

the Stand south side news

www.mysouthsidestand.com

Syracuse, NY

MARCH 2020

Issue 81 FREE

DECADE IN PRINT

The Stand reflects on
10 years of community
storytelling in speical issue

THANK YOU TO ALL

Ashley Kang recognizes volunteers who keep project going

fabulus photos

View top images from
each year and learn what
people are up to now

what they learned

Past contributors tell why
they joined The Stand, what
makes this paper special

MARCH PHOTO SHOW

O'DUNK & O'BRIGHT FURNITURE IRISH BARGAIN PARTY

The Lowest Prices of the Year

Going On Now!



Years in Print

2 FOUNDER'S LETTER

the
stand

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SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH

AMY FALKNER, BEA GONZALEZ,
BOB GATES, MICHAEL GREENLAR,
JUSTIN FOGARTY, PHIL HADDIX,
KATHY PITT, EMILY WINIECK

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THE STAND IS BASED OUT OF THE
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THE RIGHT TO PUBLISH ONLY MATERIAL
THE STAND DEEMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE
PUBLICATION'S EDITORIAL PURPOSE AND IN
KEEPING WITH COMMUNITY STANDARDS.

The Stand would be nothing and never have made it to a decade in print without a host of dedicated volunteers, as well as our supporters and partners.

The project started as the brainchild of Newhouse emeritus professor Steve Davis, who saw the need for a news outlet that focused exclusively on the South Side. The project launched online in the summer of 2009, with our first print edition out March 2010.

I want to acknowledge everyone who played a role in the success of this project and hope I don't leave anyone out!

In no particular order: Our many board members over the years — Charles Pierce-El, Shante Harris El, Reggie Seigler, Tajuana Cerutti-Brown, the late John Young, Deborah A. Willis, Yolanda L. Beckon, Monica Richardson, Nathaniel Brown, Dana McKinney, Camille Coakley, Dale Harp, Greg Munno and the founder of The Stand Steve Davis.



Additionally: The S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, the late Dean Lorraine Branham, Syracuse University, Emilie Davis, Melissa Chessher, Nancy Cantor, Kent D. Syverud, Jordan Storm, Amy Falkner, the South Side Innovation Center, the former SU South Side Initiative, Justin Murphy, Joel Kaplan, Bea Gonzalez, Stephen Mahan, Brenda & Keith Muhammad, Gina Chen, Ame Donkor, Durrie Bouscaren, Kaun Luo, Peter Moller, Maureen Sieh, Lynn Olcott, Jeffrey Chapman, Herm Card, Jim Emmons, Jason Kohlbrenner, Cedric Bolton, Jason Torreano, Hub Brown, Darius Richardson, Brad Horn, Kelsey Boyer, Michelle Weaver, John Garcia Jr., Karen Greenfield, Tracey Gotham, Michele Hayes, Patrick O'Donnell, Vanessa Johnson, Katherine Hills, LaTalia Williams, Patrick House, Victoria Coit, Nancy Austin, Yanira Rodriguez, Melissa Parker, Ruthnie Angrand, Andrew J. Simmons, Lauren J. Valenzuela, Jeremiah Howell, Stephen Shaner, Robert G. Nassau, Deborah S. Kenn, Joe Blum, Dr. Rick Wright, Camille Bautista, Tara Donaldson, Miguel Balbuena, Ashley Van Hoff, Dennis Kim, Raphael T. Richard, Ronald J. Pratt, Anna Daughton, Nick Lisi, Jeffrey Newell, Ken Harper, Vincent Cobb, Hernz Laguerre Jr., Farron Stark, Tom Kennedy, Jim Aroune, Doug Moreau, Jim Reith, Bob Herz, Vernon Macklin, Kendriana Rocker, Karaline Rothwell, Quincy Rothwell, Isaac Rothwell, Elina Berzins, Caterina D'Agostino, Kathy Sims, Cheryl Molesky, Sistina Giordano, Thane Joyal, Lynn McDonald, Hope Lont, Ginevra Petroske, Marilu Lopez-Fretts, Bill Storm, Bob Gates, The Gifford Foundation, The Near Westside Initiative, The Allyn Family Foundation, Mike Greenlar, Allison Gates, Charles Curran, Vania Myers, Nick DeRocha, Ardena Harvey-Gardner, Eurain Scott, Ceikaiyia Cheeks, Martha Chavis-Bonner, Abby Legge, Mike Davis, David Southerland, Sean Kirst, CNY Fair Housing, Gustav Niebuhr, Seth Gitner, Shelly Collins, Joanne Craner, Karen Baum, Frank Fowler and the Syracuse Police Department, Ben Cleeton, Kate Collins, Seamus Kirst, Sarah Perkes, Central New York Community Foundation, Emma Geiler, Emily Dittman, Kai Nguyen, Zau Nhkum, Dominique Hildebrand, Shawna Rabbas, Ashley McBride, Tamara Reese, Zach Kramer, Ari Gilberg, Juliana Walsh, Phil Haddix, Lianza Reyes, Matthew Gutierrez, Jishnu Nair, Sarah Tietje-Mietz, Jim Shahin, Lyle Michael, Sajida Ayyup, Meg Craig, Jeff Kramer, Robert Bosch Stiftung, CUNY Graduate School of Journalism News Integrity Initiative, Agora Journalism Center, Emily Elconin, Todd Michalek, William Gandino, Tony Hines-Tecoy, Matti Gellman, Alex Rouhandeh, David Haas, Adam Peruta, Peter Smith, Jennifer Tran, Benjamin Lannon, Dana McMullen, Zimeng Chen, Zoe Davis, John Dishaw, Sarah Francesconi, Alison Harford, Chelsea Hurd, Emily Kelleher, Zhenyu Kou, Marissa Levine, Joann Li, Jiaqi Liu, Kate Mazade, Sheila Quinell, Lisa Hackley, Robert Schulz, Eronmwon Osagie, Sharee Turpin, Allison Weis, Emily Winieck, Kathy Pitt, Katie Argus, Tom Monks, Justin Fogarty and Annaliese Perry.

