

# GPGT<sup>TM</sup>

GOOD PEOPLE GREAT THINGS

spring 2016

ADRINA  
NELSON  
*MAD HUSTLE*  
*DOPE SOUL*

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OUR SONS:  
*Father's Day*  
*Tribute!*

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with  
Charlemagne Stallings

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Letter from

# editor



**T**hird times a charm! Unless you're running a fairly new magazine, that is. In all seriousness, we truly thank God for giving us the strength and energy to persevere to produce this 3<sup>rd</sup> issue. With Write The Vision Creative Works, LLC (our parent company) having completed its 2<sup>nd</sup> run of "2 Sides" Stage Production in April, this issue was delayed. Hubby and I are expecting another little bundle to arrive early September, which caused further delay. Nonetheless, GPGT spring 2016 is here and we hope that you appreciate all of the blood, sweat, and tears that we have put into it.

What have we learned from our last issue? "There is no such thing as a former Marine (and capitalize that M)!"

Bloopers from January? Nicole Theodore was not making a musical metaphor as my ears and mind may have liked. So strike "vibrato" from our Faith & Law write-up, & insert "bravado".

**GPGT's** core belief is that, "God uses good (regular, ordinary) people to do great things" and it is our goal to feature them in this publication. Please send your letters to the editor at [info@valencyathompson.com](mailto:info@valencyathompson.com) with GPGT in the subject line and your feedback or inquiries to [info@goodpeoplegreatthings.co](mailto:info@goodpeoplegreatthings.co).

Would you like to view our media kit or recommend a feature? Please visit [goodpeoplegreatthings.co](http://goodpeoplegreatthings.co)!

God's Blessings to You! May You Be on **P**ath to **P**urpose!



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# Purpose Pusher!

## Pushing You on Path to Purpose: The Purpose of The Struggle

### Faith:

Though you might be tempted to ask, “God why have you forsaken me?” Instead ask for help to see the lesson in the struggle.

#1

### Consistency:

During times of struggle, you question if you are on the right path or not. As with all periods of adversity, remember to hang onto what you know God said for sure!

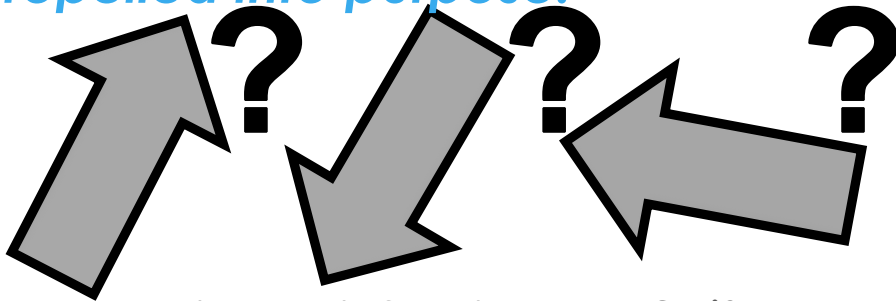
#2

### Block Out Naysayers:

It is absolutely critical to surround yourself with encouragers, especially when you are in the midst of struggle. Remember your situation is only temporary.

#3

So many are perplexed about their purpose or God’s calling for their lives. Well, it is my belief that in identifying our spirit (God)- led passions, we might be propelled into purpose.



I was speaking with my friend Tanya Jefferson and she reminded me that “the purpose of the struggle is for character development and you can either choose to get better or remain stagnant.”

Have you ever endured a long-term struggle? I know I have and I assure you, it is absolutely no fun at all! What have I gained from this period? A solidified bond with my husband is something. If I thought my husband was great on my wedding day, let me tell you how I thought even more about him after having to endure long-term trials together with him.

When I became a woman of the illustrious

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., I recall receiving a gift inscribed with the words, “Friendship is made sacred through adversity.” I also remember my young self frowning up at it because I loathed the thought of enduring adverse circumstances, but as the old song says, “you have to take the good with the bad and the rain with the sunshine.” So here I am a little older and a little wiser and I understand that there are simply things that I couldn’t have possibly come to know without the struggle, without having to fight for what God gave me, and pushing through even when I was misunderstood by friends.

*So, if now happens to be a struggle moment for you, be encouraged. Know that you are not alone and God has not forgotten you!*

Remember Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV) says, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.” Also remember that no matter what it looks like or how you may feel that THIS IS TOTALLY TRUE! So hang in there and continue to trust God, and know that your struggle is ending soon



Valencya Thompson

### Passion for Purpose:

*If you are passionate about pursuing God’s purpose for your life, you don’t get the option to choose to quit just because times are hard. Don’t get me wrong of course we all have a choice, but it is my goal to encourage you to continue to be the faithful believer that God has called you to be. Often God requires that our strength be diminished (or that we feel as though); so that we may remember that it is only by God and God’s might that we have all that God has allowed us to have. Be Blessed!*

#PUSH

*Charlene*

**A. Burton** knows she's pretty special! That conclusion is neither bred from arrogance nor is it a misstatement. She acknowledges her blessings and realizes that she is truly living her childhood dream. Charlene was about seven years old when she told her parents that she would one day become a lawyer. She had read a book about Thurgood Marshall and was in awe of the ways Marshall used his knowledge to help others. A seed was planted and she continued her education with that lofty goal in mind.

Legally



Limitless

Photo credit: Ashton Grey of 4GroundsMedia.com

Charlene is a first-generation college graduate. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Corporate Communication from the College of Charleston in Charleston, SC. As an undergraduate, Charlene was active in numerous student activities and pledged Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She earned her Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law where she was an active member of the Black Law Students Association serving on the Southern Regional Board.

Charlene graduated from law school in 2009 and relocated to Atlanta, Georgia to start her legal career. Charlene proudly served as a public defender in Fulton

County for six years where she helped those who could not afford to hire counsel. She worked tirelessly to ensure that her clients received compassionate, zealous representation. She was afforded the opportunity among a select few to attend the Gideon's Promise training program early in her career and used the knowledge imparted to offer exceptional representation to the clients she served. Most recently, Charlene embarked on a new journey— she has stepped out on faith and launched The Burton Firm, LLC in January of 2016. She is excited to continue helping clients through life's most difficult times, compassionately helping them navigate their legal issues with care and concern.

*Charlene understands that God's  
purpose for her life is  
far greater than  
what she has achieved thus far.*

She remains humble and is ready to serve wherever she is led. For more information about her law practice please visit [burtonfirmlegal.com](http://burtonfirmlegal.com).



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# Happy Mother's Day!

