Youth Brigade. This time of year brings happiness to a lot of people and I hope that even though this is our first Christmas without my Uncle that we could have a great holiday in memory of him.

### My Thanksgiving



**Ava Roberts**  
Spring Hill Elementary

My family spent Thanksgiving in Louisiana. We visited family in Baton Rouge and ate so much food.

We went to New Orleans for the Bayou Classic weekend. The Bayou Classic is a football game between the Southern Jaguars and Grambling State Tigers. It's played at the Mercedes Benz Superdome every year. On Friday we went to the Battle of the Bands and Greek Show. On Saturday we went to the Bayou Classic game.

My family are Jaguar fans but the Tigers won the game. I had so much fun and can't wait to go next year. Go Jaguars.

### My Trip to Florence



**Kevin Parish**  
Park Crest M.S.

Last Friday my friends asked me if I can go to Florence, Texas with them. My mom said yes, so I called to tell him I can go. He said "Kevin pack some clothes and bring the bag to school because you are going home with me". After a long

day at school I finally went his house to have cake because it was one of our friends birthday, then it took us 30 to 45 minutes to get Florence. As soon as we got there, we played football in the house.

On Saturday morning my friends and I wanted to go exploring in the woods. I never got to explore in the woods before and it was fun! We had to fill up eight water tanks from the fire hydrant for us to have water and that took two hours. When we were all done with that we played football outside, it was a little workout. I had a great weekend! GO PUMAS!!

### December



**Sarah Robertson**  
Athlos Leadership Acad.

It's finally December and its holiday season. After black Friday, cyber Mon-

day, and small shops Saturday we can focus on the holiday season. There's so many holidays in December like: Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and other holidays that we don't know about. Christmas season isn't just about Santa, candy, presents, or commercial Christmas. It's about Christ and family, not what the TV tries to tell us. So remember this December and this holiday season to focus on family and not the commercial stuff.

### Christmas Time



**Erika Lipscomb**  
Manor Middle School

It's here, the month of the most wonderful time of the year! Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza and probably other things

people celebrate. It's all here and waiting for us. I hope that there is a lot of Ho Ho Ho, happiness and some jolly, with lots of beautiful Christmas decorations and Christmas lights. I can't wait for Santa to bring all the gifts. He is probably working and making toys for the kids who were nice this year right now. Well that is all to tell, make sure to be jolly and nice because Santa is always checking his list. Happy holidays!

### Hamstring Injury



**Ira "T.J." Williams**  
Cedar Ridge H. S.

This weekend, our Cedar Ridge High School 9th grade basketball team participated in a tournament at Round Rock High School. Our final game was on Saturday, December 5, 2015, against Rouse High School. The winner of this game would win third place in the tournament.

Our team struggled during the first quarter. We were losing by seven points at the beginning of the second quarter. Our coach, Coach Gates, was getting very frustrated with the team because we weren't playing effective defense or getting rebounds. After calling a timeout to give us a breather, Coach Gates gave us a new strategy to win the game.

The entire second half of the game, Coach Gates instructed us to play full court defense on Rouse. During nearly every Rouse possession our team would

steal the ball or grab the defensive rebound. We had a ten-point lead by the end of the third quarter and Coach Gates directed us to continue the full court press in the fourth quarter.

A couple plays into the quarter, I stole the ball from a Rouse player and started pushing the ball up the court. On the other end, I saw a Rouse defender in front of his basket. When I went up for the layup, the Rouse defender's knee collided with the back of my leg and knocked me off balance. I hit the ground, grimacing in pain. I didn't know if I had made the basket or not. My hamstring, the muscle on the back of my thigh, was tightening more and more by the second. I could hardly stand up on my own. Coach Gates had to help me to the bench where a manager brought me ice. The pain was agonizing.

We won the game against Rouse and took third place in the tournament. After icing my hamstring for an hour, some of the pain started to go away. My mom took me home after the game and gave me Advil and iced my leg for the majority of the day. A couple hours later, my hamstring felt almost back to normal. I should be back on the court in about a week when Cedar Ridge plays our rival, McNeil High School.