And all those who have participated in our annual **Photo Walks**.

Last but not least, thank you to our readers.

— Ashley Kang

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THE IMPACT OF THE STAND

Former contributors and featured residents share what it meant to be published in local paper



Now director of communications and marketing for the city of Syracuse

RUTHNIE ANGRAND

Community Contributor from 2010-2014

I learned that as a journalist, I have an obligation to tell the truth, but I also have an obligation of how I frame that truth ... to tell a story in all its complexity. I felt The Stand was doing that for the people in the community — telling minority stories with integrity. It really blew me away, and I was like, “Anything I can do to contribute stories to this I’m going to.”

As a transplant to Syracuse, The Stand was a tool I could use to get out of my bubble. I went to community events; I interviewed people. I wasn’t just walking up to strangers going: “Hi, I’m Ruthnie.” I’d walk up and go: “Hi I’m Ruthnie with The Stand, I have a few questions for you.” And it just cleared the air and made it easier for people to talk to me. There were people willing to talk to The Stand that wouldn’t talk to other publications because they knew it did citizen journalism, so you’d be very responsible with the information that they gave you.

Attending the Newhouse School taught me to do news writing, but The Stand gave me an opportunity to do it in a judgment-free zone. Newhouse is very competitive, and I was not a journalism major in undergrad. When I got here, I was not used to that culture, and if you make a mistake on any of your writing, you get an automatic F.

The thought of a professor or a class looking at my writing and critiquing it felt like they were critiquing me. But I didn’t have that problem at The Stand. I could submit stories to Ashley Kang, who would edit them with me. She’d send them back with notes and questions: “What did you mean? See here, I switched these paragraphs.” And, it made me a lot more confident about my ability to write news. I got to tell you, this is the publication that made me. When I started getting clips, I was like, “Oh my god, I can really do this.” And that sounds like a ridiculous thing to say to someone who’s in a grad program, but we’re human, and sometimes competition can make you feel like you’re small. And The Stand is not about competition. It’s really about community.



Now a freelance visual storyteller with work published in The New York Times, The Washington Post and others

BEN CLEETON

Photo Contributor from 2015-2019

From working with The Stand, I really gained connections in the community, and working with Ashely has been great because she’s so good at organizing everything and keeping a paper running on a shoestring budget. She finds the stories in the community that are important and not necessarily always told at larger papers.

One assignment that stands out was on General Davis. He gave me a tour of Syracuse, and for some reason he kept telling everyone I shot for The New York Times, but at that time I wasn’t shooting for them. He just kept saying that, and I was like, “Geez,” but to be doing it now is cool because that was always the dream.

Another story was on Sam Adams. He worked at the Southwest Community Center (now known as Syracuse Community Connections) for god knows how many years, maybe 40. But he unexpectedly passed away, and he was a regular at the B&B Cocktail Lounge. I was able to submit a lot of the photos I had of him singing on karaoke night, just hanging out with family and all of that. The Stand was able to use those photos also for a tribute to Sam. That was pretty special, and I was happy that story was told. Because, that story wouldn’t have been told in every paper, but it was significant to the South Side, because he was iconic at Southwest Community Center where he worked.





REGGIE SEIGLER

Contributes “A Friendly Five” column since 2010

Going to South Africa was the biggest experience I've had with The Stand. Being African-American, Africa had been on my bucket list. While there, I got to meet a lot of musicians. I'm still connected with the people I met there and I wrote a lengthy article on the experience. I shared about Apartheid and related it to Jim Crow and the financial times individuals are facing in Syracuse.

The Stand also gave me the opportunity to create a column to write about what I love — music.

As a musician to get to go on a trip and write such a story, that experience has to be No. 1. I don't think you can top that.

I perform music in the same headspace I access to write my columns. I can say that maybe I've expanded that headspace by writing.

I've gotten to know Ashley since she first joined, and she is a great person for this job. Especially because she really does get out into the community. She gets the stories, she reports them well, she keeps community correspondents connected with Newhouse and the Newhouse contributors connected to the community. And she's professional. We've gotten some grants and some good looks from folks outside the community with her direction.

We want to hear more perspectives from the community, and I know there are tons of writers out there. There are a lot of writers including rappers, poets, ministers and more, and I just wish more of them would send some short pieces into The Stand. If you're interested in contributing, complete the form at bit.ly/StandContributor.



