

SE7EN Continued from Front Page



Se7en the Poet

Jutland Street, with Bellfort Street to the north and Reed Road to the south, and with the historic Houston areas of Sunnyside to the left and South Park to the right. He was raised in a home that was immersed in the arts and entertainment, as his mother, Prenise “Peaches” Howard-Reed, was a former background vocalist for the late, iconic R&B singer Teddy Pendergrass.

After attending Crispus Attucks Middle School, Howard went on to graduate from Evan E. Worthing Sr. High School in Sunnyside, where he served as a drum major and a member of the Worthing Esquires. He was inspired by old school rap artists like LL Cool J and Ice Cube and tried to emulate them and seek similar success in the world of hip-hop.

Howard tells the *Forward Times* that his motivation to do poetry was initially inspired by his grandmother.

“Initially, it was a thing my grandmother and I shared that when there was a holiday, or something or someone to be celebrated, I would get to pick the greeting cards,” said Howard. “So, when it was time to make greeting cards at school, most kids drew pictures, but I preferred to illustrate the outside and drop a rhyme to behold when the card unfolds.”

Howard provided the *Forward Times* with a more vivid memory of when he truly realized he had a gift for poetry and entertainment.

“I remember standing next to a classmate, Gino Herbert, in the Thornton M. Fairchild library searching through books to find a poem that we liked enough to memorize and present to the class,” Howard recalls. “What we didn’t know at the time is that we were about to discover a gift that would send us on a never-ending journey, producing some of the best moments of our lives. The poem I chose was titled, *DON’T EVER CROSS A CROCODILE* by Kaye Starbird, and Gino chose *DRESSED UP* by Langston Hughes. We are both published poets now.”

Going further, Howard reflected on what sparked his interest in education.

“In recent examination, I learned that I was first intrigued to get into the education field, after learning how agreeable it made my parents,” said Howard. “Good grades were celebrated and rewarded, so to me, I figured it was transactional. I enjoyed moments where I’d be able to converse with more enlightened people at a very early age. I come from an era where being smart was cool. As I grew, I found that intelligence would sustain me when the fashion trends changed. It was uncool to have money and be illiterate and for some reason, the smart guys always got the girl in the end.”

When it comes to juggling his responsibilities as an educator, entertainer, and entrepreneur, Howard states that his biggest challenge in the education space has been learning how to juggle and how to cater to the grandiose titles while knowing their pedigree is subpar.

“Staying calm while injustice and prejudice plague our schools is a challenge because my best shot to create change is from the inside,” Howard tells the *Forward Times*. “Allowing leadership to speak to me as if they have all the answers when they are so far removed from the children and community they serve. Conquering burnout continuously and lastly learning how to truly leave everything on the table. My saying to students this year is ‘THE ONLY THING I WONT GIVE YOU IS AN EXCUSE.’”

Howard continues to use his gift of spoken word to push the edge of social consciousness, and champion the call of manhood. His upbringing, educational background and passion for his community give way for him to speak about life as it evolves. He has created many memorable spoken word pieces, such as “The JESUS Piece,” “Old School Momma,” “iTeach,” “Toy Story,” and many more. In 2005, he was initiated as a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., where his passion for scholarship and service to the community have continued to empower the youth and influences the various industries he is a part of.

To find out more about Varion “Se7en the Poet” Howard, please visit: <https://se7enthepoet.com/>.

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

Part-time Driver needed for personal driving purpose; must be committed and must have a valid state driver's license; pay is \$680 per week; shifts are for two hours each day, two days each week. Email for more information. Email wowwhunn@gmail.com to apply

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

The Houston Independent School District Purchasing Services Department, located at 4400 West 18th Street, Houston, TX 77092, is soliciting Request for Proposals (RFP) via the District's electronic bidding portal. Proposers may log in to view specifications and submit their responses at the following link <https://houstonisd.ionwave.net/Login.aspx> until 2:00 p.m. (CST) Tuesday, June 4, 2024, for the following solicitation:

24-02-08 Worker's Compensation TPA, Support Services & 504 Network

Pre-proposal conferences via Microsoft Teams will be held in conjunction with this RFP. Information regarding dates, times, and instructions to receive a link to join the meeting can be located within the electronic bidding portal under the “Event Details” tab specific to this solicitation.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD will be accepting proposals for the following:

Pharmacy Inventory Services

Specifications may be secured from The Harris Center website www.theharriscenter.org beginning Wednesday, May 15, 2024. The Harris Center utilizes Bonfire for their solicitations <https://theharriscenter.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities>. Deadline for prospective vendors to submit questions to this RFP is Wednesday, May 22, 2024. Proposals must be submitted by 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 12, 2024. Historically Underutilized Businesses, including Minority-Owned Businesses and Women-Owned Businesses are encouraged to participate. The Harris Center reserves all rights to reject any and/or all proposals, to waive formalities and reasonable irregularities in submitted documents as it deems to be in its best interests and is not obligated to accept the lowest proposal.

