

The Valley Weekly

Volume 2, No. 12

Friday, December 4, 2015

FREE

"A man hasn't got a corner on virtue just because his shoes are shined."

- Ann Petry

Diversity Leadership Colloquium Graduates Class Four

The Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium (DLC) held its Cohort IV Graduation Ceremonies on Tuesday, November 25, 2015, in the Training Room of Huntsville Utilities.

Colonel (Ret) John Olshefski, vice president for customer care for Huntsville Utilities, served as the graduation speaker. Ten outstanding professionals proudly received their certificates for completing the eight-week program, and over 40 guests at-

tended the ceremony.

During the course of the two-month program, the cohorts engaged with knowledgeable subject matter experts who presented informative and interesting presentations on a range of topics.

Among the topics were servant leadership, politics and government, diverse issues in education, small business and entrepreneurship, religion, civic and community engagement,

law, equality and social justice, finance, investment and planning, and networking and mentoring.

At the end of the overall program, many of the participants commented that the colloquium was "a great experience" and that it afforded them the opportunity "to network and engage" with people that they normally would not have an opportunity to meet.

DLC was initiated in January 2015. Since its inception, some forty-six male and female

professionals have completed the program.

Presently, several of the graduates of the program have been appointed to serve on municipal and civic and community organizations' boards and are serving as volunteers at civic and community organizations.

DLC is designed to provide individuals interested in gaining access to networks, mentors, and sponsors the access that has traditionally not been available to

diverse members of the broader community.

The dates for Cohort V are March 8-April 28, 2016, and applications are now being accepted.

For applications and more information about Diversity Leadership Colloquium 2016, please visit the website at www.diversityleadershipcolloquium.com.

by Georgia S. Valrie
VW Assistant Editor

Valley Area Among Top College Destinations

When it comes to drawing spots for prospective college students landing in small metro cities of 250,000 to 1 million residents, Huntsville, Ala., is in the Top 10.

According to the American Institute for Economic Research in late November, Huntsville is among the 133 such cities in a study on quality of life and opportunities to prepare for the work world.

While colleges and universities have long shaped the cultural and intellectual life in their communities, acknowledges AIER, they now shape economic life. An important part of this change, notes the agency, comes as a result of research licensing and partnerships, which permit university-based researchers to work in labs

and commercial ventures outside the campus walls. The Top 10 small metro rankings listed by AIER include the following:

1. Boulder, Colo.
2. Durham, N.C.
3. Ann Arbor, Mich.
4. Madison, Wis.
5. Fort Collins, Colo.
6. Santa Barbara, Calif.
7. Provo, Utah
8. Naples, Fla.
9. Trenton, N.J.
10. Huntsville, Ala.

With higher education institutions "serving as economic and cultural anchors" in these cities, all but one of these small metro areas ranks high on the quality-of-student-life measures, notes AIER.



COHORT FOUR GRADUATES: Ten members of the distinguished Cohort IV of the Diversity Leadership Colloquium completed an eight-week training series on November 26, 2015, marked by a culminating presentation on diversity hosted at Huntsville Utilities. Pictured (l-r) are: Edwan L. O'Neal, North Alabama Center for Educational Excellence; Janice Capshaw, Huntsville Utilities; Tyran Bone, First Commercial Bank; Richetta A. Wilkerson, Army Materiel Command; Lillian B. Henderson, Edward Jones Investment; Sandra Nicole Butler, Huntsville Utilities; Melodie M. Morgan, Union Chapel Christian Academy; Dorothy El-Amin, parent coordinator; Xantheia Watkins, Alabama A&M University; and George Johnson, Oakwood University.

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Garden Cove Produce

Health Unlimited

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church

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Phuket's in Providence

Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church

Progress Bank - Madison

Progressive Union Missionary Baptist

Regency Retirement Village

Rocket City Barber Shop

Sam and Greg's Pizza

Sav-A-Lot

Sneed's Cleaners

St. Bartley PB Church

St. Luke Christian Church

Starbucks (Governors Drive, N. Parkway at

Mastin Lake Road/University Drive)

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

Christmas Parade Dec. 17



The Huntsville Christmas Parade will be held in Downtown Huntsville at 6 p.m.