### School Athletes



**Wesley Dickerson**  
Cedar Ridge H. S.

As an athlete at my school I was selected to be apart of an initiative that involves tutoring elementary school students in the morning usually once a week. What we do is visit our local elementary school where a good number of teammates, myself included, attended elementary school. What we do is we visit a few students who have been identified as students who are either struggling in school or that just need some assistance with a certain subject. When we are each assigned a "buddy," as we like to call the students we work with, we go once a week to help them with whatever they

need to work on that day. I really enjoy helping out the student I work with, he's a fun loving kid who has a good heart and is a pleasure to work with.

Additionally I am so glad I can participate in this program in the same elementary school I attended. It is very interesting to see the building where you first went to school from a very different perspective. I found it very exciting to see where everything was and what had changed since I had graduated elementary school. I also found it very funny to see how small everything really was. I remembered walking great distances to get to the library and the gym, only now do I realize that they are both just a few steps away from each other. I enjoyed my time at Forest Creek Elementary School and I enjoy being able to help out there because it is a very rewarding experience to visit a place where you grew up and assist someone who was once in your position.



# YOUTH BRIGADE

## Finals



**De'Ja Hill**  
McCallum H. S.

Hello readers, Well we all know that the end of the first semester is almost over so that means that our first semester finals are around the cor-

ner. Unfortunately, I have been so stressed out about taking my finals because of what my mother says is test anxiety. I am not good when it comes to taking test so I have been studying really hard and trying to stay calm.

Christmas, which is my second favorite day of the year, is also coming up soon and I am so excited. I have already received my present from my mother but I cannot wait to see what else I might get. Until next time, De'ja'

## Christmas Break



**Zyon Hill**  
McCallum H. S.

Hello readers, The Christmas holidays are coming around soon, which for students means no school for about two weeks. However, there is a different meaning for their parents. Most parents will be trying to finish up their Christmas shopping. I think that there

are several parents who dislike Christmas now because they are spending more money than they would like to. I feel like this is because a lot of people have let this day become too commercial and have also forgotten the true meaning of Christmas.

I have been spending a lot of time packing because we are moving at the first of next year and I thought that I may as well get a head start on the job. Although, leaving our current home will be a little difficult for me because we have lived in this house for ten years. I do think that everything will be just fine. Until next time, Zyon

## House Passage of Every Student Succeeds Act Signals Open Door for New Public School Accountability System in Texas

Louis Malfaro, president of the 65,000-member Texas branch of the American Federation of Teachers, commented today on the Every Student Succeeds Act, which passed the U.S. House last night:

Every parent, student and teacher should be doing a happy dance once this law reaches final passage, but I don't think many people understand just how profound an impact this legislation could have on our schools here in Texas. This law creates a huge opportunity to rid ourselves at last of the misuse of testing and to start crafting an accountability system that supports schools that need help instead of punishing them.

Texas will now have enormous flexibility in assessing whether students and schools are



**Louis Malfaro**

performing proficiently and deciding what we do if they aren't. This law also will take away many of the federal mandates under No Child Left Behind that have driven teaching to the test, excessive test prep and unjust teacher evaluations based on students' standardized test scores.

The question now is: Will our state lawmakers and education officials grasp this opportunity to

depart from the test-and-punish model of school accountability that we've suffered under for many years?

We're going to do everything in our power—and that means marshaling the voices of teachers, parents and students—to ensure that multiple reliable and valid measures are used to assess students, not just a snapshot score on a standardized test. And we're going to call again for proven models for turning around struggling schools—like the Community Schools initiatives—instead of the dismal failure of previous sanctions that sought to close neighborhood schools or turn them over to charter operators.

We've seen the Community Schools model work so well because it takes a holistic approach

to tackling the challenges of helping struggling schools. The model involves a well-planned network of partnerships between districts, nonprofits and government agencies that provide both academic assistance and social services to the students, parents and community at large. It's certain that we have a lot of work ahead of us to craft a new Texas accountability system, but we've learned a lot from the mistakes of No Child Left Behind. Let's get it right this time. The door is opening.

Texas AFT represents more than 65,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, support personnel, and higher-education employees across the state. Texas AFT is affiliated with the 1.6-million-member American Federation of Teachers.