## A Legacy of Faith & Fortitude



### Carrie

She was something like a warrior. A generation or two removed from slavery. While her husband pastored AME churches traveling by horse and buggy, she decided to plant her own group of Apostolic/Holiness churches from South Carolina to New York. Living in South Carolina, when historical accounts state relations between Blacks and Whites were less than cordial, she sold hunting licenses to White men as they hunted on her land. She acquired much property. I can recall my mother returning from "the country" to pay her taxes and she was excited to tell the story of an old White attorney she bumped into who told her accounts of how business savvy her grandmother was. She looked on with amazement as she browsed through the county record books to see all of the different transactions her grandmother engaged in during her day. She left a legacy of faith and business savvy for her 14 children. She demonstrated hard work - ethic and how to endure tough times.



### Lucy

She was a mother and a wife who made a living as a domestic worker during the week and faithfully served her church and community organizations on the weekend. She was the true definition of a Boss Chick before future generations coined the term. She embodied true grit and took pride in the humble ways that she provided for her family alongside her husband who was a postal worker and barber.

She gladly welcomed the hand-me downs from her wealthy employers that she humbly and proudly provided for her family to utilize and wear. She cared for her great grandchildren as though they were her own and had no problem with speaking her mind. She drove a vehicle well into her 80s and proudly smiled as she attended her great granddaughter's undergraduate college graduation. We chuckled when she elated, "Valencya graduated from college and she ain't have no babies" to her friends! Of course they'd roll their eyes, but this was of no consequence to her because it meant something to her.



# Wilhelmenia

Educator, pastor's wife, church leader, and community leader. She continues to take pride in how she carries herself and her outward appearance, something she passed down to her children and their children, and so on. A scholar in her own right, she holds a Master's degree and certifications, which is quite the accomplishment for Black women from her generation raised in the south. Because of this, she continuously instills in her family and others the importance of pursuing an education. All of her children are college graduates and two are holders of doctorate degrees. Her grandchildren are also college graduates. Our takeaway from this woman: education, pride in your work, pride in your appearance, and legacy.



## Wilma

**Fighter, Lady of Fortitude, Tenacious, Compassionate.** This woman has persevered through many of life's trials from divorce and other hardships, but yet fought hard to ensure that her children would be taken care of. A true go-getter who doesn't allow herself to become preoccupied by other people's opinions of her. Known for her push and drive, she has taught her children how to advocate for themselves and to stand up when the world knocks them over. An educator, business owner, and real estate agent; she demonstrates the importance of having multiple streams of income, something that was important for her grandmother, Carrie. And the legacy continues on for she is the mother of Valencya & Rickey, college graduates, people of faith, successful good people doing great things.



# Yvette



Ambitious and audacious enough to move to another state to make a better life for herself and her two children, this woman reminds us that even when we think we can't, we can. Having successfully climbed the corporate ladder within her industry despite life's trials, she exudes this lesson: When life has offered every blow to us beyond imagination, we must be reminded that God placed everything we need within us to keep going. After having made sacrifices for others for many years, she still pursued her goal of attaining her Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with a minor in Criminal Justice. She, an early role model for her niece, seems to embrace every day in life as an adventure. A listening ear, and the voice of reason that tells you to get it together and handle whatever business your day presents, even in the midst of chaos and tears.

**To the Women who made me who I am:**

You are forever appreciated, remembered, and loved! Thank you for shaping me as a woman and teaching me to appreciate God's gifts. Happy Mother's Day!

Love,

*Valencya*



Photos by Jerrell Thompson, Jerrold Mobley, and others provided by Broughton Family.



# Letters to Our Sons :

## A Father's Day Tribute



*In a society where it is rare for Black men to be highlighted by mainstream media for anything positive, it is our pleasure to bring to you our Father's Day Tribute that highlights an organization that has a mission to facilitate a closer bond between fathers and sons of color.*

---

**By combining the power of words and the stroke of a pen, Letters to Our Sons (LTOS) has made a huge impact in the relationships between fathers and their sons.** This New York based organization partners with schools in providing programs designed to increase male parental involvement and enhance father-son relationships.

Such programming includes Fatherhood Forums, Father-Son Field Trips and Dads Volunteer Day. Each program plays a major role in providing positive, consistent communication between fathers and sons, while ultimately enabling fathers to demonstrate involved fatherhood for the next generation of dads to model. The hallmark component of LTOS is the letter writing activity that takes place at the conclusion of each Fatherhood Forum where dads are instructed to write from the heart to their sons what they wish their fathers had told them.



**"I've seen fathers open up to their sons in a way that they never have before. You'd be amazed by the impact of this activity."**

**-Felicia Walker, Founder of LTOS**

LTOS plans to continue supporting, encouraging and celebrating responsible fatherhood by expanding its reach throughout the US. Currently, we're based in schools in Brooklyn and Harlem, but I believe that fathers throughout the country need to recognize their "super power". They must know how truly important they are (Walker, founder of LTOS).

As Father's Day quickly approaches, we stand with LTOS in celebrating fatherhood! We salute fathers across the world every day, but it's especially important to recognize them on the one day during the year that's solely dedicated to fatherhood.

Join us in our efforts to recognize fathers around the world by sharing one of your favorite memories as related to fatherhood. Write to us at [info@goodpeoplegreatthings.co](mailto:info@goodpeoplegreatthings.co), include LTOS in the subject line and your story may be featured in our next issue!

Happy Father's Day!

BY: FELICIA WALKER

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY: FELICIA WALKER

*Felicia Walker is a resident of Brooklyn, NY who owns and operates Letters to Our Sons ([letterstoorsons.org](http://letterstoorsons.org)). Felicia is also one of the directors of Just Be Academy ([justbeacademy.org](http://justbeacademy.org)). Stay tuned for more about Felicia Walker!*



# Family Values for Millennials to Model

By Charlemagne Stallings

**Cornelius and JoAnna Williams** are a true dynamic duo! Have you ever met a family where every single person was talented? They should really save some for the rest of us! Well, let me give you the run down.

Cornelius and JoAnna have resided in Lithonia, Georgia for the past 14 years. Cornelius, affectionately known as Corn, though quiet and contemplative at home, is a lively, remarkable public speaker who operates his own non-profit. His wife JoAnna, "Jo" moves about life listening closely, observing carefully and laughing infectious. With talent that can bring a room to tears, this powerfully gifted wife and mother is a singer (or should I say *sanga!*). In addition to being super talented, by day she is also a real life superhero - a teacher!

**With 25 years of marriage under their belt, they have thrived through the many ebbs and flows of life together by prayer, laughter, self-awareness, intentional spiritual growth and surrounding themselves with like-minded couples.**

home, is a lively, speaker who non-profit. His wife moves about life observing carefully infectious. With bring a room to gifted wife and (or should I say to being super she is also a real life kindergarten

The Williams' oldest is a former drum daughter, 23-year-old not only high school class, but she then graduated summa cum laude from

son, Dominique, 24, major. And their old Gabrielle, was valedictorian of her

Kennesaw State University in December of 2015. Falling last in age but definitely not in talent is Eli, 19, who seems to be the sum of all parts. Eli is somewhat of a one-man theatre production. He sings, acts, and he is a comedian.