The free activity is being sponsored by the Von Braun Center and Lite 96.1. It will offer the community a chance to welcome Santa Claus to Huntsville as he

ushers in the Christmas season during the Christmas parade.

Enjoy the excitement and music from bands throughout the Tennessee Valley with thousands of others. For additional information, call (256) 885-9797.

OU to Dedicate Ford Hall



Oakwood University will hold the dedication ceremony for H.E. Ford Hall and the Leroy and Lois Peters Media Center Sunday, December 6, at 10 a.m. Ford Hall is the home of the Communication Department, and the Oakwood University Broadcasting Network shares space in the Lois and Leroy Peters Media Center to help educate students studying communication as well as produce programming for and from Oakwood University.

Food and Plant Chemicals Could Help Treat Certain Cancers

Mixtures of a number of non-toxic chemicals, several found in plants and foods, could aid in the treatment of advanced and untreatable cancers, according to a global research task force.

A international task force of nearly 200 scientists includes Dr. Lynn Ferguson, professor of cancer nutrition at the University of Auckland. Ferguson said the research also suggests that non-toxic doses of plant and food chemicals could address the problem of cancer relapse. Ferguson also led one of the individual working teams, focussing on genomic instability.

The research last month with the supporting work from each of the teams, in a special issue of *Elsevier's Seminars in Cancer Biology*. Owing to the evidence, the task force calls for an immediate increase in support for research on mixtures of chemicals that can reach a broad-spectrum of therapeutic targets.

"While current therapies have achieved modest successes in some cancers, significant problems remain with most of our approaches to treatment," noted Ferguson. "In particular, many newer targeted therapies are extremely expensive, highly toxic

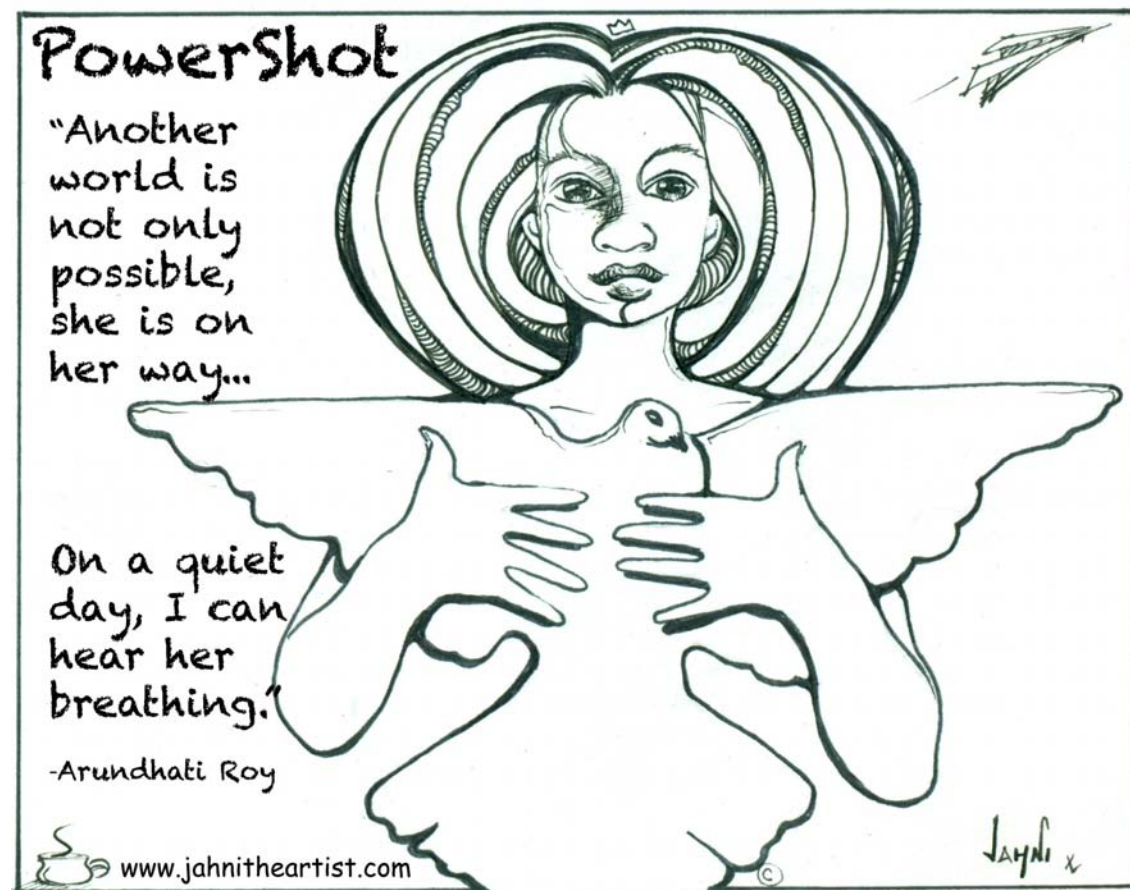
and not effective for rare types of cancer and advanced cancers."