AL-AMIN MUHAMMAD

First featured in 2016

Al-amin Muhammad started We Rise Above the Streets in 2015 to help Syracuse's homeless population.

Growing up in the South Side of Chicago, Muhammad had a rough upbringing. He joined a gang at 13 and was incarcerated multiple times. In an attempt to start fresh, Muhammad moved to Atlanta to work but was laid off. He found himself back on the streets selling drugs, next in prison. While there, he converted to Islam and vowed never to get involved in crime again. He was released a little over a year into his 10-year sentence, but without a job or a place to stay, became homeless.

He was offered a spot at a recovery center, where he got clean and found the support he needed to get back on his feet. It was during this time he learned one of his most valuable lessons — “power of the community.” He spent the next five years working with a nonprofit in Atlanta. With the skills he learned, he went on to launch We Rise where he quickly developed a strong following. Sandwich Saturdays started with 15 people, then 25, then 60, then 100 and eventually 575.

His local nonprofit gained even more traction after a profile in The Stand, which led to a surge of media coverage. Eventually, Muhammad's story gained the attention of CBS leading to We Rise receiving national exposure. Though, it's the South Side coverage he credits with first drawing the attention:

“It really started from The Stand,” Muhammad said. “To me, in my heart, it opened the doors to everything else.” Muhammad hopes that by sharing his life with The Stand that young people will be motivated by his story and see that self-betterment is possible. He welcomes young people across Syracuse and the South Side to get involved with We Rise.

Since being featured in The Stand, Muhammad and We Rise have also received shoutouts from Jay Z's Rock Nation and rapper Meek Mill. Mayor Ben Walsh even declared March 18, 2018, to be Al-amin Muhammad Day and presented him with the Rubenstein Justice Award.

18 SYRACUSE TO SOUTH AFRICA

ON THE SIDE

GAINING EXPOSURE

A Friendly Five

By Reggie Seigler

Contributed to The Stand

Seigler, a Syracuse native, traveled to South Africa in 2010 and wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.

19 SYRACUSE TO SOUTH AFRICA

ON THE SIDE

RECOGNIZING TALENT

Black musicians on 4 continents share strikingly similar experiences

By Reggie Seigler

Contributed to The Stand

Seigler, a Syracuse native, traveled to South Africa in 2010 and wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.

20 SYRACUSE TO SOUTH AFRICA

ON THE SIDE

ABOUT THIS TRIP

The Stand's Reggie Seigler joined a group of musicians to travel to South Africa in 2010. He wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.

Now looking to move We Rise to a larger location to serve more individuals

12 FEATURES

ON THE SIDE

WANT TO HELP?

Helping to help the homeless

By Reggie Seigler

Contributed to The Stand

Seigler, a Syracuse native, traveled to South Africa in 2010 and wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.

13 FEATURES

ON THE SIDE

FINDING PURPOSE

We Rise Above the Streets discovers needed means to homeless

By Reggie Seigler

Contributed to The Stand

Seigler, a Syracuse native, traveled to South Africa in 2010 and wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.

14 FEATURES

ON THE SIDE

MAKE A DONATION

Supporting the homeless

By Reggie Seigler

Contributed to The Stand

Seigler, a Syracuse native, traveled to South Africa in 2010 and wrote a column for The Stand about his experience. He is currently a member of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra.



ARDENA HARVEY-GARNER
Featured in 2015

Since being featured in The Stand, she's become a published author

In 2014, I worked with The Stand's special community photography project, From Where We Stand, that encouraged eight residents to document their own stories with the help of a professional mentor. I focused on capturing the final year of high school of my son Yahkeef Davis and his graduation. Then when he went to college, I continued my photography to document his journey and achievements.

The photography project gave me the confidence to get where I am now. I was a longtime reader of The Stand and what I appreciated was how they told real stories of the South Side community. I often read about people I knew personally.

Unfortunately, I've given up the camera — the technicalities intimidated me.

I hope to get back to photography some day, but know participating in The Stand's summer-long community project was what helped me push myself.

After working with that project, I decided to share my personal story to help others. In 2002, I walked out of an abusive marriage and re-entered the world, a Black single mother with two young children. I escaped the abuse, but still had much to do. I am proud to have pushed myself to attend and complete college while also running a support group for women in similar situations.

I worked with Ashley Kang, opening up about my past and what I've learned, and she was very helpful and supportive. I think she knows the community really well and does her best to keep the stories real and community-based.

In my last interview with The Stand, I shared how I hoped to have the book I was working on published. Now that dream is a reality. Today, I am an entrepreneur who has published a book, "Divine Invitation: The Seven Spiritual Lessons of a Relationship." The book is about my journey, relationships with men and what they taught me about life and faith.



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JENNIFER CHENG

Contributor 2010-2011

I first visited the South Side during my fall semester of my senior year. I remember walking down and feeling like I was in a different city. I was trying to find story ideas on the elderly because that was my beat. So, I went down different streets trying to talk to people and met an older couple. They said I could talk to their neighbor but that in the meantime they could give me some ideas. In the end, the man introduced me to a family that I wrote stories about.