So perhaps **it is a shot in the dark, but it is probably safe to accept that their 1-year-old granddaughter, Madison Joy, is going to bring about world peace.**

That's right Miss America! You're out of a job.

To know the Williams family is to love them.

With more than two decades together, the family has certainly conquered some unrehearsed challenges along the way; like when Joanna lost her mother who battled cancer, a family move across the country, financial hardships while transitioning from employment to self-employment, and a child's unexpected legal issues. The

Williams acknowledge they were able to grow immensely from those experiences by fervently praying together and maintaining constant communication about moving forward as a family.

This entire family loves the Lord and it is apparent in their faithful attendance to, and service in, their local church. The Williams place high value on instilling authenticity and Christ-like community in their kids by talking about faith in everyday conversations, participating in service opportunities, and

## **FAMILY MISSION STATEMENT:**

**“To be a role model for other families in our devotion to God, love for family & friends, service to humanity, and the investment of our wealth”.**

surrounding themselves with other Christian families.

Having tradition is also important, as they schedule annual family trips and family meetings. As the only child from my single parent home, these traditions seemed foreign to my experience. Witnessing one of these family meetings etched a permanent goal in my mind for my future family. Adding to these traditions, as Dominique, Gabrielle and Eli reached age 13, they each had a special Rite of Passage into young adulthood.

The Williams' family mission statement is a code to be honored and upheld by each member. This mission states, “To be a role model for other families in our devotion to God, love for family and friends, service to humanity, and the investment of our wealth”.

When asked for one nugget of wisdom they would like to impart to young millennial families, Cornelius and JoAnna respond resolutely: “Put God first (pray, read, grow, worship and serve), develop a family mission and values, and spend time together.”



**BY: SHANELLE EBANKS**  
**PHOTO BY: GERALD MULVANEY**

# How to *See* Our Children

One of my favorite things to do with youth, and something I encourage other adults to do with younger generations, is listen. To begin a conversation, I ask young people *why*. Anyone who has been around kids, has at some point gotten the barrage of *why* questions. *Why do I have to go to school? Why do I have to learn? Why do I have to be smart?* While this is a fact-finding mission for our young people, we know this can also be a test of patience (lol)! I like to use this same activity to discover what they like. I encourage you to do it first, how well do you *know* the things you *know*? Ask yourself why you do something, and follow through with the series of *why* questions until you reach the foundation. Once you've personally done this activity, do it with the young person in your life. Start with small things and build up to tougher subjects. Keep in mind that this is not meant to be an interrogation, so it may need to be spread out over a few hours or even days depending on the young person. You may also need to build trust with the young person, depending on the nature of the relationship (keep in mind, it is difficult to ignore or hate someone who is genuinely interested in you and supporting your passion).

Every day I work with and for our youth, I remind myself of the goal: developing whole, happy, productive citizens. If we can learn their passions and purpose and support them in development of those skills, regardless of our personal opinions, we will have much happier youth and, eventually, adults. I often think about this Albert Einstein quote "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it was stupid." Let's listen and ask the questions necessary to develop geniuses. ■

*Shanelle Ebanks is a Youth, Family, & Community Sciences Professional who works with Youth Development Leadership & Volunteer Management & Administration based in Raleigh, NC.*

**P**artnering with youth is a bit like being a detective. I follow the clues to help solve the mystery of who they really are and discover their purpose. As a proud member of the village it takes to raise a child, I see it as my responsibility to help youth identify their interests, talents, and drive. I strive to expose them to new concepts and opportunities, challenge their thinking, and develop a greater sense of self.

I believe everyone has a purpose and I work to help develop empowered young people with knowing and owning their purpose early in their lives. I seek opportunities to make the opinions and influence of young people relevant today. I want all youth to understand they are contributing members of society. They can become innovators, entrepreneurs, motivational speakers, educators, advocates and activists, and so much more, even before 10 years old. At minimum, youth should be involved in conversations. They may not understand all of the complexities of the world, but they are often more intuitive than we often like to give them credit for.

A large part of what I do is translate the findings of my work for adults in youth's lives to help facilitate healthier, more supportive connections between both parties. There's so much that has changed since adults were young and this can often make it difficult to relate to young people, (just think about how familiar youth are with technological devices and social media).

# Meet *Chinelo*



## Fashion Icon in the Making

**C**hinelo Okona is a 22-year-old fashion enthusiast, fashion blogger and aspiring fashion designer. Born and raised in Atlanta, Chinelo earned her BBA in Marketing from Georgia State University in May of 2015. Her love for fashion began at a young age when she discovered her passion for art and design. Watching her mother sew fabrics into garments intrigued Chinelo and sparked her desire to explore the world of women's fashion. After receiving her first sewing machine in 2013, Chinelo taught herself the techniques of making garments by using

YouTube tutorials and Googling sewing methods. Pretty cool, right? When asked about her career goals...let's just say, she is definitely going to be one to watch. *My ultimate career goal is to become the most iconic Nigerian American fashion designer, period.* Chinelo is determined to work her way to the top by "working for the greats and training from the best teachers all over the world." Not only is she into designing, but she also has a love for photography, blogging, and so many other facets of the fashion industry.

Though the fashion industry is steadily evolving, Chinelo mentioned being inspired by Cher because of her charm and how her looks have shaped the fashion trends over the years. *I'm so into glamour and shock value when it comes to fashion and couture...things that are so abnormal, but when a woman wears it, she can make it beautiful.* We're definitely here for it.

*Find your confidence, find your voice, and find what works for you.*

Perfecting her craft as she moves her way up in the industry is important to Chinelo. *If it takes another 10-15 years before launching my own haute couture line, I'll be fine with it.* It is her desire to build her portfolio by working with Vera Wang, Zac Posen, Christian Dior, and more.

You're probably wondering, what's next for this multi-talented fashionista? She is currently running her fashion blog entitled *LustforLo*, "the go-to for millennial women who have a keen sense of style and adoration for high fashion and haute couture." Her blog



highlights current fashion trends, street styles and fashion news. On occasion, Chinelo continues to work with clients doing personal styling and personal shopping. She specializes in finding rare, hard-to-find pieces for her clients...what a talent! This past March, she made a big move to New York "to pursue retail buying and digital merchandising." Look out New York; she is about to take the city by storm!

Chinelo has great advice for young, aspiring fashion industry professionals. *Spend the time that you have right now getting to know yourself. Find out what your 'thing' in fashion is. If you're like me and you want to do everything, find something that you want to focus on right now. Still have your goals for the future, but find something to focus on right now and go hard at it!* She also suggests finding a good mentor and staying consistent.



*Immerse yourself in the culture!*

Be sure to check out her fashion blog at [www.lustforlo.com](http://www.lustforlo.com). You can also connect with her on Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest @lustforlo. Be on the lookout for all of the great things she has in store!