"Even when they appear to work, a significant percentage of patients will experience a relapse after only a few months," she said. "Typically advanced cancers are untreatable and relapses occur

when small sub-populations of mutated cells become resistant to therapy. Doctors who try to address this problem with combinations of therapies find that therapeutic toxicity typically limits their ability to stop many cancers."

To handle this problem, the task force of scientists from major institutions in more than 20 countries was assembled by a Canadian non-governmental organization called "Getting to Know Cancer".

- University of Auckland



Publisher
The Valley Weekly, LLC

Editor-in-Chief
Dorothy W. Huston

Assistant Editor
Georgia S. Valrie

Editorial Assistants
Linda Burruss
Gary T. Whitley

Layout & Design
Independent

Photographer
Eugene Dickerson

- Contributing Editors -
Hortense Dodo
Dave Herron
Amoi Savage

Website Administrator
Calvin Farier

Illustrator
John "Jahni" Moore

Editorial Consultant
Jerome Saintjones

Mailing Address:
The Valley Weekly
415A Church Street - Suite 100
Huntsville, AL 35801
(256) 651-9028
www.valleyweeklyllc.com

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Items for consideration for publication in The Valley Weekly should be submitted at least TWO weeks in advance to above address or by e-mail to info@valleyweeklyllc.com. Items do not necessarily reflect the views of The Valley Weekly, LLC.

The Valley Weekly

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From the Editor

Ah, it's December!

For me, December is a time of reflection and direction. We reflect on the year that is passing, the things to be finished, plans for a new year and direction for the future.

It seems like only yesterday we were planning for January 2015, the Dr. Martin Luther King Annual Unity Breakfast, Valentine's Day, spring break, final exams, graduation, summer vacation, back-to-school, fall break, Thanksgiving and now Christmas. This calendar year has just about ended. Most of us have things on our lists that we did not get-around-to completing. We have less than a month; so, its time to put some skin, grit, teeth and elbow grease in to 'get it done.' You have heard the saying, "Success is a do-it-yourself project." Let's take care of business and get it done. For most, this requires little effort, including getting in touch with a family member or old friend, forgiving and seeking forgiveness and even moving on when you have made the contributions and difference you can make. For others, it requires much effort--returning to school, completing a degree, picking up job application, preparing for a job interview or professional certification, completing a home improvement project, or even starting a small business.

It's final exam time for students at all levels. For some project managers, it's finishing a product or service. For Families, it a time of gathering, travelling, preserving traditions, and creating new ones. Regardless of what 'year-end' means to you, you know what needs to be done to make it happen.