I remember afterward my friends asking me: “You went there by yourself?” because I didn’t have a car. They were worried for me, but I told them it’s actually a place with a lot of kindness and the people are hospitable.

After graduation I worked as a journalist for two years and then changed careers and became a teacher. Regardless of my profession, The Stand impacted me a lot. I continue to work with more marginalized communities now as a teacher. The Stand was where I realized that I was drawn towards such work.

I also went on the South Africa trip with Professor Steve Davis to Grahamstown, the sister city of Syracuse's South Side. We wrote a lot of stories that were featured in the paper afterwards. Ashley came with us too. She gave me tips and was very encouraging.

Prof. Davis taught me that you can be a really good reporter, but if you don't have compassion it doesn't mean much, especially in today's world. Even as a teacher or as a citizen in Hong Kong, I'm always reminded to really take the time to listen to people's stories. I think it'd make the campus a better place if we just started listening to our neighbors.

to find out how much it would cost to replace the roof. The contractor said that the roof would be replaced with a new asphalt roof. The contractor said that the roof would be replaced with a new asphalt roof. The contractor said that the roof would be replaced with a new asphalt roof.

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OBTAINING CUSTODY

Jacqueline Hannah, program assistant of the Congregational Council on Aging and Youth, says that **obtaining custody of your grandchildren** is not as simple as you (the parent) is willing to give up your rights.

However, she said that **parents can be hesitant to obtain custody** because they receive a welfare check for their children and one parent of the most modest means would be reduced to about \$150, according to the Connecticut Department of Social Services.

Without legal custody of the child, grandparents will not qualify for much assistance from Hannah.

According to Hannah, **many grandparents are not aware of the legal rights and made available to assist** in the custody of their grandchildren when they are saving grandchildren.

The Non-parent Congregational Council on Aging for seniors offers, and \$125 for each child.

For information to the American Association of Retired Persons from New York, only \$100 for each child. In New York state only \$100 for each child. The grant receives it.

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— Testimonials compiled from interviews by Alex Rouhandeh and Shrishti Mathew, both student interns for *The Stand*

IMAGES ON DISPLAY

What: Reception for “THE STAND :: 10 Years in Print”

When: 6 to 8 p.m.
Sunday, March 8

Where: The Link Gallery,
on the ground floor of the
Nancy Cantor Warehouse,
350 W. Fayette St.

Details: The exhibit will
feature 10 images chosen
from the past decade and
a collection of photos from
The Stand’s 10th Annual
Photo Walk held in 2019.
The reception will include
food and beverages. The
exhibit is up through March
31. The Link Gallery is
regually open from 8:30
a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Cost: Free and open to
the public

Accessibility and

Parking: The Link
Gallery is accessible to
wheelchair users from its
West Fayette Street and
West Washington Street
entrances. Street parking
is available on both
sides of the building with
limited parking available
in both The East and West
Warehouse lots (WHWS
& WHFS). For parking
questions, contact Kathy
Pitt at kepitt@syr.edu or
(315) 443-6144.

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and learn the story
behind each photo



10 Years in Print

Gallery Reception

6 to 8 p.m.
Sunday
March 8

The Link Gallery

| Photo compilation by Ashley Kang

By Shrishti Mathew
The Stand Intern

South Side community and newspaper to be celebrated in exhibit of 30 local images

This month to commemorate the last decade,
The Stand will host a photo exhibition, “THE
STAND :: 10 Years in Print,” featuring pictures
from past print issues and the project’s annual Photo
Walk.

The exhibit is on display at The Link Gallery and
has been sponsored by Syracuse University’s Office of
Community Engagement. The Stand will host a free
reception from 6 to 8 p.m. March 8.

“The Office of Community Engagement is excited
to support and showcase, at the Link Gallery, prints
from the 10th year of the South Side Photo Walk spon-
sored by The Stand,” said Bea Gonzalez, vice president
for community engagement and special assistant to the
Chancellor.

The Stand is a collaboration between Syracuse
University’s S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communi-
cations and residents of the South Side. The paper was
started by Professor Emeritus Steve Davis who wanted



> The Stand volunteers Justin Fogarty and Bob Gates help to hang the images currently on display at The Link Gallery. | Maranie Rae Staab, Staff Photographer

students to be more involved with the local community.

“We’d put together packages of eight to 10 stories.
They were good stories and we had a good time report-
ing them so we put together a little print newspaper and
started circulating it,” Davis said. “One of the things

we were hearing was that people wish there were more stories written about the neighborhood, but local newspapers didn't pay that much attention, aside from, crime stories, and things of that nature. So one thing led to another and I eventually did the work and started a newspaper."

The Stand's annual Photo Walk has become its most popular community event.

So popular, that July 27, 2019 was proclaimed "Annual South Side Stand Photo Walk Day" by Mayor Ben Walsh.

"Photographers usually shoot by themselves, and they don't often focus on their own homes and lives. What is special about the annual Photo Walk is that photographers and residents of the South Side come together in a mutual effort to represent the community for themselves and for others. It has been great being part of this event for the past few years," said Bob Gates, longtime Photo Walk volunteer and member of the Syracuse Camera Club.