Get to know *Chinelo*:

Nickname: Lo

Fav Fashion Season: Fall/Winter

Fav Fashion Moment: Rihanna at the CDFA Awards 2015

Fav fashion piece: A statement clutch

Dream designer to work with:  
Giambattista Valli

BY: MICHAELA CARTER

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY: CHINELO  
OKONA



# Adrina Nelson:

By Felicia Walker

*Mad Hustle*

*Dope Soul*

I met with Adrina on a cool Saturday afternoon at a quaint coffee shop in Brooklyn. She and I attended undergrad together, so I was excited to see her and to spend some time catching up. Before arriving, I created a mental list of questions to ask, but I knew that I wouldn't need them because I believed that our conversation would organically flow (and it did). After grabbing a cup of tea, Adrina joined me at the table, and we immediately began discussing the unpredictable New York weather and our desire to visit our home state, South Carolina, for some much needed sun, warmth and relaxation. The topic of South Carolina steered our conversation into a different direction, as Adrina began to recall a few memories of her childhood.

Like most children, Adrina was encouraged by her family to study hard and get a good paying job that would provide long-term security. In efforts to please them, she pursued a degree in health at the College of Charleston and afterwards obtained a social worker position at the Department of Social Services. **According to my family, I had a good, city job that I should stick with, but I wasn't satisfied there. I knew I was destined for more.** At the time, Adrina was regularly sewing and had begun to receive requests for bridal and casual women's wear. *Sewing was just a hobby for me for a long time. It was like cheap therapy. I never imagined it becoming my career.* But after working in an unfulfilling job for three years, Adrina knew that she had to make the decision to do what she loved.



After careful, spiritual deliberation, she took a huge leap of faith and moved to New York to pursue a career in fashion. Despite the odds, she landed a job in the fashion industry, which provided the experience she needed. Adrina also took a few design classes at Parsons School of Design. After five years of hard work, lots of networking and tons of trials and errors, Adrina has beautifully blossomed into the designer who is responsible for the ultra-chic *Adrina Fanore* apparel line which can currently be found in several New York based boutiques, as well as online.

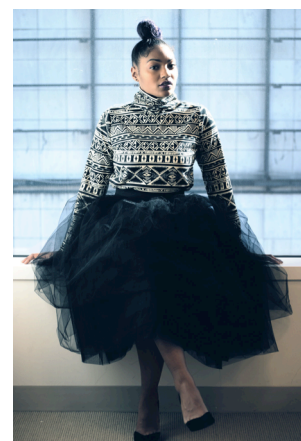
Adrina worked extremely hard to launch Fanore and learned a great deal along the way. She graciously agreed to share the wisdom she's gained on conquering the fashion industry, lessons learned from living in New York, and the fulfillment that lies within pursuing her life's purpose.



*Image photographed by Adrina Nelson*



*Adrina Fanore Designs*



Adrina Fanore highlights the beauty in simplicity through simple lines and classic silhouettes paired with bold colors and prints I've designed myself. **When women wear my clothes, I want them to feel liberated; I want them to exude the confidence that every woman should.** When my collection was featured in its first fashion show, I literally cried while watching the models walk down the runway in the clothes I designed. I mean, I came from a small town in South Carolina, to living in New York, to actually watching my clothes featured in a NYC fashion show. It all made me very emotional. I thought, what if I hadn't taken that leap of faith? What if I stayed in South Carolina? To think of it all can be quite overwhelming, but in a really good way.

### The Concrete Jungle

I've met so many people in this city (NYC), and I've received so many different opportunities here. I had to leave South Carolina because I knew I couldn't reach my full potential there. I had to step out on faith, and I'm so glad that I did. Since moving here, I've met a lot of people who think creatively like me. Shockingly, I have been inspired the most by film-makers. It's interesting to watch the whole process of creating a film from start to finish, to know and understand all of the work behind it. It's inspiring, but the biggest gift New York has given me is thick skin. You definitely have to be tough to live here, and in the fashion industry, you have to be bold. So, I thank New York for making me brave.

An Adrina Fanore Design



### The Fashion Industry

Don't compare your work or your journey to anyone else's. Comparison only hinders your progress. Instead, be patient. Patience is key and it allows you to develop as a person and build character. Also, if you're interested in the fashion industry, learn to be resilient. It's a cut-throat industry. I've experienced rejection a lot while trying to get my clothing in boutiques. **It can curb your confidence if you don't learn to use rejection as motivation to get better.**

### Purpose

My purpose, in part, is to serve by teaching others. One of my goals is to promote entrepreneurship to teenagers. I want them to understand that they can be their own boss and that they don't have to settle. I want to expose them to the freedom that can be achieved through entrepreneurship. When I was growing up, I was told that the only good professions were in law, education, or medicine. I never knew that becoming a fashion designer was a good thing until I became older. **I want to help kids understand that they actually can be whatever they want to be. Whether a filmmaker, photographer, fashion designer, or dancer; they CAN do it!**

### Advice to Her Younger Self

Take more risks. You'll make mistakes, but if you keep working hard you'll get there. **I was afraid to do things when I was younger for fear of messing up or making a mistake, but I've learned that it's okay to make mistakes. They make you stronger.** After all, what is for you is for you. I would also tell myself not to skip out on your dreams. Don't just wish for things to happen. Take action. Your dreams are so worth it, but you've got to have faith because the odds won't always be in your favor. The people you surround yourself with are very important and often times will determine how far you go in life.

So I would remind myself to always keep positive, like-minded people around. And finally, just go for it! If you don't, you run the risk of looking back years from now, and wishing you had.

### The Future of Adrina Nelson and Adrina Fanore

There's much more to come. I have a lot of plans and I am doing a lot of things. I'm in a good position, and I can't wait for what's next. I'm excited!

Photos by Richard Rembert, Adrina Nelson, & Dreamscape Photography



@richpointofview @adrina\_fanore

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# VISION BY

BOSSES IN BUSINESS

# DESIGN



**B**randon Garrett is the 32-year-old visionary and co-founder of *My Vision Tools, LLC*. Established in 2012, *My Vision Tools* is a personal innovation company specializing in life

coaching and creative project consulting as well as its own line of trademarked Vision Tools. Vision Tools operates with the motto: *Goals Plans Action Now*.

Brandon decided to start his own business after following the early example of his grandfather. He admired, and endeavored to emulate, the great work ethic and sense of purpose that his grandfather exhibited in his community. He wanted to *grow up and have the same type of presence* he witnessed in his grandfather's life. His tenacity for success and personal growth was also



Photos by London Carmichael IG: @mrc\_1

Co-Founders John Castillo & Brandon Garrett



underwritten by his childhood rearing. At an early age, he desired nothing more than to pay his mother back for all of the sacrifices she made for him and his siblings.