For some "cyber Monday, midnight madness, free shipping, special deals, cash back and special sales" don't excite any longer. I attended two seminars during the past month where the emphasis was on giving, saving/investing and then consuming the stuff we need. Do not be mistaken--this column is not to suggest that this model will work for everyone. Many times it takes all that we earn to care for the day-to-day experience known as "living." At minimum wage, an individual can not afford a place to live, something to drive, food to eat and clothes to wear. So, such a family can forget the formula altogether!

As a direction for the future, consider a good K-12 education, including vocational skilled, licensed and certificate curricular, two-year associate degree and certificate programs, four-year degrees and beyond. Education might not be an equalizer, but it will get us closer than anything i know towards moving the needle.

We hope you enjoy the holiday socials, galas, dinners, and family gatherings. As we enjoy, lets reflect, plan and look to the future. Christmas 2015 is upon us. Remember the REASON for the SEASON. God is great!

Until next week ...

*When you can't find a
printed copy of The Valley
Weekly around town,
follow us on-line at [www.
valleyweeklyllc.com](http://www.valleyweeklyllc.com).*



Dorothy

2015 Football Standings

6 IRS Tips for Year-End Gifts to Charity

SWAC

EAST

(SWAC/Overall)

Alcorn State

7 - 2

8 - 3

Alabama State

5 - 4

6 - 5

Alabama A&M

3 - 6

3 - 8

Jackson State

3 - 6

3 - 8

Mississippi Valley State

1 - 8

1 - 10

WEST

(SWAC/Overall)

Grambling State

9 - 0

9 - 2

Prairie View

8 - 1

8 - 2

Southern

6 - 3

6 - 5

Texas Southern

2 - 7

3 - 7

Arkansas-Pine Bluff

1 - 8

2 - 9

SEC

West

(Conference/Overall)

Alabama

7-1

11-1

Ole Miss

6-2

9-3

Arkansas

5-3

7-5

LSU

5-3

8-3

Texas A&M

4-4

8-4

Mississippi State

4-4

8-4

Auburn

2-6

6-6

Many people give to charity each year during the holiday season. Remember, if you want to claim a tax deduction for your gifts, you must itemize your deductions. There are several tax rules that you should know about before you give. Here are six tips from the IRS that you should keep in mind:

1. Qualified charities. You can only deduct gifts you give to qualified charities. Use the IRS Select Check tool to see if the group you give to is qualified. Remember that you can deduct donations you give to churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and government agencies. This is true even if Select Check does not list them in its database.

2. Monetary donations. Gifts of money include those made in cash or by check, electronic funds transfer, credit card and payroll deduction. You must have a bank record or a written statement from the charity to deduct any gift of money on your tax return. This is true regardless of the amount of the gift. The statement must show the name of the charity and the date and amount of the contribution.

Bank records include canceled checks, or bank, credit union and credit card statements. If you give by payroll deductions, you should retain a pay stub, a Form W-2 wage statement or other document from your employer. It must show the total amount withheld for charity, along with the pledge card showing the name of the charity.

3. Household goods. Household items include furniture, furnishings, electronics, appliances and linens. If you donate clothing and household items to charity they generally must be in at least good used condition to claim a tax deduction. If you claim a deduction of over \$500 for an item it doesn't have to meet this standard if you include a qualified appraisal of the item with your tax return.

4. Records required. You must get an acknowledgment from a charity for each deductible donation (either money or property) of \$250 or more. Additional rules apply to the statement for gifts of that amount. This statement is in addition to the records required for deducting cash gifts. However, one statement with all of the required information may meet both requirements.

5. Year-end gifts. You can deduct contributions in the year you make them. If you charge your gift to a credit card before the end of the year it will count for 2014. This is true even if you don't pay the credit card bill until 2015. Also, a check will count for 2014 as long as you mail it in 2014.

6. Special rules. Special rules apply if you give a car, boat or airplane to charity. For more information visit IRS.gov.