The main thought behind organizing the Photo Walk was to get people involved, says Davis, noting contributors to the paper don't have to be professional journalists or journalism students. It could be everyday people who lived in the neighborhood.

Some people found writing a story a little bit intimidating, but he found everybody knew how to take a picture.

"We found that was a good way to get local people involved. Much easier to introduce them to the newspaper and the idea of contributing by doing something like a Photo Walk and getting them taking photos," Davis added.



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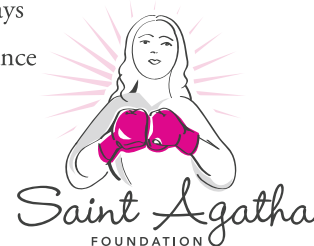
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Where are they now?

By Ashley Kang
The Stand Director

For as long as Jovan Daniel can remember, he loved horses. He recalls that he first felt drawn to them when he saw a group being fed and groomed on a University of Minnesota campus over two decades ago. His mother, Roshana Daniel, was studying for a degree in psychology. He was barely beyond kindergarten, but so clearly fascinated with the sleek, muscular animals that the college caretakers allowed him into the barn for a closer look.

“She thought it was a phase,” Jovan said of his mother. “But I was immediately hooked.”

By the time he reached middle school, he discovered a person could train as an equestrian in college. He saw his life’s goal laid out in front of him. “It was pretty much a wrap at that point,” he said.

When he first spoke to The Stand at 16, he shared that he hoped to one day compete in the Olympics and become a professional trainer.

Now, Jovan is set to graduate from St. Andrews University in North Carolina with a degree in Equine Studies and Business.

The photos of Jovan captured by then Newhouse student Mitchell Franz have remained top on my list of favorite images.

Not only did Mitchell capture the passion Jovan holds for the sport, but the portrait shows the special connection he has with these animals.

Having Newhouse reporter Katelyn Faubel follow up with Jovan in 2017 to tell how he was continuing to work toward his goals was rewarding. Her article, “Where Are They Now? South Sider’s equestrian dream from childhood is being realized,” was recognized in 2018 by the Syracuse Press Club, winning second place in the category of “Human Interest Feature.”

Not only did The Stand document Jovan’s progress, but we shared his unique story of being one of the very few Black males in the sport. “There’s still some underlying racism,” he recently told The Stand’s Intern Shrishti Mathew. “So that definitely was a reason people a lot of times underestimated me, which was fine, because I was the only Black male in a white, female dominated sport. I use that to my advantage — all eyes are on me, so I show off.”

2010

Jovān Daniel



> Jovan with his horse, Ares, in 2010. Jovan explained each horse has their own personality. “You have one that’s really goofy and nibbles your shirt and licks you in the face,” he said. “Then you have one that’s a slow poke and you have to really get going so he knows you mean business.” | Mitchell Franz, Staff Photographer

2011 Magda Bayoumi

Clinic offers free medical care, food

By Jishnu Nair
Staff Reporter

In 2011, the Rahma Free Clinic opened its doors becoming the first free clinic in Central New York to receive state health certification. Now, according to board member Dr. Mustafa Awayda, they're a mainstay on the South Side.

"Our presence grows, volunteers grow, and most importantly, patients come," Awayda said.

Magda Bayoumi originated the idea for the project with her husband, Mohamed Khater. Starting the free clinic had long been a dream for Bayoumi. She and her husband presented the idea to a group of doctors, who agreed to support the clinic if the couple built it.

The space, at 3100 S. Salina St., continues to grow to accommodate its community's needs. The property includes the Rahma Edible Forest Snack Garden, which provides healthy foods for visitors. The garden was started by Frank Cetera as part of his Alchemical Nursery.

"We got to know each other through the Syracuse Peace Council," Cetera said. "Since we both opened, we've taken some feedback from people associated with the clinic. Thanks to them, we branched out a little. Now we grow strawberries, peaches and flowers (in addition to the garden's usual perennial trees and herbs)."

Other clinic staff are students from SUNY Upstate Medical University. The clinic has partnered with the university to create an elective that allows students to volunteer at the clinic for credit.

Awayda said he is pleased with the clinic's progress since its founding.

"When we began discussing the clinic in 2008, 2009, there were roughly 48,000 uninsured or under-insured people in Onondaga County, and these people really needed attention," he said. "We thought by setting up this clinic, we could check symptoms earlier."

The clinic has been featured in *The Stand* as well as on the national news outlet NPR. Awayda said the clinic's appearance in *The Stand* helped spread its reputation in the South Side community it serves.



> Magda Bayoumi, a self-proclaimed "full-time volunteer" and co-founder of the Rahma Clinic saw the need for fresh foods in the South Side. So she helped utilize the clinic's adjacent lot to grow healthy foods. |

Lena Budd, Staff Photographer

Strolling the South Side

By Ashley Kang & By Keith Muhammad
The Stand Director Community Contributor

The story of Bernard Cannon came out of curiosity.

During a news writing workshop, community reporter Keith Muhammad described Bernard as “a guy that stands out on the street corner — daily — holding a spray-painted sign that read ‘Stop the Senseless Killing of Our Youth.’”