**AUSTIN, TX**— On Saturday, December 12, 2015, thousands of families in need will have the opportunity to find just the right warm winter coat for their children. This will be the 29th year for **Coats for Kids**, which distributes more than 35,000 coats to children in need in Central Texas. The Junior League of Austin, Jack Brown Cleaners, 98.1 KVET and KVUE are proud to sponsor this event and thank the Central Texas community for supporting this worthwhile cause!

"It is very heartwarming to see the Central Texas community come together to make **Coats for Kids** happen," said JLA President Casie Wenmohs. "The event is so special to so many because when we all combine our efforts, we can help needy children in such a tangible way: by giving them a warm winter coat. We appreciate everyone who takes the time to volunteer, donate funds, give a coat or organize a coat drive. On no other day of the year is it more clear how much the people of Austin care

## THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF AUSTIN AND PARTNERS TO DISTRIBUTE 35,000 COATS

### KEY DATES

- Community Coat Drive: Monday, Nov. 16 - Wednesday, Dec. 9
- Coat Drive Competition: Monday, Nov. 16 - Friday, Dec. 4
- Volunteer Registration: Friday, Oct. 9 - Friday, Dec. 11
- Distribution Day: Saturday, Dec. 12, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### LOCATION

The Palmer Events Center  
900 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX 78704

about our community's children!"

We distribute the majority of the coats at Palmer Event Center and Del Valle Elementary school serves as a satellite site. Clients visiting this site **MUST** pre-register with a DVISD Parent Community Liaison.

**Coats for Kids** is an annual community event through which new and gently-worn warm winter coats are collected and distributed to economically disadvantaged youth in Central Texas. Families who attend have the opportunity to learn about additional re-

sources and services available through an on-site community fair featuring local non-profit organizations. The community fair has expanded this year and includes the distribution of shoes, flu shots, booster seats and many other offerings. Families who make less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines are eligible to

receive a coat and have the opportunity to visit the community fair. The community's support — both financial and in volunteer efforts — helps to keep so many children warm and healthy during the cold winter months. Volunteers who speak Spanish, Farsi, American Sign Language and other languages are especially needed.

There is still time to donate towards the purchase of new coats — just \$15 buys a new coat for needy kids! This is a community-based initiative and it is because of the support of local groups, businesses, schools, and individuals that the youngest members of our community will be protected from the cold this winter. To donate to **Coats for Kids** or to volunteer, please [www.jlaustin.org/coats](http://www.jlaustin.org/coats).

## Five Texas Schools Named State Finalists in \$2 Million National STEM Competition

Five Texas schools are among the nation's 255 State Finalists in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest, a program that encourages teachers and students to solve real-world issues in their community using classroom skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Each of the State Finalists will receive two Samsung Galaxy Tabs for the classroom's use.

Next, teachers from the five state finalist schools will submit a lesson plan outlining how they will address the challenge with their students while working with their communities — all with a share of \$2 million on the line.

### Who:

1. Anderson High School, Austin
2. Crownover Middle School, Corinth
3. Cummings Middle School, Brownsville
4. Graham High School, Graham
5. McKinney Boyd High School, McKinney

### Future Competition

### Phases:

- The 255 State Finalists will create lesson plans that put their ideas into action.

- From there, 51 State Winners (representing all 50 states plus Washington, D.C.) will be selected and receive \$20,000 in technology for their school. State Winners will be revealed in December.

- From the pool of 51 State Winners, 15 National Finalists will be selected. The National Finalists will then pitch their idea live in New York to a panel of judges and America will be able to vote on their favorite ideas.

- Five National Winners will be named and honored at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., where they will also get the opportunity to meet their Congressmen and Senators.

### Interview Opportunities:

- Local teachers are available for interviews about the local issue they're working to solve and the importance of hands-on STEM learning.

## Akins Winter Holiday Showcase

Friday, December 11, 2015

Join the Akins Fine Arts Department as we present our Winter Holiday Showcase. Enjoy performances from students throughout the Fine Arts Department and see what makes Akins shine!

