

# The GRIOT

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## *Ilyasah Shabazz— Growing Up X*

Garrett Hayes

An oatmeal cookie left on a plate. This is Ilyasah Shabazz's memory of her father, an oatmeal cookie that he would give her. When he was assassinated, Shabazz's mother kept her father alive by leaving an oatmeal cookie on a plate for her.

Her mother made sure that Ilyasah didn't accept that her father was dead until she was old enough to understand the events that took place, who he was, and what he stood for.

With a room filled to capacity (and quite possibly over), hundreds of people waited to get the opportunity to hear from the daughter of one of the most controversial figures in American history. The audience came from all walks of life to hear the daughter of Malcolm X speak.

It was a night filled with knowledge and inspiration as Ilyasah Shabazz spoke about her father, her upbringing and insight into African and Black history. Shabazz kept the audience engaged as she connected her father's beliefs and legacy to her own life and to what we as a nation should be striving towards.

"Many people think that when my father went to Mecca he completely changed. My father didn't change, he was constantly evolving something we all should be doing," stated Shabazz about her father Malcolm.

Shabazz talked about her own evolution from a young girl to a woman and how she learned to never settle and never compromise similar to her father's teachings. She then talked about how as a nation we need to be constantly evolving as well as, how we need to begin to look deeper into history instead of just settling and compromising for what the school systems normally teach us.

Shabazz continued through her speech explaining to everyone how every gender, every race, and every nation should never settle but continue to rise up.

"Women, learn to be by yourself so you can learn what you won't compromise so that these men will treat you like the queens that you are."

Shabazz stated, that at 16 she went to college, where she then learned about the father that had only been known to her as "daddy" previously. In his namesake, Shabazz continued to learn all that she could and brought that knowledge with her as she spoke to the audience.

She touched on African civilization and how the history of Africa, from ancient to contemporary, is continuously expelled from the text books. She discussed how Africa is the birthplace of civilization and should be recognized as such.

"I used to have these misconceptions about Africa and my people from the media and my mother made it her responsibility to make sure that I knew the truth about Africa."

Shabazz continued on Africa saying that it is the responsibility of every older generation to teach the younger generation about their history, otherwise it will be lost.

When Shabazz finished, she received a standing ovation from the crowd, and a myriad of raised hands waiting to ask her questions about her life and her father's life.

Her inspirational message of growth and personal evolution was clearly ingested by the masses. It would be safe to say that Shabazz's father, Malcolm X, would be proud of her if he saw her today.

Ilyasah did for hundreds, on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 what her mother did for her over 40 years ago, and kept her father's legacy alive making sure that we also didn't just accept that her father was dead without understanding what he stood for.



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## ***“Why We Laugh” A Documentary***

*Edward Harlan*

The United Men of Color organization held a cultural program on February 16<sup>th</sup>, titled “Why We Laugh,” for Black History month. This was built as an open dialogue discussion based on a documentary about the vast history of black comedy in the United States by the same name as our program.

This event was designed to create an understanding of what our society believes to be important to comedy. At the same time, many of the misconceptions associated with black people that are brought out through comedy were exposed.

The documentary gave an idea of what the livelihood of an average black person (and maybe even sometimes the average white person too) was like, considering the fact that comedy was used to tell stories.

The likes of Richard Pryor, Red Foxx, Eddie Murphy and more were able to pave a way for the comedians of today. Although the way was paved, it was not necessarily followed by the newer comedians. This is

shown throughout the film by various iconic figures in the black comedic community.

They spoke of current black comedians and their methods. Individuals touched on how current black comedians use a lot more profanity than had been used in past decades. Also, how comedians have to appeal to the black community now because of how segregated certain television network stations have become was exposed.

The entire event was laced with good conversation. Those who were in attendance gave good insight on the topic. Even though there was not really a formal time limit for our event, it ended up going for almost two hours with no drawn out questions or conversation. It turned out to be a very successful event.



## ***Determined Xpressions Open Mic Night***

*Leah Andrews*

On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, Determined Nation presented Determined Xpressions Open Mic Night in the Ram Skeller. The event, hosted by spoken word performer and activist Kimberly “InVinity” Ford, packed the skeller with students, staff and community members, hopeful to hear original pieces from aspiring artists, poets, and individuals with a message.

The event gave everyone an opportunity to share their voices, talents and ideas. From spoken word, music, poetry, and heartfelt dedications to those past, the audience definitely left satisfied. Those who attended the event classified it as an opportunity to showcase their souls, oftentimes for the first time.