When it comes to business, Brandon Garrett is intensely passionate about his life's work. He works through Vision Tools to create personal innovation and empowerment solutions for individuals, small businesses, and non-profit organizations. One of the more popular of these tools is an 11 - track affirmation



album called, *Activation: A Soundtrack for Life*. This unique album combines motivational affirmations, powerful messages, and dynamic music production with the concept of auto - suggestion used to condition the listeners' mind to be more focused, positive and productive.

Vision Tools originated from Brandon's personal need to organize his own goals when he returned home from a one and a half year military deployment. In addition to Vision Tools, Brandon works as the Atlanta coordinator for the *Cultivate Kindness National Campaign*. This is a national outreach and volunteer campaign that works to support the idea that the world could be made a better place through one act of kindness at a time.

As for the future of *My Vision Tools*, Brandon says his team is expanding the Vision Tools product line and also creating a sequel to their *Activation* affirmation album. Vision Tools is also looking to expand into creating customer programs and courses for high school and college students. The goal is to create a program that helps students develop a clear vision, organize their goals and create realistic plans for achieving them.

**When it comes to success, Brandon's ideas are simple:  
Success is equal to freedom. If you can do what makes  
you happy consistently and you are at peace, that is  
success.**

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**Jonathan  
Castillo**

**Brandon  
Garrett**

# Courtney's Socks

A Simple Act That Heals Broken Hearts



Have you ever met an angel right here on Earth? Well, meet Courtney Adavia Kemp; a beautiful angel who graced this earth with her presence for nine wonderful years. Courtney was a little girl who was fascinated by the simplest things in life, such as butterflies and the color green...the color of life. This little angel enjoyed basking in all of God's splendor by spending hours and hours exploring the outdoors.

She had an appreciation of all of His little creations, from the little critters crawling around to the flowers that bloomed so beautifully. It is safe to say that Courtney was God's little helper here on Earth; tending to His wonderful masterpieces.

On August 19, 2012, Courtney made her journey to heaven due to an undiagnosed heart disease.

Nevertheless, she has never left the hearts of many and continues to make an impact in a special way. As her family grieved the loss of their beloved daughter, her mother found a bag of socks that she was saving for Courtney's tenth birthday. In that moment, her mother realized that her daughter would never be able to wear those socks; however, those pairs of socks would be used for a greater purpose.

### ***Our socks heal broken hearts.***

This marked the beginning of Socks for Courtney, a nonprofit organization in memory of the Kemp's daughter. This organization strives to "bring awareness to heart disease as well as charities and civic organizations that provide services for those in need." Courtney's parents, David and Alneata Kemp, have taken a simple act of kindness, providing socks for others, and have created an amazing initiative from it. Mrs. Kemp describes this organization as an act of God.



Courtney Kemp

As the founder of Socks for Courtney, Mrs. Kemp strives to use this organization as a way to reach everyone from all walks of life. *When we bend down and cover feet with these socks, all of a sudden we are speaking the same language and that language is love!* She feels that these socks are being used to relay God's message of love being that many people, as well as organizations, have donated socks and many lives have been touched as a result.

It is so easy to become involved with this incredible organization. The Kemps are open to anyone hosting a sock drive or simply donating socks to Socks for Courtney. They can be reached at [www.socksforcourtney.org](http://www.socksforcourtney.org) where you will find all of their contact information and more about Courtney's story. Socks for Courtney can be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @SocksForCourtney. *We have tried our best to not put a number on the amount of socks that we receive! We are grateful for any and all socks! One pair of socks is just as important to us as 1,000 pairs of socks.*



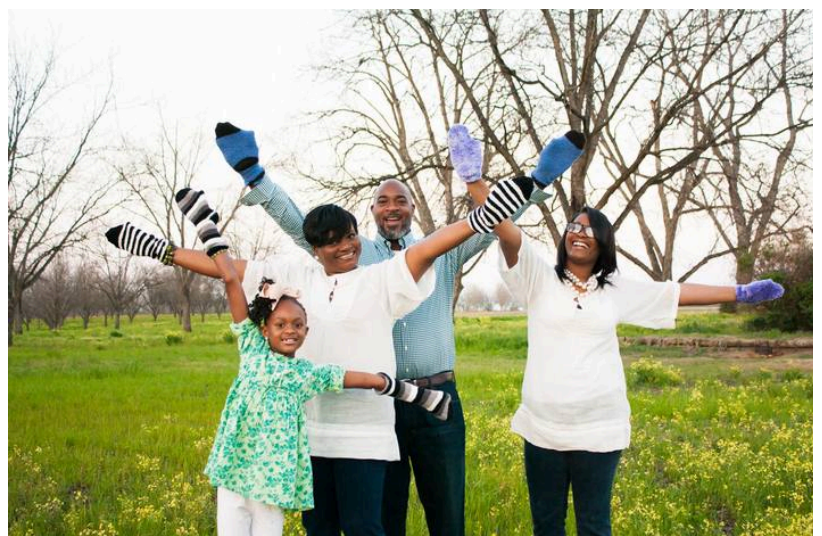
Socks for Courtney is seeking more socks across the globe! Instead of sending their socks on mission trips, The Kemps hope to actually participate in mission trips and bring their socks along.

They have even hosted a sock fashion show where they introduced their very own sock with the Socks for Courtney logo on it in order to promote the organization's brand.

The Lord took a horrible loss and turned it into a ministry. *The Lord can take something that hurts so bad and will use it to push us into our purpose.* Mrs. Kemp is proud to say that this is why she was created. She wants to uphold the memory of her daughter while ultimately giving God all of the glory. The Kemps are Good people doing amazingly Great things!

BY: MICHAELA CARTER  
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ALNEATA KEMP

"Nothing that the Lord has gifted us with is too small for the uplifting of the Kingdom!"



# **“I'm A Good Person, Now What?”**

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## **But first, let's take a selfie!**

By Kendra Ketter Chavis

Modern culture drives us to do noble things, really big things, go out and save the world...and then go tell everyone about how selfless we are and why all the things we DO matter. But God doesn't care about the big things you do half as much as God cares about who you are. Fortunately and unfortunately serving is trending. Serving is popular. Serving is sexy. But like any important project, after the work is done we have to take a step back and evaluate. Did I do what I came for? Why did I come at all?


As a millennial in ministry, I am in the constant prayer struggle, for myself and my peers, to choose between selfie mentality and a selfless mentality. A selfie mentality, not the picture but the attitude, is a mentality that is self-congratulatory. It looks out at the world and sees a reflection of all the ways I am necessary to the goodness project. It sees the changes I've made, the lives I could touch. It sees that I absolutely must chase my dreams because the world is depending on me to do so, so that everyone else can then pursue their dreams too. This spiritual charity becomes my obligation to chase and reflect a successful lifestyle that glamourizes my awesomeness...in Christ...of course.