**What:** Akins Winter Holiday Showcase

**When:** 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Akins High School, 10701 S. First St.



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[austinncc.edu/spring](http://austinncc.edu/spring)



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# Constable Danny Thomas Plans for Re-Election

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | Villager Columnist

As 2016 Democratic Party primary approaches, elected officials are starting to engage in re-election activities. For instance, Danny Thomas the current Constable of Travis County Precinct 1 plans to run for re-election. During the last election cycle, Constable Thomas did have an opponent. For the 2016, it seems that he will have another challenger.

Over the past 4 years, the Danny Thomas's Constable Office has worked hard to keep the public safe while maintaining



Constable Danny Thomas

good professional conduct with the public. According to Constable Danny Thomas' office, "We do more

than just serve warrants. We are committed to building and strengthening relationships between our office and our residents so that we can better serve the needs of our community."

As previously stated, Constable Thomas will face a challenger in the 2016 Democratic Party. Moreover, only those living in the geographic area of the Travis County Constable Precinct 1 area will be able to vote for him or his challenger. Precinct 1 includes some parts of Pflugerville, North-East Austin, and Manor. Precinct 1 has a large African American and African Diaspora community.

# Salima African Hair Maybe Leaving Pflugerville



Salima, Owner of Salima Hair Braiding

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | Villager Columnist

Just like numerous African Diaspora business owners, Salima African Hair Braiding had made Pflugerville their businesses' headquarters. Pflugerville having a large African American and African Diaspora community, made it easier for them to get customers. In other words, Pflugerville has been a good location for Salima African Hair Braiding.

Salima African Hair Braiding was unique from the other, "hair braiding salons" due to the owner's sense of business and customer's appreciation. Salima, the owner placed emphasis on customer services that have caused them to come back. At her store located at 1100 Grand Avenue Parkway, Pflugerville she offers various types of services. Some of the services include micro braiding, the Senegalese Twist, cornrows, hairs extensions, and single hair braiding.

Due to family reasons, the owner may be leaving the United States before February, 2016. If the owner leaves the area, she also plans to sell items to the new owner. A move from this company will be a great loss to the Pflugerville area. But for the time being the owner is still opened for business.

# African Social Club Celebration



Members of the African Social Club. Photo by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon

by Tsoke (Chuch) Adjavon | Villager Columnist

As 2015 comes to an end, there are numerous African Diaspora organizations that will be holding an end of year celebration. For instance the African Social Club, a recently formed organization plans to hold their end of year

event on December 19th in Austin Texas. According to the organizers, the end of year event will be like "a repeat of the successful Family Day event that they held earlier in the year."

The "End of Year celebration" is meant to unite and celebrate the African community living in Central Texas. For instance,

they plan to recognize those who have made a difference in the community. In other words, there will be an "award ceremony." Also, the event is focused on bringing Africans of various country origins together. For instance, there will be people coming every part of Africa at this event.

The African Social Club was birth from the idea of bringing various African communities together in order to do activities that will benefit everyone. In the upcoming year, they plan to do more "family" and children centered events. For instance, they plan to hold a soccer clinic for children.

# Milwaukee's Communities of Color Discuss Law Enforcement Concerns

By Nicole Beilke Special to the NNPA News Wire from Media Milwaukee

The forum titled "The Relationship between Communities of Color and the Police De-

partment" was summed up perfectly by panelist Angela Walker when she said that the problem in Milwaukee is that there isn't a relationship.

Many nods, snaps and murmurs of affirmation followed this com-

ment as well as other points made throughout the event. The meeting created a space for members of Milwaukee's community of color where they shared and discussed their struggles against what they described as discrimination and oppression by law enforcement in Milwaukee.

The panel discussion was held Oct. 22, 2015 at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Union and hosted by the Wisconsin chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Panel included local

social justice advocates Emiliano Corbett-Soza, George Martin, Angela Walker, Mary Watkins and Reverend Steve Jerbi and was moderated by UWM history professor Robert Smith. A wide range of organizations was represented at the meeting.

The UWM Social Justice LLC, UWM Cultures and Communities, YWCA of Southeastern Wisconsin, Rid Racism Milwaukee, ACLU of Wisconsin and the ACLU Student Alliance at UWM were all present. These organizations of people



Pictured left to right are: Angela Walker, Reverend Steve Jerbi, Emiliano Corbett-Soza, George Martin and Mary Watkins listen to an audience member during the panel discussion. Photo by Nicole Beilke/Media Milwaukee

of color and their allies all gathered to address what they see as the three main issues in Milwaukee that involve community and law enforcement relations.