Hearing his description — as editor — I wanted to know more: why did he do this, what motivated him to be on a one-man crusade?

We soon learned that Cannon grew up touched by violence. At 10, he witnessed his mother being shot and killed. And as he got older, he continued to see family and neighbors lost to what he deemed senseless violence. Senseless, he explained because too often guns were pulled out over petty disputes.

We learn one day a woman came up to Bernard to complain, saying his sign glorified violence and he shouldn’t be displaying weapons. But while she argued at him, a young boy came over and put a green switchblade in his hand. In that moment the woman saw the power of Bernard’s crusade and she became one of his biggest supporters.

We met with Bernard to get an update on life and his campaign to stop the violence. We learned his 21-year-old son, Rhyan Williams-Cannon, was shot and killed in March 2019. The loss has left Bernard in shock, angry and disarrayed. “I haven’t slept in 8 or 9 months,” he confided. “I’m hurt, devastated, lost and confused. I ask God to take this pain away.”

Bernard knows that he is not the only one that has lost a child, but he wonders where is the anger, the frustration, the bitterness? He now wants to start a nonprofit called “Saving Rhyan” to rescue young men from the violence that claimed his son.

“I just want to be a messenger,” he said. “I’m going to speak up and stand up. Let God be the leader of the direction he has me go in.”

This image of Bernard still speaks loudly to Keith all these years later.

“As I reflect on the image of Bernard standing in front of the one way sign, I feel that God is sending the message that we, as a community, are headed on the path of self-destruction,” said Keith, who wrote the original cover story about Bernard. “We must become agents for the salvation of our youth before anyone can stop the violence.”

20 Bernard Cannon



> In 2012, Bernard Cannon poses for a portrait on the corner of Midland Avenue and Colvin Street. | Jason Greene, Staff Photographer

2013 Rahmeik Bowen

Corcoran student
won highest honor

By Ashley Kang
The Stand Director

Rahmeik “Rahm” Bowen was a Corcoran High School senior in 2013 when he won the Gold Key Scholastic Art Award for his portrait “Eye See Me.” His piece was selected out of more than 4,500 entries submitted to the competition by students from Central New York. He was the only high school student in the Syracuse City School District who won the award in fine arts.

The award surprised Rahm, he said, because “Eye See Me” was his first attempt at art.

The Gold Key is the highest award an artist can receive at the Scholastic Art Awards, followed by the Silver Key and Honorable Mention. Terri Konu, the 2013 coordinator of the CNY Regional Scholastic Art Awards, said the Central New York region presents about 1,100 awards each year, but fewer than 300 Gold Keys. “It’s a pretty prestigious award here,” Konu said.

After graduating, Rahm attended his dream college, Parsons School of Design, with the intention of studying photography. “Because painting was so new to me, it wasn’t the plan,” he said. But he took advantage of the resources Parsons offered, tried a class on painting with oils and then continued to take more painting courses.

Since college, Rahm returns each year to Syracuse to co-host “The Collective Display Art Show” with Jaleel Campbell.

Jaleel said he first met Rahm during a job training in high school. “From the way he dressed and carried himself, I knew he was a creative,” Jaleel said. “I’ve gotten to follow his career path and have been blown away each time I see a piece of his art.”

In 2015, Rahm landed a sponsored emerging artist show. He sold his first painting that night. Since graduating in May of 2019, he has solely supported himself by selling his paintings.

He next wants to explore outwear design and hold a solo show in New York City.

“It’s crazy,” he said about that first self-portrait. “That was my first-ever painting, and now my room is full of paintings.”



> When Rahmeik Bowen drew this award-winning self-portrait, he spent the most time on the eyes. “I noticed that the eyes really stood out,” he said. Bowen still creates art. To see it, visit rahmbow.bigcartel.com.

A Friendly Five
music column

By Matti Gellman
Staff Reporter

Local guitar legend Robert “Bobby” Green, 83, continues to play the soulful music that inspired him growing up on Syracuse’s South Side, except now he is the one inspiring a new generation.

Bobby has won a Syracuse Area Music Award, been inducted into the Syracuse Area Music Hall of Fame and played with the likes of Sly and The Family Stone and Frankie Avalon. Local musicians often refer to him as a “badass,” for his ability to teach himself guitar by ear, leading groups like the “El Daros” and most recently “Bobby Green & The Cut Above.” Few expected this future for Bobby when he was a student. The Stand’s music columnist, Reggie Seigler, highlighted Bobby’s rise to South Side fame. Bobby told Reggie he was seen as “slow” growing up, and teachers believed he was destined for factory work. He left only able to read by memory, but in music, he was a natural.

Bobby brought together musicians and music lovers of all colors and backgrounds over his 65-year-long career. This ability to bring together a community and place a long-awaited spotlight on Black art and culture is a common thread throughout the stories Reggie has contributed in The Stand for the past decade.

“Music is the universal language, there’s a bond people have all grooving to the same language,” Reggie said of music’s effect on the community. Specifically, music like the funk, rock and soul stylings of Bobby represent a celebration of Black history. Reggie remembers starting out in his own band on the South Side and seeing how few musicians were willing to play music made by and for Black people, instead aiming to appeal to a mainstream, whiter audience. His group The Soft Spoken Band (SSB), led by his wife Donna Alford, played R&B music like that of Marvin Hicks and Maleira because that was the music the band wanted to hear. Reggie found that SSB was able to represent Black audiences, long neglected by mainstream music and inspire them to celebrate the struggles and triumphs of the Black community.

“The music was us; it was a part of who we were,” Reggie said.

2014

Bobby Green



> Local musician Robert “Bobby” Green at home in his studio in 2014. Last October, Bobby took the stage to continue his 15-year-long tradition of playing at Shifty’s Bar & Grill to celebrate his 83rd birthday.
| Alexandra Hootnick, Staff Photographer

Baby King

Search for a
match continues

By Matti Gellman
Staff Reporter

King Nazir Leon, 7, dreams of growing old enough to race into burning buildings and fight fires alongside his uncle, but first he must continue to fight for his own life.

King was born with a rare immune system disorder called CD40 Ligand deficiency. The only cure is a bone marrow transplant, and King has yet to find a donor. In 2015, his mother, Denisha DeLee, and community members rallied on Syracuse University's quad to urge locals to sign up for the bone marrow registry. Since, Denisha has given up, saying nobody comes anymore.

"People would message me and say they want to get tested but never show up. I guess because it's not their child going through it," she said.

Denisha's two brothers were also diagnosed with the disorder and passed away at 4 and 18. She says eventually their bodies shut down, rejecting the monthly IV drip that King now receives. Often children affected by CD40 are unable to fight infections, leading to severe pneumonia and liver damage. Though Denisha said she did not want any more children when she last spoke with *The Stand*, she is happily engaged and has a 2-month-old son, Ace, also diagnosed with the disorder. She says she feels blessed to have him, and although the family was reeling from learning Ace was born with the deficiency, King feels less alone in his fight.

Denisha says King is no longer allowed to have friends over or play the sports he loves because his body is too weak. Every month she takes King and Ace to Upstate Medical University for a four- to six-hour IV drip.

"It's hard to see children who are sick, but it's wonderful to see donors who save these kids lives," said Paula Miller, executive director of the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, which provides funding for bone marrow research, drives and patients.

Paula feels many do not join the bone-marrow registry because of a lack of awareness, explaining few know of the need to diversify the registry. Since tissue type is an inherited trait like eye or skin color, race matters, meaning a patient is more likely to find a match within their race. "I always hear 'I don't know how you do it; you are so strong,' that's their favorite line. 'I'm going to try to pray for you,'" Denisha said. "I don't want any of that. I would love to hear someone ask me about getting tested, to hear from somebody who is willing to see if they can help my boys."



To learn how to join the bone marrow registry, visit wgpfoundation.org/life

> King Nazir Leon at age 2 sits between portraits of his two uncles, Dayvon and Daqwan DeLee, who passed away from complications of a CD40 Ligand deficiency, a hereditary disease that King also inherited. Only 20 percent of those afflicted are said to live past 30. | Leonard Adams, Staff Photographer

South Side Photo Walk

By Ashley Kang
The Stand Director

A fixture at many Stand events, Lenora Monkemeyer, passed away in late 2019 in her home.

The Stand was sorry to learn of her passing and remembers her attending several of the project’s journalism trainings and walks over the years. Lenora first participated in 2012 and attended five walks since then.

To regular participants, she became known for her incredible ability to get close. She’d return from a walk with surprisingly good close up images, which she took using her feet by getting extremely close to objects — usually flowers — rather than relying on the camera’s zoom. This technique is preached by several Photo Walk leaders but something many beginners are hesitant to do.

In 2016, she posed for photos along the painted wall in the alley beside Key Bank, twirled with neighbors walking along the street and even danced for a boomerang video.

The Photo Walk held each July is The Stand’s most popular event because it brings people together to capture a typical day on the South Side in photos.

In 2014, a film crew joined in the festivities. That year, the walk was featured on the nationally syndicated show *Artifex*, a PBS program that showcases various artists unique to local communities.

Then in 2018, funding from the Finding Common Ground grant and the Robert Bosch Foundation allowed a photo exhibit to be mounted. Additionally, images were placed on permanent display in five South Side locations.

Last July — the 10th year — the Photo Walk expanded by organizing four options for participants: the classic path, a historic route, a trek along the I-81 viaduct and coverage of the neighborhood’s Get the Lead Out Block Party. Mayor Ben Walsh even opened the event by reading an official proclamation declaring July 27, 2019, South Side Photo Walk Day.

2019 Lenora Monkemeyer



| Lenora Monkemeyer



| Rosalie Spitzer

> Clockwise from above: Lenora Monkemeyer dances for the camera. Crouched by a flower growing off a South Sider’s porch, Lenora moves in close to take a tight shot. Lenora’s feet in a pair of weathered shoes, and Lenora captured from below in her wide sun hat.



| Della Branch-Bullock



| Della Branch-Bullock

2017

Shaunna Spivey-Spinner

Finding Her Way

By Shrishti Mathew
The Stand Intern

Shaunna L. Spivey-Spinner lost her most vocal cheerleader — her mother — in 2014. The loss was one of her biggest. But Shaunna turned her pain into growth by launching her second book in 2017.

Each book is about her journey through childhood bullying, depression, suicidal thoughts and the pain of losing loved ones. The chapters detail what she's learned and how she's grown.

While working as a successful androgynous model, Shaunna was also preparing to join the Syracuse Police Department in 2017. It had been a childhood dream until police raided her mother's home and arrested her older brother when she was 10.

After the death of her close friend and mentor, Tavorn Hunter, Shaunna marched from Salina Street to City Hall with a group of protesters, waiting outside until she was invited to speak to the police chief. Over the years, her involvement with the local community taught her that both sides mattered, and she resurrected her dream of becoming a police officer. She trained daily, her lean model's body adding 25 pounds of muscle, but in the end did not enroll in the police academy.

She is now a Pre-K teacher at Salem Hyde Elementary School and volunteer EMT/firefighter for Manlius Fire Department.

Life had a lot more in store for her. In July, much to her delight, she learned she was pregnant. "I started trying to get pregnant in November of 2018. I went through CNY Fertility and tried at-home fertilization," said Shaunna who had almost lost hope.

"I tried again in July, and to my surprise, it worked," she continued. "Being a lesbian and trying to get pregnant without going against yourself is tough. You never know what can happen or what will work. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to get pregnant since I never tried before."

Shaunna continues to model through her pregnancy, doing maternity shoots.

She thinks of her mother a lot as she prepares to become one herself.



> This portrait of Shaunna L. Spivey-Spinner took first place in the Syracuse Press Club's Feature Photo competition in 2018. | Emily Elconin, Staff Photographer

Couples
in Love

By Sarah Tietje-Mietz
Staff Reporter

Everyone loves a good love story, which is why The Stand’s series on local couples has captured the hearts of readers.

It started with a special February cover story of the incredible and almost-unbelievable love story of Twiggy and Aundra Billue, who make the saying “love at first sight” seem less like a fairytale and more like a reality. The couple, who have been together for over three decades, married just eight days after meeting. “I’m in love with this man,” Twiggy said in the original article. “I’ve been in love with him since the day I saw him.”

When local Marissa Saunders saw the recent “Time for Love” article, she tweeted how much she loved a good love story.

“It brought back my faith in love, my faith in partnership, my faith in love at first sight, my faith in the power of love,” Marissa said. “There’s so much power and I kind of have forgotten.”

Affected most by Twiggy and Aundra’s story, she saw the beauty of humanity in their connection. With so much focus on negativity in the world, she feels inspiring stories of love is the medicine our hearts need, and something universally understood.

Reading these stories, she realized she had given up on finding love for herself. Marissa has served as the director of Community Engagement at the Center for Community Alternatives, but is moving on to pursue her passion in sharing her faith with others. Despite failed relationships and marriages, she was reminded of wanting love, and feeling deserving of it, by these couples.

“I think in every story I was able to connect with pieces and I think that’s what draws people in ... you’re able to find pieces of yourself in those stories,” Marissa said. “It ignites hope and it brings joy and it fills your heart up in places that you didn’t know needed to be filled.”

2018

The Billues



> Aundra and Twiggy Billue have been married for over 30 years. A longstanding tradition they share is to enjoy Ethiopian food each year on their anniversary, June 6. Twiggy works as the workforce development coordinator for Jubilee Homes of Syracuse Inc., and Aundra is retired. | Ben Cleeton, Staff Photographer

2019

David Chaplin

Q&As show fathers matter

By Ashley Kang
The Stand Director

David L. Chaplin was the 40th father to be spotlighted in The Stand's Fatherhood Q&A series.

The series launched in 2015 with a story focused on a new community outreach program — the Fatherhood Initiative — run by Syracuse Healthy Start to provide needed resources for local dads.

The idea for the series, which sometimes features grandfathers or father-figures, originated from photos that came out of The Stand's 2014 community summer project, From Where We Stand. Eight residents spent the summer documenting their family life in still moments with many images capturing touching scenes between father and son.

During the exhibit's gallery opening, participant Brenda Muhammad said it best: "This project is important because it shows there are strong men supporting and raising their sons in this community."

Because of those photos and Brenda's statement, The Stand wanted to further highlight South Side fathers through stories. The series has been well received by readers and there has been no lack of nominations.

David shared the most significant update since being featured is his son's need for security at daycare to keep the paparazzi at bay. "But in all honesty, we're proud that he is still a happy healthy scoop of joy," David joked. "We successfully transitioned him from an at home nanny to a homestyle daycare. This was not easy for him, my wife or myself, but now he loves the kids and primary adult there." David says that despite this change being an emotionally tough process it was a necessary one as they begin to think about universal pre-K enrollment.

"Socially, and from a community perspective, this series is critical to myth busting about Black dads and Black parenting," said David about why The Stand's Fatherhood series is important. "It humanizes an often-denigrated demographic based on historical lies, structural racism in media and society. This series shows how much alike we are to other racial parent groups."



> David Chaplin is father to Owen, who turned 2 on Oct. 18. Chaplin works as the director of employee relations for Onondaga County and is married to Lanessa Chaplin, project counsel for the Central New York Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union of New York. | Annaliese Perry, Staff Photographer

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