<https://www.irs.gov/uac/Six-IRS-Tips-for-Year-End-Gifts-to-Charity>

IRS Special Edition Tax Tip 2014-23, November 17, 2014

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SEC

East

(Conference/Overall)

Florida	7-1	10-2
Tennessee	5-3	8-4
Georgia	5-3	9-3
Vanderbilt	2-6	4-8
Kentucky	2-6	5-7
Missouri	1-7	5-7
South Carolina	1-7	3-9

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Washington in 60 Seconds

1. The House and Senate are in session this week. The House will take up an energy bill, which, among other things, would change the process for approving cross-border pipelines similar to the Keystone Pipeline, transferring the responsibility for approving a project from the President to the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Energy. The House will also take up resolutions to cancel the clean power plan and carbon emissions regulations and may take up the Elementary and Secondary Education Reauthorization bill. In the Senate, Democrats are expected to filibuster a House-passed bill that effectively halts Syrian refugee resettlements in the U.S. The Senate may also turn to the Reconciliation bill that will eliminate pieces of Obamacare – which also contains language to defund Planned Parenthood. Rumor is that the current deadline to enact the FY2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill will be moved up to December 18.

2. President Obama is in Paris for the start of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (known as the “21st Conference of the Parties” or COP21), with negotiators from 190 countries, including 147 heads of state. COP21 is expected to result in the adoption of a new international climate change agreement in which all major greenhouse gas emitters will commit to action.

3. The final bill for the Every Student Succeeds Act, which will replace the No Child Left Behind law, was officially released today. Lawmakers on the conference committee will now have a chance to review it and decide on their final votes on the Elementary and Secondary Educa-

tion Reauthorization bill. Almost every lawmaker signed onto the bill in conference - but a couple, namely Senators Elizabeth Warren and Chris Murphy, sounded skeptical. ESSA is on the list of potential bills for the House this week, so there could be floor action very soon. Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander said lawmakers would have at least a week to review the bill in his chamber, so the Senate will move after the House.

4. House and Senate Transportation Conferees are expected to release a 5-year surface transportation reauthorization bill conference report this week (known as the DRIVE Act), which is the final step before the House and Senate take final votes on the legislation and send it to the President for his signature. The current deadline to enact the new bill is December 4. Five days out from another policy expiration, the question this week remains whether this Friday will be the deadline to end all deadlines--or whether lawmakers will (again) buy themselves more time to clear a multiyear transportation bill.

5. Here come the holidays! On Wednesday, new House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) will light the Christmas tree on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. On Thursday, it's President and Mrs. Obama's turn to light the White House tree on the Ellipse. And, next Sunday is the lighting of the National Hanukkah Menorah (also on the Ellipse).

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400 North Capitol Street, NW Suite 585
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Calendar of Events

Thru December 3
Mandarin Chinese (Beyond the Basics) Free Continuing Education Class
AAMU Center for Extended Studies
Thursdays, 5:30-7 p.m.
(256) 372-5753

Thru December 31
“Celestial Dreams: The Art of Space Jewelry”
U.S. Space and Rocket Center

Thru January 24, 2016
“Blow Up: Inflatable Contemporary Art”
Sponsors: Sarah and Carl Gessler
Huntsville Museum of Art

December 1
Galaxy of Lights 3k Holiday Dash
Huntsville Botanical Garden
6:30-8 p.m.

Women's Basketball
Alabama A&M vs. Samford University
Elmore Building
7 p.m.

December 2
Santa's Village
Constitution Village
5-9 p.m.

December 3
“Supper with Santa”
Early Works Museum Grand Hall
404 Madison Street
5 & 6:30 p.m.

“A Disney Christmas”
Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center
7-9 p.m.

December 4
“World Aids Day Poetry Corner”
show with Marcus Sims
Listen live on WJAB 90.9 FM at 4:00 p.m.
Listen online: www.wjab.org

December 5

World AIDS Day Workshop for Youth & Young Adults
First Missionary Baptist Church
3509 Blue Spring Road
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

December 4-5
Kris Kringle's Candlelight Christmas
Tickets: (256) 536-2882
Burritt on the Mountain
5-9 p.m.