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However, a selfless mentality is the offspring of a servant heart and the producer of servant life. A selfless mentality understands that this is not about me. It is not about my goodness, and all the ways God has gifted me to be great. It comprehends what my servant heart has accepted: this has always been a God project, not a goodness project. When we operate from a selfless mentality and a servant heart we understand that it is all grace.

***Whether we have a glamorous lifestyle or a simple one; whether we win or feel like we've lost it all in an attempt to give it all, whether 10,000 people know our name or 10 people feel our touch, it is all grace.***

We didn't deserve any of it. We don't deserve any of it. We can't do enough to ever earn any of it. It's grace. We get to be the hands and feet of that good God on earth. *That* is the goodness project. Jesus washed feet, touched sick people, ate with strangers, walked far, and worked until He was tired, all to prove who God really is. Jesus was a servant for the sake of salvation. Why do we serve?



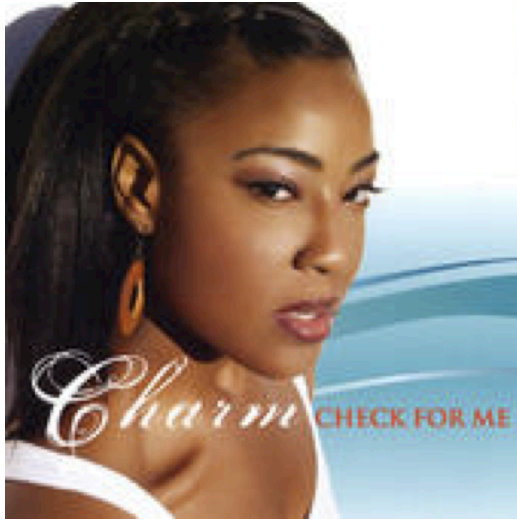
Servant heart, remember  
that GOD DOES NOT CARE  
ABOUT ALL OUR DOING,  
GOING AND SHOWING  
MORE THAN OUR LIVING,  
LOVING AND GROWING.  
God wants right now what  
God has always wanted,  
your pure heart.

We all get sucked into the trap, it's easy. And no one is too humble and wonderful to be exempt from it's temptation. We find ourselves in a place joyfully giving money to someone struggling, or in the midst of a great opportunity to travel and see poverty in a new way, or going into a *so-called* ghetto or hood next door that you've never seen, and immediately you're moved to start a Christmas toy drive for the underprivileged children or T-shirts to raise awareness. And there we are. The cameras are out, selfie mode is on and before we know it we're on spiritual Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat having Show 'N Tell. We see ourselves, our goodness. And what becomes the bigger moment is the telling about the doing and not the evaluating of why we did it. To be clear, pictures are completely okay and testimonies are biblically necessary (Rev 12.11). That's not what's at stake here.

A servant heart has a double - layered foundation. Here's what that means: It is a heart that starts from a place of gratitude; gratitude that God can use any hands and feet, but that God is using yours. After all the negative things you have thought, said or done in your lifetime, God still loves you and wants to partner with *you* to be evidence of real love in a world where we all need it so badly. And the second layer of that foundation is starting from a place of intention. A servant understands that the "why" is for God's glory - God's loving presence to be made known on the earth. **The "why" isn't for profit, or things, attention, affection, credit or followers.** The "why" is to make followers of Christ. All that other stuff is icing and bonuses. Have it or lose it, it's all grace. You may have health and they have money; you may have great peace and they have a great daughter; you may have hope and they are handsome. It's all undeserved, un-earnable grace. And a servant heart sets our eyes on things above. It sees what God can do, when it looks out at the world. It sees God's dreams for your life. God-sized possibilities measured perfectly, just for you.

So go, serve. Don't be amazed or destroyed by what you see in the selfie, but what God can do when you're selfless ■

*Kendra Ketter Chavis is a minister serving in the northeast United States and internationally. Her focus is heavily centered on the 4-way intersection of Jesus, culture, media and justice. She operates the emerging millennial resource ministry, [CheckTheEvidence.org](http://CheckTheEvidence.org).*



(Album Cover from iTunes)

from  
Your  
GPGT

# Hello

Entertainment Insider  
Correspondent

It is with pleasure that I join GPGT as the Entertainment Insider Correspondent! I come to you as an entrepreneur, singer/songwriter and journalist.

I began my music career at age 18, just 7 years after I began singing publicly in choirs, at events and in the church.

Upon entering college, I began work on my first music project, only to lose the majority of the project to a power blow out in 2005.

Just 3 years later, my first commercial album, *Check For Me*, was released independently under my publishing company, Charm Works Publishing. (For a young woman in the music industry, this was not a common occurrence).

The title track, *Check'n For Me*, received major radio spins and garnered hometown recognition, including artist spotlights by The Herald, a local newspaper, and Power 98, Charlotte NC's leading FM station.

Notable performances include: singing the national anthem for the 1st Inaugural Eagle Bank Bowl in the Nation's Capitol in 2008 to a crowd of over 40,000, opening for Anthony Hamilton at the 2010 CIAA,

performing for Robert Townsend's private birthday party in 2012 and more.

Having studied theatre in college, my work in several indie plays and theatrical shows in The Nation's Capitol has garnered me much stage and television experience.

I have appeared as a contestant on two game shows: *Let's Make a Deal* and *Price Is Right* in 2012 and 2015, respectively.

Lastly, as a voting member of the Recording Academy for 5 years, I have been fortunate to brush shoulders with many of the country's most talented stars. I have so many great stories to tell!

I plan to bring you progressive information, share personal stories, and give you insider tips on the Entertainment Industry.

I look forward to serving you as the Entertainment Insider of GPGT! Don't hesitate to connect with me via FB, Twitter or Instagram using the handle @charmismusic.

**Until next time...love and light~**

~Charissa Mobley



*Chasity Broughton*

Available for Bookings.

Broughton.chat@gmail.com  
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# IT'S SHOWTIME!



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**W**e completed our second run of our show *2 Sides* in early April 2016 and our first was completed in March of 2015. If you were privileged to attend both shows you may have noticed a few changes: 1 African Drum to a keyboardist and 5-piece set, chorus in the background to a designated mic'ed chorus section, white to color lighting, the change in the characterization of Bobby and Rachael from husband and wife to father and daughter, raffles to none, three - day run of show to a two – day run of show, change of venue from Emory to Saint Philip, Valencya Thompson playing role of Grandmother to not, an entire new cast with the exception of the role of Carrie, and many more.

# 2 Times for 2 Sides

**From the  
Director's  
Chair!**



*2 Sides*  
2016  
Cast

Some changes as with life, are desired, others are determined according to circumstance. To this point, Jerrell and I were pleased with what we consider to be an improvement in our *2 Sides* production. This success in our ability to create, direct, and produce what God has required of us does also come along with its set of challenges; challenges that teach us how to perfect what we're doing, how to persevere, and how to run our businesses more effectively. I'm even glad to say that I noticed improvement in how Jerrell and I engaged each other during the 2016 production efforts versus the 2015.