It was my experience that while I did not perform, I had the opportunity to see another side of individuals I go to school with everyday. There is so much that can be expressed artistically and it is in those few moments that the true person is showcased. The event also had a special spare of the moment performance by a high school student who also takes part in the G.P.S mentoring program, Kira.

It is at that moment that one can quickly establish the meaning of the month, inspire and motivate. It starts at an early age, and is seen by those you never would think to look for, We as a community inspire people everyday and it is because of events like this that those moments can be highlighted.

A special thank you to all that participated in this event, as it was a great way to kick off Black History Month! Determined Xpressions Open Mic Night is a monthly event put on by Determined Nation Magazine in various locations.



## Save Your Cookie

Raven-Olivia Kellum

On February 15, 2012, Trina Patterson came to CSU to discuss romantic relationships among Black/African Americans. Mrs. Patterson has been married for 19 years and is also the owner of her own business called The Cookie Movement.

The Cookie Movement is an organization which lives by the mantra "Save your cookie for the right glass of milk". They cater to young women and teach them abstinence and waiting for the right man, not just any man who comes and claims he loves you.

I enjoyed listening to Trina Patterson because she was real with us and gave us advice that we could use. She comes from a lifestyle many of us come from which makes her relatable.

One of the statistics I learned was that 70% of African American women are single. Although I have learned that stat before I was never told this was only including women aged 25 -29 years old.

Hearing this statistic alone with the extra bit on the demographic of African American women, made me think, "Dang I might not ever get married!" I wouldn't mind being single until I am 29 years old because I have a lot of things I want to accomplish before I even want to think about starting a family.

Another topic we discussed is how we learn the definition of what makes a relationship. She explained that she learned what a relationship was supposed to look like from the way she saw her parents interact.



## THE COOKIE MOVEMENT

The Cookie Movement Inc.

Courtesy of:

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

I believe it may vary from situation to situation because some people grow up in single family homes. I have been blessed to have both parents in my life although they are separated. The man that is blessed to be in my life will have to treat me as my dad does and better because I look up to him as a man and role model in my life.

One big idea that she talked about that stood out the most is honesty and being true to who you are. Mrs. Patterson stated that you have to honestly look at yourself and examine yourself first; if you can't be honest with yourself then you can't be honest with other people in your life. I believe that most relationships fail because many people are not real from the beginning and once they get into the relationship people get comfortable and their true selves come out.

Lastly, she talked about the Five Love Languages in which you find a partner who communicates the same or is willing to be flexible around your different love language.

The five love languages are words of affirmation, quality

time, receiving gifts, acts of service and physical touch.

I learned that I am a mix between quality time and acts of service. One thing I do know about myself is that I hate to be touched all the time, so I know I can't be with someone who has a physical touch love language because it will drive me insane.

Overall, I truly enjoyed the event because learning about relationships is something we can all learn more about every day.

## Tracey Ashley– Comedianne

Alexandria Norris



Tracey Ashley

***"I was at a gas station and a gentleman asked for my name. He said first name- I respond Tracy... Then he says last name- I replied Ashley..."***

***The gentleman stops writing and says NO I need your Last Name! Then I paused, he was so convincing that I stopped and said what the Hell is my last name, and How could I've gotten that wrong!"***

Tracey Ashley's comedy set was absolutely wonderful, "funny, real, and daring," Shanel Hughes stated after attending her act. Tiana Franklin Douglass stated that the act, "was a lot better than she thought and that she had a very diverse act," which kept the audience on its toes.

From her openness and willingness to not only joke about gay marriage, but to share her stance on the issue, she managed to keep the audience wanting more. Her act was so appealing because she used material the audience could relate to. She used her personal stories as well as, making the story unique and original.

Tiana, Claudia, Shanel, and I couldn't stop laughing as she talked about her interracial marriage, her friends constant mention of her big forehead on her TV land debut, and her crazy aunt and uncle and their reference to the Gay Demon that lurked the world.

So if you missed the show, then you sadly missed a night full of laughs. I think all who attended would agree that "the show was hilarious and that [they] loved it" just as Claudia stated.

## *The Opening Ceremony for Black History Month*

*Kayla Tolbert*

On February 1, 2012, it officially marked the first day of Black History Month 2012. The opening ceremony was celebrated in the Lory Student Center at the Commons, and it was filled with students of all different backgrounds. The ceremony began with the voices of the One Voice Intersivity Choir singing the Negro National Anthem with a twist.

Then the ceremony proceeded to hearing from one of our own prominent figures on the CSU campus, Blanche Hughes. She reminded us that Black History Month should be a month to reflect and give thanks to our history and its people. Blanche was also joined by the mayor of Fort Collins, Karen Weitkunat, who officially declared it the beginning of the celebration of black history, and encouraged the citizens of Fort Collins to participate in the activities coordinated.