December 6
87th Annual Christmas Musicale
Alabama A&M University Choir
Elmore Building
5:30 p.m.

December 11
Fall Commencement Exercises
Alabama A&M University
Elmore Building
9 a.m.

December 12
Rocket City Marathon

Skating in the Park
Huntsville Museum of Art
10 a.m.-12 noon

December 12-13
“Christmas in the Valley”
Sponsor: Valley Conservatory
HarborChase of Huntsville
4801 Whitesport Circle, SW

December 16
Women's Basketball
Alabama A&M vs. Saint Louis University
Elmore Building, 7 p.m.

December 17-19
Special Holiday Jazz

December 31
“Have Yourself A Jazzy Little New Year”
(In support of the Jack & Annie Anderson 2nd Chance Scholarship)
Burritt on the Mountain Museum | 8 p.m.-12 a.m.

January 10
Harlem Globetrotters
VBC Arena

January 15
The Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Emancipation Proclamation Celebration
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr., Charlotte, N.C.
Progressive Union MB Church
1919 Brandontown Road
7 p.m.

January 16
“Journey's Escape”
Black Jacket Symphony
Von Braun Center Concert Hall
8 p.m.

AAMU Choir to Host Musicale

The Alabama A&M University Choir will perform its yearly Christmas Musicale.

Indeed, The Hill's official opening of the Holiday Season with the 87th Annual Christmas Musicale will be held Sunday, December 6, at 5:30 p.m. in the T.M. Elmore Building. The renowned Alabama A&M University Choir will perform the featured work, Antonio Vivaldi's “Gloria”, arranged by John Rutter and under able the direction of Dr. Horace Carney, left, along with the accompaniment of Dr. Mira Kruja, pianist, and the AAMU Instrumental Ensemble.

The public is invited to this free event.



The Launch of Fashion Heist

The self-employed society generally likes to stand out. Not because we are attention-needy, but mainly because we like uniqueness. The desire to be different shows not only in our projects, but also in our fashion.

My very first job was at Moods, a designer boutique that was in Providence and Bridgestreet Towne Center. The best part about working in the store was the exposure to beautiful, one-of-a-kind apparel, that you could not find everywhere.

Therefore, I am absolutely thrilled that the owner, Christian Elizer, has partnered with her best friend Leslie Ware, owner of Exhale Day Spa and Leslie Ware Cosmetics, to start an online boutique labeled, "Fashion Heist," offering fabulous fashions at prices that won't break the bank.

In efforts to capitalize on a tech savvy society that wants the convenience of shopping online, Fashion Heist, will offer weekly, seventy-two (72) hour, flash sales beginning every Friday at 12 a.m. Therefore, we encourage you to grab these great items before they are sold out or before the sale expires.

Fashion Heist will launch on Friday, December 4, 2015. Fashion Heist will consist of social media selling, whereas customers



Photo from: Leslie Ware and Christian Elizer

following @FashionHeistClothing on Instagram and Facebook can type "Sold + their size" in the comment section and an invoice will automatically be sent to the buyer's inbox/email.

Items will be sent to the buyer's doorstep with complimentary shipping. Christian Elizer and Leslie Ware have hopes of expanding into a private label line where you will see their creativity in design aesthetics truly flourish.

Other future plans include an app that will offer VIP memberships as well as other perks. Fashion Heist offers clothing for the fashion forward female who is looking for great everyday basics, as well as unique stand-out pieces.

It will also carry a small selection of accessories to complete the look. Like and follow Fashion Heist Clothing on Facebook and Instagram for updates and access to weekly flash sales. Be sure to support Fashion Heist Clothing and "grab it before it's gone."