- 1) Visit [www.valencyathompson.com](http://www.valencyathompson.com) and make a donation at the footer of the page via the Paypal button.
- 2) Contact us at [info@valencyathompson.com](mailto:info@valencyathompson.com) to discuss potential collaboration and other ways to fund *2 Sides*.
- 3) Write to us at Write The Vision Creative Works, LLC  
PO Box 390661  
Snellville, GA 30039
- 4) Call us at 678 - 827-1793  
\*Serious inquiries only.

God Bless,

**Valencya The  
Visionary**



*2 Sides*  
2015  
Cast

We are often asked, what's next? Our answer is to secure additional funding for future productions and take our show to other venues upon request. Should you desire to support *2 Sides* there are a number of ways do so:

# *Exhale* Because every woman needs a safe place to let go.

## 2016 Conference

By: Tamika Grimes  
Photos: Tamika Grimes

Friday, February 19 – Saturday, February 20, 2016



(Host, Robin May with Tamika Grimes)

When the editor of *Good People Great Things* contacted me about submitting a review of *The Exhale Conference* I immediately said yes, however, it took me a while to even begin to put into words my experience from attending the conference. Let me just say that I am one of those people who will have attended up to 5 to 10 different conferences by the end of the year, so it is rare that I leave a conference feeling motivated on a mental and spiritual level. When I left *Exhale 2016* I was so inspired by the amazing speakers, conference attendees and host of *Exhale 2016* that I immediately jumped into action to work on some of the goals that I felt inspired to accomplish this year, but enough about me.

Let me share some of the highlights from the conference. The conference began on Friday, February 19 at the Hyatt Hotel - Perimeter in Atlanta, GA. It began with very delicious hors d'oeuvres and a mixer that included an icebreaker where attendees were encouraged to get out of their comfort zone and talk to other people who they did not know. Naturally, I was drawn to my friend Brandy who I met at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sisterhood luncheon, but I couldn't complete the icebreaker task if I was going to stay and kick it with her all night. By the way, Brandy is an overachiever so she ended up winning the icebreaker for the evening!



(Brandy and Tamika)

Next, attendees were ushered into another room where the host, Robin May, licensed professional counselor and life – coach, welcomed everyone to the conference. She shared that this was her 5<sup>th</sup> year hosting the conference that began as a women's empowerment luncheon and evolved into a two - day weekend. The speaker on Friday night was Valorie Burton who is a bestselling author, speaker and life coach. You may have seen her on some of your favorite television shows such as the Today show, CNN, Dr. Oz and The Potter's Touch with T.D. Jakes. I believe she was the perfect speaker to kick off the conference because she shared so much about her journey of endurance and encouraged the attendees by sharing her personal testimony. She discussed friendship, entrepreneurship, optimistic and pessimistic thinking styles, etc. One of the things she said that resonated with me was "The person who succeeds is the one who stayed at it the longest". After Mrs. Burton's session, the night ended with a panel of conference speakers who answered questions from attendees.



(Tamika & Valorie Burton)

Saturday, the conference kicked off with a powerful speaker and successful business owner, Marquita Miller. It felt like she was speaking directly to me. I believe many of the other women who attended would agree, as they were clapping and nodding their heads throughout the session. It was evident that she is a natural - born encourager and teacher. She asked us to write down something that God has told us that we are supposed to do in 2016 and begin with the end in mind. I thought that was a great segue into the next session.

Shenikwa Cager, founder of *That Wife Life*, was next to speak on the topic of "Finding God's PEACE in the midst of our CRAZY!" She brought an amazing word from Genesis 16 the story of Hagar and Sarai. Her session drew me in from the beginning to the end. Shenikwa's approach was spiritual, comical and real. She shared the three "R's": Recognize - God's faithfulness in our lives, Remember - what hurt us but didn't kill us and Refocus - and rebuild for the next task at hand.

Cherise Thomas, the CEO of White Diamond Image Consulting in Atlanta, GA graciously shared her knowledge of personal branding. She provided attendees with knowledge that most people outside of the fashion industry would never know concerning image and branding. Cherise began her session by passing around a Kate Spade shoe with a broken heel. I am a visual learner so I was impressed with the visual and her story about the quality that should be connected to your brand. Mrs. Thomas left us with tips to upgrade our brand beginning with wardrobe. One thing that she shared about branding that resonated with me is: "Don't do anything outside of your brand, if you do, you're going to confuse your audience."

After the morning sessions, attendees were allowed to take a break for about an hour before the sisterhood luncheon began, but, before I begin to write about the luncheon, I need to say that the food was absolutely amazing! We ate really well (see picture below). Host, Robin May, was the keynote speaker during the luncheon. The one thing that amazes me about her is that she is married to a successful politician, has 3 very young children, and has a successful career as a licensed counselor, life coach, speaker, radio host and yet she still makes time to pour into women. She dispels the myth that women cannot live out their dreams, have a successful career and a happy home. Robin has such a transparent and open approach that can make her relatable to all women.



Janice Anderson, the CEO of Moruwa Consulting, is an organizational growth strategist and she facilitated the last session on creating a 90 - day action plan. She encouraged attendees to think of a project they would like to work towards accomplishing and to create a 30, 60, and 90 - day plan. She shared her personal story and encouraged attendees by sharing examples she used to accomplish her specific goals.

The conference ended on a very high note as women exchanged hugs, took pictures and embraced new ideas. Women connected with each other, were equipped with the knowledge to accomplish their personal goals, and left empowered by the fellowship. If you are wondering if I will attend the *Exhale Conference* again, the answer is a definite YES! ■

***Tamika is a wife, mother, and professional counselor who resides in the metro-Atlanta area. For more writings from Tamika, please follow her blog at [www.millennialmotherhood.blogspot.com](http://www.millennialmotherhood.blogspot.com)***

**D**r. Gerald Mulvaney is an OB/GYN specializing in infertility treatment in Cary and Greensboro, North Carolina. From an early age, Dr. Mulvaney has loved science and had a passion for learning, which led him to medical school at Boston University School of Medicine and to residency at King's County Downstate Medical Center.

Dr. Mulvaney has practiced medicine for over 30 years. When asked about retiring, he laughed and said *what's that?* He has traded some of his larger procedures for more time with family and pursuing some personal passions like photography, racing cars, and singing with his reggae band, *Jamrock*. He is also considering opportunities to teach future generations of doctors. He recognizes and wants to guide newer doctors through unexpected challenges.