They were militarization, the school-to-prison pipeline and use of excessive force by police.

Out of the discussion of these issues, the speakers unanimously called for key changes to be made in the city.

They said that solving these problems would begin with decriminalizing drug offenses, policing with a firehouse model and holding police accountable with real consequences for misconduct or excessive use of force.

They favored that these would be substantive positive changes to

improve relations between communities of color and the police in Milwaukee over the implementation of body cameras, which they discussed as a weak recent attempt at a solution in the city.

In the discussion of police use of excessive force, body cameras have been commonly talked about nationally to be a solution to keep them accountable.

The panel discussed the recent hearing on September 29 about the implementation of body cameras for the Milwaukee Police Department.

Audience members asked panelists their opinions on other solutions to the discussed issues. They did offer specific changes that they feel need to be made in MPD's practices.



# CLASSIFIEDS ~ PUBLIC INFORMATION

Even after the death of a family member, the disparity does not change continued from page 3



receive much support financially from their parents. However, their parents look forward to receiving support from their children. White parents hardly expect such help which is the exact opposite. According to studies conducted in the past, most colored people cannot save money as adults. Their income goes towards supporting their family members.

Even after the death of a family member, the disparity does not change. In reference to an observation made by the Institute on Assets and Social Policy, Jones writes that white Americans have a higher likelihood

**Dell Medical School is first new medical school in nearly 50 years to be built from scratch on a top-tier, Association of American Universities-member campus**



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

laboration between Duke and UT Austin that will build on the strengths and population health interests of both institutions, McClellan will split time between the universities and help the Dell Medical School implement innovative policy and clinical reforms in Austin that can be a model for the nation.

“Real health care reform is hard to create and harder to put in place. New approaches are needed to develop, implement and expand successful models,” McClellan said. “The Dell Medical School is bringing together critical resources to address these challenges and contributing to national leadership in health reform, making this a unique and important opportunity to affect change.”

At the federal level, McClellan oversaw the development of the federal Medicare prescription drug benefit, the FDA’s Critical Path Initiative, and public-private initiatives focused on reforms creating value in health and health care. Most recently, he was a senior fellow and director of the Health Care Innovation and Value Initiatives at the Brookings Institution.

The Dell Medical School is the first new medical school in nearly 50 years to be built from

scratch on the campus of a top-tier, Association of American Universities-member campus. The school also was created in unprecedented partnership with the surrounding Travis County community, which voted in 2012 to increase property taxes to support the school with \$35 million a year in local funding. McClellan’s work will draw on both of these landmark opportunities — leveraging the school’s unique community relationship and inherent resources to redesign health care delivery in ways that help this community and provide a model for other communities.

McClellan grew up in Austin and graduated from the Plan II Honors program at UT Austin. He previously served as a member of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers and as senior director for health care policy at the White House, and he was an associate professor of economics and medicine at Stanford University. He earned an M.D. from the Harvard University–Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Division of Health Sciences and Technology, a Ph.D. in economics from MIT, and an M.P.A. from Harvard University. He is board-certified in internal medicine and has been a practicing internist during his career.

of acquiring an inheritance as compared to black Americans. The institute equates the likelihood to be at 36 percent for whites and seven percent for blacks.

At the same time, even in instances where both white and black millennials receive an inheritance, the one belonging to a black individual is ten times less that of a white American. To make the matters worse, black millennials have a high likelihood of going into debt once a member of their family passes on. Funeral costs force some families to seek for ways of raising funds to give the departed family member a decent burial.