- Amoi Savage

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Reporting Suspicious Activity

Prompt and detailed reporting of suspicious activities can help prevent violent crimes or terrorist attacks. If you see suspicious activity, please report it to your local police department. Local law enforcement officers can respond quickly. Once they assess the situation, they can obtain additional support.

First Things First

Citizens should always call local law enforcement. If you see something suspicious, please call local law enforcement.

If there is a life threatening emergency, please call 911.

When reporting suspicious activity, it is helpful to give the most

accurate description possible, including:

- Brief description of the activity
- Date, time and location of the activity
- Physical identifiers of anyone you observed
- Descriptions of vehicles
- Information about where people involved in suspicious activities may have gone
- Your name and contact information (optional)

Behind the scenes there is an active national strategy for information sharing. The Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI) is a collaborative effort led by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investi-

gation, and state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners.

This initiative provides law enforcement with another tool to help prevent terrorism and other terrorism-related crime by establishing a national capacity for gathering, documenting, processing, analyzing, and sharing SAR information.

The NSI is a standardized process—including stakeholder outreach, privacy protections, training, and facilitation of technology—for identifying and reporting suspicious activity in jurisdictions across the country and also serves as the unified focal point for sharing SAR information.

- Department of Homeland Security

Broadcast Journalist Addresses AWM Chapter

The Alliance for Women in Media met Tuesday, December 1, in the Edward S. Johnson Theatre in the Morrison Fine Arts Building on the Alabama A&M University campus.

The meeting featured a presentation by Emmy, Telly and Aurora Award-winning broadcast journalist, empowerment coach, author and AAMU alum Janette R. Smith, who also signed copies of her new book, "From Dream to Reality: Navigating the Path to Your Life Purpose."

Additionally, the AAMU-AWM affiliate is seeking student members to promote the entry, development, and advancement of women in media and related fields.

The national AWM is



the longest established professional organization of both women and men, dedicated to advancing women in the media and entertainment fields.

The AAMU-AWM seeks to empower career devel-

opment, engage in thought leadership, and drive positive change for industry and societal progress.

For more information, contact Dr. Susan C. Brown, advisor, at susan.brown@aamu.edu.

Top 10 Mistakes Businesses Make

Avoid These When Dealing With a Disaster

It could be a mistake to believe your insurance policy will cover all of your business continuity needs in the event of a major disaster. Another big error: not having a basic emergency plan that will keep your clients and employees safe when a crisis occurs.

Businesses everywhere are now operating on limited resources. Yet the survival of your company rests—particularly when faced with a disaster—on whether or not you have a solid plan in place that

will enable you to protect your assets, and allow your organization to rebound quickly.

On Tuesday, December 8, Agility Recovery and the U.S. Small Business Administration will host a webinar focusing on the top ten most common mistakes business owners make when dealing with a crisis.

We'll look at recent small business recoveries, ranging from hurricanes and tornadoes to building fires and plumbing leaks, and best practices that will help you lead your organization

and successfully manage any disaster.

SBA has partnered with Agility Recovery to offer business continuity strategies through the "Prepare-MyBusiness" website. Visit www.preparemybusiness.org to access past webinars and for disaster preparedness checklists.

The SBA provides disaster recovery assistance in the form of low-interest loans to homeowners, renters, private nonprofits and businesses of all sizes. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov/disaster.

**Kris Kringle's
Candlelight
Christmas**

**DECEMBER
4TH & 5TH**

5PM - 9PM

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↑ See the LEAP video



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satisfaction visit us online at damson.com

12/31/2015



On This Day - December 4

Tyra Banks - Born in Los Angeles, California. She is best known as hostess/judge of the reality television show, "America's Next Top Model," since its 2003 debut. She also hosts her own talk show, "The Tyra Banks Show"
- BlackInTime.info



ALL BUSINESS: Visiting executives from Regions Bank intently listen to presentations by marketing students in Alabama A&M University's College of Business and Public Affairs. The event was coordinated by Dr. Kendra Harris.

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- Albert Einstein

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