Harris County Commissioner Ellis Praises Megan Thee Stallion’s Nonprofit for Donating \$35K for Improvements to Precinct One’s Youth Education Town. Declares May 2 “Megan Thee Stallion Day in Harris County”



Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, center, smiles as Reese Norman, 9, left, and Kimorre Miles, 9, hold books at the Finnigan Youth Education Town’s renovated Literacy Room, thanks to a \$35,000 donation from Megan Thee Stallion’s nonprofit Pete & Thomas Foundation.

Renovations Include Improved Space for Literacy, Computer Lab and Fine Arts Studio

By: Forward Times Newswire

With a \$35,000 donation from Grammy-award-winning rapper Megan Thee Stallion’s nonprofit organization and the help of 50-plus volunteers, Harris County Precinct One recently wrapped up renovations at the Finnigan Youth Education Town (YET), which included improving rooms for meditation activities, literacy, technology and fine arts.

Megan Thee Stallion’s Pete & Thomas Foundation, which honors her parents, also brought 50 volunteers who she calls “hotties” to the Fifth Ward community center to help with the renovations, which included painting, carpeting, new furniture, Apple products (MacBooks), state-of-the-art podcasting hardware and software, as well as selected “banned” books.

“I want to personally thank Megan Thee Stallion and her foundation for the generous support that will help us advance our mission to provide every child with activities and experiences that nurture their body and mind, foster healthy behaviors, and help them develop essential life skills,” Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis said. “In particular, I’m extremely thankful for her contributions to improvements to the Literacy Room, which includes new banned books and space for meditation. As the right to read is under attack in Texas, which includes banning books and eliminating libraries in HISD, kids need safe spaces and robust access to literature.”

Also, Commissioner Ellis proclaimed Thursday, May 2 as “Megan Thee Stallion Day.”

“... Harris County Precinct One invests in and champions causes Megan Thee Stallion is in solidarity with – from pointed programming at our community centers for children and seniors to implementing alternative responses to policing and investing millions in reducing maternal mortality rates that disproportionately affect Black women,” the proclamation reads. “We salute her unwavering love for the people of Houston and Harris County and mirror that deep commitment and investment.”

The YET, along with the precinct’s Lincoln Community Center in Acres Homes, serves 5,000-plus children, teens, young adults and seniors annually. The two centers offer

free year-round, out-of-school enrichment programming to caretakers and their children from underserved and vulnerable communities. Programs are constructed with a well-rounded focus on recreational, educational, and social-emotional development.

At the YET, the Pete & Thomas Foundation funded renovations to the Literacy Room that addresses literacy loss and regression through hands-on tutoring and curricula by partner organizations like the Children’s Defense Fund Freedom Schools. Before the renovations, YET’s hundreds of books were inaccessible because of the lack of bookshelves.

In addition, the Literacy Room now includes meditation space for a serene, quiet and peaceful atmosphere where youth can take a brief retreat for meditation or reflection. Many who experience anxiety, frustration or uneasiness will benefit from a place to regroup. This also aligns with Megan Thee Stallion’s initiatives on addressing anxiety and stress.

Another improved room is the Technology and Computer Lab. The old computers, while functional, were outdated. The lab now has functional equipment that is relevant to today’s world, including tablets, game consoles (with educational programs), STEM Kits and more. Most of the children served do not have access to this technology.

Finally, the Fine Arts Studio, originally built for audio and video recording, was improved to help keep up with advancements in recording technology. This project aligns with Megan Thee Stallion’s path to create art through music.

“Precinct One strives to provide holistic programs that aim to address social determinants of health and assist with any learning loss or gaps as result of issues of area schools,” Commissioner Ellis said. “These improvements will better the lives of underserved youth in the Fifth Ward community.”

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Triple 7 Movers Notice of Public Sale:
Property is being sold to satisfy Triple 7 Movers of Texas lien. Customer #10140370 Cynthia Seymour unit contains household items and goods . Auction will run from 5/08/24 through 5/22/24 at 12:30 pm on www.storage-treasures.com . Cash only at time of pickup at addressed facility on Storage treasures website.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

Request for Proposal – Houston-Galveston Area Council – Public Services – Emergency Medical, Safety, and Rescue Equipment – EE11-24

H-GAC is soliciting responses for selecting qualified manufacturers, dealers, distributors, and service providers for Emergency Medical, Safety, and Rescue Equipment to make these types of products and services available to Customers of the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Program under blanket type contracts.

To view the solicitation documents, visit <https://www.hgacbuy.org/bid-notices>.

Response Deadline: June 13, 2024 @ 12:00 P.M. CST