## Healthcare Provider

### *Spotlight*

By Shanelle Ebanks

It's obvious Dr. Mulvaney loves and takes pride in the relationships he's built with his patients and his contributions to obstetrics and gynecology. He suggests everyone do the thing(s) you love because it shows in your work. *Don't chase money, look for what you like, what puts a smile on your face every day, and follow your passion, ~Dr. Mulvaney.*

*Pursue your passion and you never know what new opportunities can come your way.*

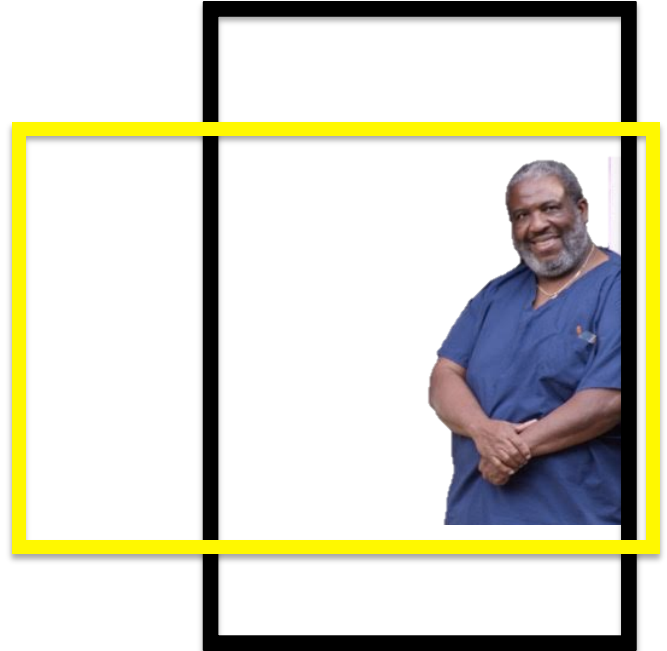
While Dr. Mulvaney has many fond memories throughout his career, one highlight is when he and a colleague were asked by the NC Zoo to remove cancer from the reproductive system of a 400lb gorilla. Veterinarians were unsuccessful at removing the cancer. Since the reproductive systems of gorillas and humans are so similar, Dr. Mulvaney was called in and ultimately performed a complete hysterectomy on the gorilla, who made a full recovery.

### **Dr. Mulvaney's medical advice?**

*Get pregnant sooner than you think you need to.* He said one of the most difficult parts of his job is telling a woman who's done it all *right* (completed her degree(s), established a career, found the right partner, and is now settled) *that she can't have a baby because she waited too long.*

In this situation, Mulvaney might be able to aid a woman in getting pregnant, but it more than likely won't be with her own eggs. While many industries have advanced, there's limited progress in reproductive medicine. The best development has been egg freezing, which admittedly takes a lot of forethought.

*Remember that your relationship with your doctor is a partnership. Don't be afraid to ask questions and be your own advocate.*



When asked what he enjoyed most about his job, he smiled as he recalled the number of patients that he's had for their entire adult lives and now their daughters too. He shared, one of the joys is the continuity of care the field allows and the relationships he's built over the years. *There's something special about meeting someone who recognizes me from a baby picture that was taken shortly after his or her delivery,* ~Dr. Mulvaney. He also loves surgery, and noted obstetrics is the only field in which one can do surgery and walk away with new life. He also admitted that he prefers working with women, they are more proactive. He half-jokingly said that *men go to the doctor only when something is about to fall off.*

Who you are is so much more than a title or a job description, it is how you fill your days and the sum of your life experiences. It is clear from the way Dr. Gerald Mulvaney lives his life that this is his approach.

# hello BEAUTIFUL!



By: Charlemagne Stallings

Photo provided by: Charlemagne Stallings

As I appreciate the beauty of this warm winter day curled up in the corner of my couch, I notice that this winter was more like spring most days and now that its coming to an end the radiance of spring is blooming prematurely. The clear skies, bright sun, daylight savings, birds singing and flowers budding are all the beautiful workmanship of God's design for the Earth. Even though the pesky pollen is beginning to fall, rainy days are coming and soon my dog will be shedding unsightly amounts of fur. We have to accept the good with the bad because it all serves a purpose. It reminds me of one of my favorite scriptures in the Song of Solomon.

*You are altogether  
beautiful my darling;  
there is no flaw in you.*  
*~Song of Solomon 4:7*

Now I wouldn't consider myself a hopeless romantic but boy that...right there...makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside because it is so life giving. Even though these are words spoken by Solomon to his beloved wife, it reminds me of how God feels about me, His beloved. Some days I can hear him whispering this to me when I am drowning in the muck of life.

I mean between social media, television, magazines and Pinterest it's pretty easy to get caught up in the comparison trap. Going day in and day out like this can cause one to feel like she is not enough. There are so many messages every second of every day bombarding us regarding our identity as women that if we are not careful those messages become a blurry line from what is truth and what is deception hiding behind the cloak of truth.

How great would it be if we could internalize this truth just as easily as we internalize those other messages? For some reason it is human/second nature for us to magnify the negative things about ourselves and minimize the good. If we would just stop zooming in on our flaws and view ourselves through the eyes of our Savior, we could see that our flaws are drowning in grace. Just think When you are looking in the mirror at those love handles that just won't budge God is whispering...“you are altogether beautiful my darling; there is no flaw in you.”


When you are looking for validation from your spouse or significant other God is whispering...“you are altogether beautiful my darling; there is no flaw in you.” When you are trying to nail that project or land that promotion or new job God is whispering...“you are altogether beautiful my darling; there is no flaw in you.” When parenthood gets tough God is whispering...“you are altogether beautiful my darling; there is no flaw in you.”

When He says there is no flaw in you, it doesn't mean you are perfect. No, it means I'm not holding your mistakes and poor decisions against you. You are already forgiven. I view you through the eyes of grace and your slate is made clean. Today is a brand new day. You have been washed white as snow. Jesus already died for all of your mess. You do not need to pay for it any longer through fear, regret, control, guilt, shame, stress, worry and anxiety. Fret no more, my Dear. You are loved beyond measure. Therefore, silence those lies Satan wants you to keep repeating and beating yourself up about; instead, turn up the volume on all of your radiant beauty.

You will become so radiant that people will begin to take notice. Your girlfriends will wonder what your secret is. Could it be the extra time you put in with your trainer? The detox water concoction you found on Pinterest? Your new bronzer? You can look her square in her eyes, place one hand on her shoulder and fill her heart with those sweet and tender words “You are altogether beautiful my darling; there is no flaw in you.”

**Prayer:** Lord, teach me to silence the lies that I am not enough and to turn up the volume of your truth. You died an excruciating death for my imperfections. THAT WAS ENOUGH. Now, I am a new creation that is beautiful and flawless because of your endless grace.

*Charlemagne is a resident of the metro-Atlanta area, a school counselor, wife, and mother. To keep up with Charlemagne, follow her on Instagram.*

 @hellobeautifulpgt





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