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New Jobs for the  
Week of 12/06/2015

- Specialist,  
Tutoring-Part-Time (50%)  
Riverside Campus  
20 hours per week. Minimum 4  
hours shifts mostly Monday-  
Thursday during peak hours.  
Some evenings and weekends  
may be required.  
\$23,923-\$34,175/yearly  
**Job# 1511038**  
Coordinator, Faculty  
Development  
Highland Business Center  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 5:00  
p.m. with occasional evening  
hours for special events.  
\$38,159-\$54,513/yearly  
**Job# 1511039**  
Assistant, Student Financial Aid  
Riverside Campus  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00  
p.m. occasional evening and  
weekend hours.  
\$26,978-\$38,540/yearly  
**Job# 1511040**  
Assistant, Student Financial Aid  
Cypress Creek Campus  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00  
p.m. occasional evening and  
weekend hours.  
\$26,978-\$38,540/yearly  
**Job# 1511041**  
Faculty, Pharmacy Technology  
Eastview Campus  
Hours are as assigned. May  
require weekend and/or  
evening work.  
Salary is assigned according to  
the Full-Time Faculty Salary  
Scale.  
**Job# 1512003**  
Apply at HR  
Middle Fiskville Rd.  
6th Floor, Austin, TX 78752  
**Job Line (512) 223-5621**  
<http://www.austinctc.edu>  
EEOC/AA/M/F/D/V

Austin Community College District is requesting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for modification and remodel of former Highland Mall tenant space at the ACC Highland Campus.

Competitive Sealed  
Proposal (CSP)  
No. 909-16009RW

All proposals must be submitted to the Purchasing Department by no later than Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 2:00PM. Solicitation packages are available on the ACC Purchasing website at <http://www.austinctc.edu/purchase/>. In addition, the solicitation documents are available for pick-up (with advance notice) in the ACC Purchasing Office between the hours of 9 am and 4 pm, Monday through Friday, (512) 223-1044. All proposals must be sealed and returned to the ACC Purchasing Office, ACC Service Center, 9101 Tuscany Way, Austin, Texas 78754, by the date and time indicated above. Electronically transmitted responses will NOT be accepted unless otherwise stated in the documents.

A mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference will be held next to the project site on Thursday, January 7, 2016; 10:00 am; located at the Highland Campus, 6001 Airport Blvd., Austin, Texas 78752, South Entrance to the mall.

\*\*\*Notice of Closure: ACC will be closed for the Winter Break from 12/23/15 thru 1/3/16\*\*\*  
The ACC Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and/or all responses and waive all formalities in the solicitation process.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DPR Construction will receive select “early-release” Subcontractor and Material Vendor proposals for Phase 2 of the Charles Schwab Corporate Campus project located at 2309 Gracy Farms Lane in Austin, Texas. Proposals will be accepted on or before December 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM CST. Proposal packages include the following trades:

### Generator Yard

**Earthwork, Reinforcing Steel, Concrete, and Misc. Steel (primarily Gates)**  
**AUS G1 Parking Garage**

**Hydraulic Elevators and Precast Structural & Architectural Concrete (this trade will include a “Design-Assist” component)**

**AUS 2 Office Building & AUS A(3) Amenity Building**

**Exterior Glass & Glazing, HVAC, Plumbing, and Electrical (these trades will include a “Design-Assist” Component)**

For additional information, or to obtain project documents, please contact Mark Gray at [mgray@dpr.com](mailto:mgray@dpr.com), or Ryan Krogstad at [ryank@dpr.com](mailto:ryank@dpr.com) (512) 345-7699.

DPR Construction is an EEO Employer and all HUB and M/WBE Subcontractors and Material Vendors are strongly encouraged to submit bids on this project.

## Listen Live )))

Every Friday 8 AM - 9 AM  
Tommy Wyatt & Damita Shanklin



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MISCELLANEOUS**



City of Austin Featured Job  
Opportunities

The City of Austin is currently seeking qualified applicants for the following positions:

- Associate Judge
- Assistant Director, Public Works Engr and Project Delivery
- 911 Call Taker/Dispatch Trainee
- Athletic Officials I-IV (30 Part Time Openings)
- Dispatcher II (Night Shift: 9:30 p.m. - 5:30 a.m.)
- Project Manager
- Street & Bridge Operations Technician I
- Compensation Consultant (Two Positions)
- Dispatcher II (Night Shift: 9:30 p.m. - 5:30 a.m.)
- Graduate Engineer A or Graduate Engineer B
- Case Manager
- Administrative Specialist

Please visit the City of Austin employment website at [www.austincityjobs.org](http://www.austincityjobs.org) to view requirements and apply for these and other job opportunities. We encourage you to check the employment website often as new job opportunities are posted daily. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call 512-974-3210 or email us at [employment.services@austintexas.gov](mailto:employment.services@austintexas.gov). The City of Austin is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Please visit the City of Austin employment website at [www.austincityjobs.org](http://www.austincityjobs.org) to view requirements and apply for these and other job opportunities. We encourage you to check the employment website often as new job opportunities are posted daily.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call 512-974-3210 or email us at [employment.services@austintexas.gov](mailto:employment.services@austintexas.gov).