Black History month not only plays a part in an African American's life but as well as in any other American's life. Black History is also American History because of the contributions Blacks have made to America.

Therefore Black History Month should not only be celebrated by African Americans, but all Americans as a community. The month of February consisted of multiple events remembering the history of African Americans as well as inspiring the young African American generation today.

## *Pillow Talk: Mama Ruby*

*Danielle McConnell*

If there is one thing that must be said about the Black/African American Cultural Center, it would be that there is no doubt that a family exists here.

Although we come from different places, it is in the shared space of this office that our bonds are exposed. On February 23rd, this connection was inspired over desserts, pajamas, and friends.

At the beginning of the month a book by the name of *Mama Ruby*, written by Mary Monroe, was given as an optional read for anyone that wanted to take on the challenge. These four-hundred pages were not the easiest to get through and in many instances stood as an open door for frustration.

This story follows the life of two young girls, Ruby and Othella, and their journey through life. It discusses the hardships, misfortunes and joyous experiences that we all have the opportunity to experience in life, and every woman that chose to read the book could connect to it.

As the discussion started up, there was an instant bias of who had the most self-esteem, who deserved their happy ending, and what made these girls so relatable.

Although the story ended rather abruptly, readers felt as though there was a deep seeded need to understand the concepts revealed in this book, as that was the purpose of pillow talk.

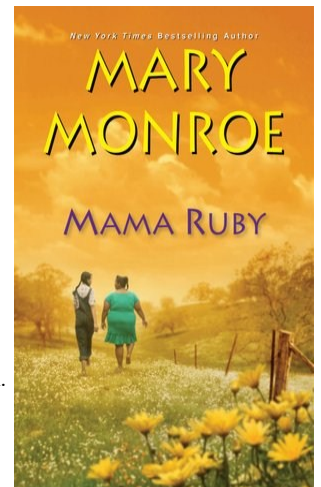
Bridgette Johnson, host of the event, encouraged all who attended and read the book to show up in their pajamas, ready to have a few laughs over comfort foods.

We all had varying opinions but simultaneously could agree on certain concepts as well. It was interesting to see the different mentalities in regards to the book and how characters acted.

Many couldn't understand the reasons why characters did what they did, but Bridgette was quick to express how she felt about it.

"There are events that happen in each and every individuals life that someone else may not understand. It is important for us to realize that you cannot call someone's choice stupid, because you don't understand why they made it. At the end of the day we often take things for face value instead of further exploring what may actually be the cause for the decision, but it isn't stupid, just merely a choice you as an individual may not have made."

Overall the event was a huge success. It gave individuals the opportunity to let their hair down and enjoy the company of others in a comfortable setting. There is nothing more inspiring then family sometimes, and this is exactly what this event opened the door for.







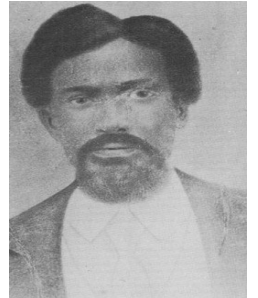
## Unsung Black History Month Heroes

*“A people without a knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots.”- Marcus Garvey*



*Marian Anderson*- *An African-American operatic and concert singer that was renowned around the world for her contralto voice. She was also the first African American to sing at the Metropolitan Opera.*

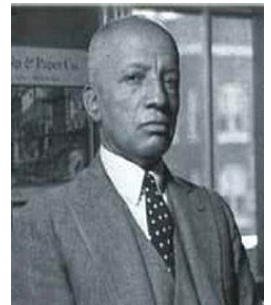
*Matthew Gaines*- *A former slave, community leader, minister, and Republican State Senator. He made valuable contributions in the establishment of free public education in Texas.*



*Akua Lezli Hope*- *African-American woman poet, writer, and hand papermaker. A founding member of the Black Writers Union and the New Renaissance Writers Guild.*



*Dr. Carter G. Woodson*- *Educator and philosopher, mentor to African American scholars, and founder of the African American Historical Association.*



*Dr. Alondra Oubre*- *Medical anthropologist and the author of *Instinct and Revelation* as well as “*The Adaptionist Yardstick*” and “*Black English Vernacular and Educability*.” Her writings cover scientific topics on things like plant drug research; pharmacology, and human biodiversity.*



# March 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> GPS @10
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Women @ Noon– Dialogue about “The Help”  — Academic Recovery @3 p.m.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>13</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>14</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>15</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>16</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>17</b> <i>Spring Break</i>
<b>18</b> <i>Spring Break</i>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	



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