The City of Austin is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



City of Austin  
Purchasing Office

The City of Austin Purchasing Office invites you to view current bid solicitations at [https://www.ci.austin.tx.us/financeonline/vendor\\_connection/solicitation/solicitations.cfm](https://www.ci.austin.tx.us/financeonline/vendor_connection/solicitation/solicitations.cfm). Vendors are encouraged to register on-line in the City’s Vendor Self Service System. Once your company is registered, you will receive notifications about new bid opportunities. For additional information regarding current bid opportunities or Vendor Registration, please call the Purchasing Office at 512-974-2500.

For information on the City of Austin’s Minority Owned and Women-Owned Procurement Program and the certification process, please contact the Small & Minority Business Resources Department at 512-974-7600 or visit their website at <http://www.austintexas.gov/smbr>.



# THE COURIER

## Susan L. Taylor Gives Keynote Address at Black Austin Democrats Event

Former *Essence* Editor highlights fundraiser honoring Austin women

Susan L. Taylor, Editor Emerita of *Essence* Magazine, will be the keynote speaker at the Black Austin Democrats fundraiser, to be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 20 at the Westin at the Domain.

"On February 20, the Black Austin Democrats Political Action Committee will host the Austin Trailblazers Awards," said event organizer Shuronda Robinson. "We're bringing Editor Emerita of *Essence* Magazine, Susan Taylor, to inspire us to greater action on behalf of our community."

Under Taylor's leadership, *Essence* readership soared to 8 million, and the *Essence* brand expanded into book publishing, broadcasting, fashion and the creation of the *Essence* Music Festival.

Taylor, who served 27 years as the chief editor of *Essence*, is now the Founder and CEO of National CARES Mentoring Movement. The mission of CARES is "changing the predictable futures defined for our young who are struggling along the margins and living with the indignity of poverty."

This year's Trailblazers Award nominees and the categories they were nominated in are: **LISA BYRD, the Ada DeBlanc Simond Honoree** - Lisa Byrd currently serves as the founding executive director for Austin's African American Cultural Heritage District. **JUDGE**

**BRENDA P. KENNEDY, the Barbara Jordan Honoree** - In 1988, Judge Kennedy became the first African-American elected in a contested county-wide race in Travis County. She has served as the Presiding Judge of the Travis County Criminal Courts since January, 2015. **Or Ann Houston, the Willie Mae Kirk Honoree** - Ms. Houston was elected to the Austin City Council, District #1, in 2014, and serves as the Chair of the Council Committee on Health and Human Services. **Ms. Cheryl Reese, the Azie Taylor Morton Austin Trailblazers Award** - Ms. Reese serves as the Volunteer Coordinator at the Travis County Voter Registration office. She is responsible for planning and executing all aspects of our Voter Registration Outreach Program. **Ms. Ayana Flewellen, the Ada Anderson Youth and Arts Honoree** - A Ph.D. Student at the University of Texas at Austin, Ms. Flewellen is a future cultural anthropologist, and one of the local organizers for Black Lives Matter.

Funds raised at this event will be used to increase canvassing and *Get Out The Vote* efforts in Travis County, in order to increase voter participation amongst African Americans.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/austin-trailblazers-brunch-with-susan-taylor-tickets-9496609615>



Susan L. Taylor

## Nominations Announced for the 58th GRAMMY Awards

Naomi Richard | The Austin Villager Newspaper

LOS ANGELES — The Recording Academy® announced nominations for the 58th Annual GRAMMY Awards® in all 83 categories on December 7. Reflecting a diverse blend of talented music makers, this year's nominees were selected from more than 21,000 submissions entered. As the only peer-based music award, the GRAMMY Awards are voted on by The Academy's membership body of creators across all disciplines of music, including recording artists, songwriters, producers, and engineers. The preeminent awards for excellence in music will be presented Monday, Feb. 15, 2016, live from STAPLES Center in Los Angeles and broadcast on the CBS Television Network from 8 – 11:30 p.m. (ET/PT).

This year, Kendrick Lamar leads nominations with 11, followed by Taylor Swift and The

Weeknd, who each earn seven. Additionally, music producer/songwriter Max Martin receives six nominations and mastering engineer Tom Coyne, rapper Drake, and engineers/mixers Serban Ghenea and John Hanes each earn five nominations.

The eclectic nature of this year's nominations is perhaps best exemplified in the Album of the Year category, where nominees range from the alternative and soulful rock of Alabama Shakes to Lamar's thought-provoking jazz-infused rap, the classic country sounds of Chris Stapleton, the pop emergence of Swift, and the genre-bending R&B style of The Weeknd.

Join @theGRAMMYS Twitter Moments conversation using #GRAMMYS.



The Weeknd

Christopher Polk/BET/Getty Images

## Congressional Black Caucus Issues Statement on Oral Argument in Evenwel v. Abbott

WASHINGTON, D.C.

— Earlier this week, The Supreme Court of the United States heard oral arguments in *Evenwel v. Abbott*, a Texas redistricting case that would deny representation to anyone who is not a voter, including every child and minor under the age of 18, by changing how state legislative districts are drawn. The Congressional Black Caucus strongly believes that all individuals should be counted in our democracy, as mandated by the Constitution and maintains that states should be required to count everyone when determining legislative districts.

"Members of the Congressional Black Caucus hold firmly the belief that every person living in America deserves equal representation and has the right to be counted in our democracy. Sue Evenwel's egregious attempt to deny millions of individuals representation



Ruth Ginsburg



Antonin Scalia



Elena Kagan



Clarence Thomas



Sonia Sotomayor



Supreme Court of the United States



Sue Evenwel

when determining state legislative districts is an attack on our democracy and threatens the ability of elected officials to adequately represent and serve their communities. Everyone deserves representation even if they are unable to cast a ballot and vote.

"As elected officials, we took a pledge to serve all constituents, not just those who share our political views. The *Evenwel* case threatens to disenfranchise far too many individuals, hardworking taxpayers, young people, and minorities. We must protect and uphold the integrity of our democracy to ensure that no individual, regardless of their age, race, or political affiliation is marginalized. Our country is best served when everyone is counted and when everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in our democratic process."

## Sanders Only Candidate on Texas Democratic Ballot Via Volunteers

AUSTIN, Texas — In only three months, volunteer petitioners from across Texas collected more than 12,000 signatures, well over the 5,000 petition signature requirement, for Sanders' official inclusion on the Texas Democratic primary ballot. Sanders is the only presidential Democratic candidate to use the ballot petition method rather than paying a fee to participate in the 2016 Texas primary election.

"The impressive effort of the petitioners proves that this is a true grassroots campaign" said Jacob Limon, state director of the Sanders campaign in Texas. "This is not your typical top-down campaign."

At Texas for Bernie 2016 headquarters in Austin on the night before filing, Jim Hightower, former commissioner of the Texas Department of Agriculture, reminded the crowd of petitioners from around the state, "Texas is not a Republican state; Texas is a *populist* state." Friday morning at 11am, petitioners rallied at the West gate of the Texas State Capitol, then walked the signatures and accompanying paperwork to Texas Democratic Party headquarters in Austin.

"We are supporting Bernie because we have seen he has consistently stood up for the rights of the Middle Class and Unions," said Barbara and Danny Fetonte, the co-leaders of Texan petitioners for Sanders. "His defense of Social Security and Medicare is important to us personally. His plan for college education would have been a big help to us as we helped our two sons get through state universities in Texas."

Barbara Fetonte worked for the State of Texas for 28 years, is active in both the Texas State Employees Union and the South Travis United Democrats.

Danny Fetonte is a retired Labor Organizer who organized unions for 34 years with both the Communication Workers of America and then the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT).