

# SoulVision®

M A G A Z I N E

A close-up portrait of actor Hill Harper. He is a Black man with short, dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket over a white collared shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Hill Harper:**  
**Investing in Us**

**July 2021**

EDITORS NOTE

## BK Fulton



*Photo courtesy of BK Fulton*

| “It’s always been about the vote. Be sure to make yours matter.”

Juneteenth is now officially a US Holiday! I’m happy about that, but it’s not enough. The assault on our voting rights is real. Congress did not enact the law that would make the most difference for all Americans. Republicans at the national and state levels are working 24/7 to minimize the impact of voters who they don’t think will support them. Super-partisan politics is a plague that we have to fight with what is right. Honoring the right to vote for all citizens should be a simple thing. However, trampling on the rights of others has been a consistent refrain in the American experiment. The best people in our nation must work diligently to keep the pressure on Congress and our State leaders. It’s always been about the vote. Be sure to make yours matter.

## BK Fulton (*continued*)

In this issue, we talk to the phenomenal Hill Harper about his career and his Black Wall Street project. You'll be amazed by his family legacy and the way he is paying it forward. Mike Jones brings image magic with his stunning photography. Steve Glenn, DeShon Hardy, and Khadijah Smith remind us of the power of sharing our knowledge and talents with those from our neighborhoods. Our community feature highlights the Underground Kitchen's "UGK Community First" program, which addresses food insecurity in the Richmond Metro Region and Petersburg areas of Virginia. In our Legends section, we honor the great Sydney Poitier and chef Steve Glenn brings the heat with a fantastic new recipe. You get a new look when you have SoulVision.

*BK Fulton collaborated with the Black-Jewish Entertainment Alliance to celebrate Juneteenth, our latest federal holiday. BK speaks briefly about what the holiday means to him. Watch [here](#).*

**“Honoring the right to vote for all citizens should be a simple thing.”**

*Follow BK Fulton on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). To learn more about Soulidify Productions, visit their website [soulidify.com](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).*

## CELEBRITY

# Hill Harper: Investing in Us



*Photos courtesy of Hill Harper*

| “Time is the most valuable thing you have.”

Hill Harper comes from a rich history of black entrepreneurship. “The family lore is that we were slaves in Kentucky and made our way to the Mississippi River,” Hill says. “They made their way up North and like a lot of other folks, they wanted to get as far away from the South as possible.” Hill got his name from his two grandfathers—Harold Hill and Harold Harper. His maternal grandfather Harold Hill, also known as ‘Doc Hill,’ started serving the black community in the Jim Crow era. He owned Piedmont Pharmacy in Seneca, South Carolina. As young Hill Harper read comic books and bit on popsicles, he saw his grandfather trade medical prescriptions for potatoes and chickens with those who couldn’t otherwise afford their medicines.

## Hill Harper: Investing in Us (continued)



His paternal grandfather Harold Harper was an OB/GYN physician in the small town of Fort Madison, Iowa. He and his brothers were graduates of Howard University Medical School and operated their own hospital in Fort Madison. Black women from surrounding states would come to him and have their babies delivered. Hill recalls his grandfather's good fortune. They would visit during summers. He owned an 88-acre farm outside of Fort Madison. There was an indoor and an outdoor pool. "Not even white families had all of that," Hill says. He was inspired by his grandfather's pride. "My father inherited his pride, and I think I got some of it too," he says. "To see those two very successful men serve the community with so much class and dignity was such an inspiration."

Hill doesn't play into others' expectations of him. His intuition is his best guide in life. "It is so easy to let other people project their fears onto you and influence you to change your behavior and decision-making," he says. "Always follow your heart." When Hill goes through work and life, he thinks in terms of impact and

legacy. "I have a deep desire to have a positive impact in the world and for that impact to last, which is legacy," he says. He quotes part of the Bodhisattva Vows: "Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them all." For Hill, this means no matter the impossibility of a situation, he has "the will to change the world and do all the work." Because he believes he has yet to achieve his highest purpose, he must continue to do the work.

Acting works as a springboard for Hill's greater purpose—becoming a guiding force in the world. His acting and fame have afforded him the ability to reach a wider audience with his words. He references his first book *Letters To a Young Brother: Manifest Your Destiny*.

"There were a lot of young men who needed guidance, role modeling and help to navigate the journey from adolescence to manhood and a lot of them didn't have positive male role models in their lives," he says. "For me, having a role model on paper changed my life, and I wanted to do the same for others." Hill says people of all ages have reached out to him to tell him how much

## Hill Harper: Investing in Us (continued)

the book has changed their lives and how they see and navigate the world. “These are people who I wouldn’t otherwise have known or met,” he says. “It won the Best Book for Young Adults award by the American Library Association. It is in every library across the country. So people have access to the book even if they do not buy it. I’m very proud of *Letters* and what it has done.”

**“It is so easy to let other people project their fears onto you and influence you to change your behavior and decision-making. Always follow your heart.”**

As an actor, Hill understands that actors have a greater purpose and are perfectly suited to be activists. It is in his lineage. His late aunt, Virginia Harper, was an activist. “Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Paul Robeson: all of these people were activists in their own ways. I wanted to be that type of actor, performer, and activist.” One of Hill’s first major roles was in Spike Lee’s *Get on the Bus*. He spends most of the movie sitting next to Ossie Davis. “He would tell me stories about Malcolm X visiting him at his house, tell me stories about Godfrey Cambridge acting in theatre with him, basically telling me that my only purpose as an artist is to be an activist in some way or you are not being an artist,” he recalls.

We see this mentality play out in the roles Hill chooses to play. He is Dr. Marcus Andrews on the hit TV show *The Good Doctor*. He loves playing the role of a doctor who is considered the best surgeon in the hospital. “It is certainly a stereotype buster, but it is also about making him and his life cool, making him something people want to emulate,” he explains. He recently was involved in the documentary *Black Men in White Coats*. The documentary advocates the need for more black male doctors. “So few black men are becoming doctors even though we must face the fact that we have disparities in the way that black men and black people, in particular,

are treated by the medical profession,” Hill explains. “The data certainly shows that we get higher and better and more complete care when we are treated by black folk, so black men becoming doctors is a matter of life or death.” Hill hopes that his role as Dr. Marcus Andrews inspires “young brothers” to become doctors. “They ask me what Dr. Andrews drives and I say he drives a fly 911 Turbo S,” he says. “And I know doctors like that. He’s confident. He’s had an evolution as well on the show, so I love playing Marcus Andrews.”



One of Hill’s primary pursuits is working to close the wealth gap. “All of these big issues we want to see solved—criminal justice reform, health disparities, education gaps, housing, and poverty—can be dealt with through a prism of financial agility,” Hill says. “We can solve these many problems or at least create a foundation for solving these problems.” Years ago, Hill wrote the *Wealth Cure* about this exact issue. Some of the solutions he proposed in the book are now able to come to fruition due to technological advances. He has created Black Wall Street, an app and digital wallet

## Hill Harper: Investing in Us (continued)

that allows people to directly invest in the black community. The name is inspired by Black Wall Street, the Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma, that was an epicenter of black wealth in the early 20th century. In 1921, a white mob stormed the town killing hundreds, destroying their livelihoods and assets. This atrocity set their descendants back generations. “Today’s dollar leaves the black community after six hours. In contrast, in the brick and mortar version of Tulsa’s Black Wall Street, the dollar changed hands 36 to 100 times within the ecosystem,” Hill Harper explains. “With digital currency, we are seeing the dollar move out of the black community even quicker.” His *Black Wall Street* is the solution to this issue.

“I have a deep desire to have a positive impact in the world and for that impact to last, which is legacy.”

In Hill’s eyes, most artists will have a hard time making money solely off of their art in the near future. “Why? Because technology is allowing anybody and everybody to create content.” Hill explains. Hill believes content creation will be even more decentralized in the future. “There will be micro-communities where you can create content, but it is not going to be easy doing it for a living,’ he predicts. Hill sees the creative world going back to the days when people would create for the love of it instead of for money, so having a nest egg is important. “Get into an asset class that is growing,” he says. “If you have a strong financial foundation then you can make the choice of how you want to use your time, which is the most valuable thing you have. Don’t let anyone lie to you and say that money is more valuable. No. Time is the most valuable thing you have. If you have the resources to have more time then you have invested well.”

*To learn more about Hill Harper, follow him on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).*

# Mike Jones Captures Our Biggest Inspirations



*Mike Jones self-portrait. Photos by Mike Jones.*

| “My photography is a visual representation of how I view life.”

Mike Jones has lived quite an exciting life documenting black music and culture. His Southern California roots have inspired and informed his work. His upbringing made him at ease in social situations and he loves the outdoors. “My photography is a visual representation of how I view life and it is guided by some deep-seated principles I have that were instilled in me by my parents,” he says. “I feel like I have the calling to represent people of color with positive images that are steeped in the passion and emotion of living, surviving, and struggling.”

The beginnings of his career were highly impactful. The late Don Cornelius, the esteemed host of *Soul Train*, hired Mike Jones to capture the essence of *Soul Train* and the people in small towns and big cities across the country who were making positive change in their communities. It wasn’t until Mike worked for Motown Records to take photographs for promotional and marketing materials that his career took off.

His process is simple: make your subject feel comfortable and care about the craft of your subject. “I use my technical mastery of molding, shaping, and directing light alongside my ability to get people to relax and allow their real selves to be documented,” he explains. “If I’m working with an actor, I watch their films prior to a shoot. For a musician, I listen to their music. I do my homework. I am the calmest person on set.” Mike’s work was recently on display at the Los Angeles Center of Photography. “The exhibit featured several images from my work within

## *Mike Jones Captures Our Biggest Inspirations (continued)*



*Janet Jackson at the 2004 Soul Train Awards*



*Whitney Houston and Denzel Washington in a private photo gallery backstage at the 1996 NAACP Image Awards.  
The two stars hosted the ceremony.*

the music industry and my years of working with *Soul Train*,” he says. “I love the images and the conversations along with the funny stories.” He recalls a time when he blocked Don Cornelius’ car in with his car. “Everyone was freaking out, but Don just said I guess I needed to answer the phone,” he recalls. “The dinners with him were full of insight and life lessons. He was one of the coolest people I have ever met.”

Mike uses his work to help promote positive social causes. He is working with the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, which has been developing programs to provide housing for seniors, those who are low-income, and the homeless. “The images I create for them bring attention to the people who receive housing support and leaders in Congress who bring the bank into California communities,” he says. This fall, he will begin a project for Syracuse University. “The project will feature several of their high-profile alumni. It’s going to be cool,” Mike says.

To learn more about Mike Jones, you can visit his [website](#).



*Janet Jackson at the 2004 Soul Train Awards*

# Chef Steve Glenn Comes Home



*Chef Steve Glenn is currently competing on "Hell's Kitchen: Young Guns" with Gordon Ramsay. Photos courtesy of FOX.*

| “Showcase our talents together.”

Chef Steve Glenn grew up in Chesterfield County, Virginia. He was inspired by his grandmother’s cooking. After losing her to cancer, Steve continued his passion for cooking. “I have a genuine love for fresh local ingredients and an appreciation for where they come from,” he says.

At the age of 21, he competed on *Hell's Kitchen: Young Guns* and had to keep it hush for two years before the competition premiered in May of 2021. In a recent episode of the podcast *Eat It, Virginia!* Steve recalls how he got accepted within two hours of sending out his application. He says at first he felt a little overwhelmed with how much he had to fill out, but after a couple of drinks, he loosened up and got to typing away. When asked why he thought he was picked, Steve says he was simply himself. He didn’t fill it out like a “job application.” After filming, Steve gained friendships and bonds that he expects will last him a lifetime.

## Chef Steve Glenn Comes Home (continued)



After returning home from filming, he became executive sous chef at the Richmond Country Club. However, by the end of 2020, he decided to venture out on his own. Unbeknownst to many, along with being a personal chef, Steve is also a musician. “I often incorporate my love of music into the food I make,” he says. “I create content on media platforms to introduce the world to my innovative cuisine and the amazing sounds that inspired it.”

Steve plans to promote the best of Richmond, Virginia, with a filmed tour. “I’ll travel through this beautiful city in search of the greatest dishes and drinks the RVA food

scene has to offer,” he says. “I highly encourage restaurant and bar owners who are looking to increase exposure for their business to visit my website and contact my team to discuss how we can get their restaurant featured.”

*To learn more about chef Steve Glenn, you can visit his [website](#) and follow him on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).*

# Khadijah Smith Wants To Help Improve Your Health



*Photos by Denitra Smith*

| “Use food as a medicine.”

Khadijah Smith helps those who cannot help themselves mentally or physically. “I worked as a nurse in the mental health field for 13 plus years,” she says. “I believe this work was preparing me to care for my son who has mild intellectual disabilities.” Khadijah was uncomfortable about putting her child on controlled medication, so she did her own research to figure out natural ways to help her son. She discovered many food choices that would help improve her son’s quality of life. “It was a struggle trying to get my son to eat half of the things that were needed for his betterment, so I decided to start juicing and making smoothies,” she says. “Along with other resources, it was a long journey but a successful one. My son is now more focused and has more energy for getting through school work with no issues.”

## *Khadijah Smith Wants To Help Improve Your Health (continued)*



For Khadijah, juicing is just the start of her advocacy for a healthier lifestyle. She plans to travel and talk to others about the importance of diet and how it can help them live their best lives. "Using food as medicine can change you forever, but that is just one part, we also have to dive into the emotional and spiritual component," she says. "When we connect both physically and emotionally, it will all start to change. That is why I'm here to help you with the process."

*To learn more about Khadijah Smith and Ka'Tagious Juices, you can visit their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).*

Ka'Tagious Juices was the outcome of Khadijah's urgency to help her son. The goal is to promote a healthy and vegan lifestyle. The juices have no added sugar or synthetic vitamins. Juicing can be an effective way to supplement a normal diet with fruits and vegetables that you might not take daily. "We are offering a straightforward way for our friends to live a healthy life by embracing the benefits of our juices," Khadijah says.

# DeShon Hardy Switches It Up



*Filmmaker DeShon Hardy. Photos courtesy of DeShon Hardy.*

| “Create characters that leave everlasting impressions.”

DeShon Hardy is a filmmaker who believes his true craft is writing. “My style of writing is painting pictures with my words, allowing my audience to envision everything they read,” he says. “My strength is creating characters who leave everlasting impressions, which helps every story develop.” DeShon is from Neptune, New Jersey, where celebrities like Jack Nicholson were born. He is a product of the northeast hustle and grind.

After recovering from torn knee ligaments that ended his football career, DeShon began to have movielike dreams. He would write his dreams down after they occurred. This inspired DeShon to earn a certificate in screenwriting from the New York Film Academy.

## DeShon Hardy Switches It Up (continued)



Trina with Asia'h Epperson and DeShon Hardy on the set of "Dear Best Friend."



Kyrie Irving x FIBA commercial, directed by DeShon Hardy.

DeShon believes his films can have a global impact, and that too often the entertainment industry underappreciates black voices with “amazing storytelling abilities.” His new project – *A Message from Brianna* – will star NFL player Vernon Davis and Greenleaf’s Asia’h Epperson. He calls it the “first urban possession film.” “Typically, when you hear ‘horror film,’ you think of monsters, but in this film, the sins of family members create horror for this couple,” he explains. “The urban, hip hop vibe in this film is something we have never seen before.”

In addition to *A Message from Brianna*, DeShon will be releasing another project this fall. It is a thriller titled *Dear Best Friend*. The cast includes Andra Fuller, Asia’h Epperson, Jeremy Meeks, Angel Love Davis, Dennis “LA” White, Genise Shelton, Vernon Davis, and Ashley Rios. “I also teamed up with PlayersTV, led by Chris Paul of the Phoenix Suns, to direct multiple television and film projects this year,” he says. “One of the projects will be the docuseries, executive produced and narrated by Michael Vick, called “The Evolution of the Black Quarterback”.

To learn more about DeShon Hardy, you can follow him on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

**CHEF'S CORNER**

# Chef Steve Glenn

*Photo by Scott's Photography*

**“A super quick and delicious pasta dish that showcases one of my favorite cheeses.”**

*Photo courtesy of chef Steve Glenn*

*Chef Steve Glenn worked as an executive sous chef at Richmond Country Club before venturing independently as a private chef. Chef Steve can be seen on Season 20 of “Hell’s Kitchen: Young Guns” with Gordon Ramsay on FOX 8|7c.*

*To book chef Steve for your intimate dinner parties and small events, visit his [website](#). Follow him on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) to find out about Richmond restaurants that will feature his cuisine.*

## Lobster Linguine w/ Burrata

**Course:** LunLunch/Dinner**Cuisine:** Italian/Southern fusion**Prep Time:** 30 min**Cook Time:** 10 min**Total Time:** 40**Serving Size:** 2

### Ingredients:

- 2 strips of diced bacon
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tbsp sambal oelek chili paste
- ½ c lobster/vegetable stock
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp Cajun seasoning
- 4 oz linguine noodles
- 2 tbsp European style butter
- 6 oz lobster claw and knuckle meat
- chopped chives
- Fresh dill leaves
- 2 oz portions of burrata cheese

### Preparation:

1. Add bacon to a sauté pan and gradually cook it on medium heat until crispy.
2. Add lobster, garlic, chili paste, and Cajun seasoning. Cook for 30 seconds.
3. Add Worcestershire sauce and lobster stock. Cook for 90 seconds or until half of the liquid evaporates.
4. Add cooked linguine.
5. Remove pan from the heat, add the butter. Continue stirring until the butter melts and the sauce thickens.
6. Finish with chopped chives.
7. Plate and top with a fresh piece of burrata cheese and a few dill sprigs.

## COMMUNITY

# Underground Kitchen's Community First: Feeding the Community



*Micheal Sparks, founder and CEO of Underground Kitchen (UGK). Photos courtesy of The Underground Kitchen.*

## | “Get back to the basics.”

Each month we highlight a community program that aligns with the values of SoulVision Magazine. We believe engaging with one's community is critical to fostering positive change in the world.

In 2020, Underground Kitchen (UGK), “a roving experiential dining and event company,” was forced to close due to the pandemic. As restaurants closed and many societal inequalities widened, UGK saw a way to do their part in helping the community by addressing food insecurity in the Richmond Metro Region and Petersburg areas of Virginia. In April of 2020, UGK Community First became an official nonprofit and has so far distributed over 100,000 meals. Along with delivering meals, UGK strives to educate. “We are developing a Curated Food Box Distribution program, which will include an educational component, providing nutrition and health information, recipe cards for meal suggestions based on what is included in each food box,” says Kate Houck, UGK’s executive director. “It will also include invitations to live/virtual cooking classes with UGK chefs.”

## *Underground Kitchen's Community First: Feeding the Community (continued)*



*Kate Houck, UGK's executive director*



*In April of 2020, UGK Community First became an official nonprofit and has so far distributed over 100,000 meals. Along with delivering meals, UGK strives to educate the community on how to cook their own healthy meals.*

UGK has two community gardens: the Kitchen Gardens at the Annie Giles Center in downtown Richmond, and the Garden of Grace located on the grounds of the Immanuel

Episcopal Church in Mechanicsville, Virginia. “Being able to turn an area of land that was overgrown with weeds into a place where we can grow homegrown food that can go towards our food relief initiatives has been incredibly fulfilling. I get to see the fruits of my labor,” says John Mattingly, UGK’s community garden director.

UGK will partner with Soar365 on a workforce development program that will offer training and employment opportunities in the kitchen and gardens. The organization looks forward to working with corporate sponsors to launch its Curated Food Box program and Family Cooking Class. “Not only will families be receiving fresh and healthy food that can be made into several meals, they will also be able to engage with a UGK Chef to learn new ways of cooking and dining as a family,” Kate says. “In addition, since UGK is committed to the promotion of chefs of color and women chefs, we are excited to introduce our incredibly talented chefs to these families as a point of inspiration, connection, and engagement.”

Micheal Sparks, founder and CEO of UGK, adds that the ultimate importance of the entire mission of UGK is to get back to the basics. “Black culture and food traditions have too often been hijacked by the big corporations and others,” Micheal says. “We need to get back to the way our grandparents used to cook.” Micheal believes UGK’s initiatives will help black people to reconnect with their roots. “A lot of the Southern food and the genealogy of those foods have come from black makers who brought certain vegetables and dishes overseas from Africa,” he says. “It is about time black people themselves and the entire world realize this history, so we can continue great food traditions from history in a healthy contemporary way.”

***Click [here](#) to view video.***

*To learn more about how you can support UGK, you can visit their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).*

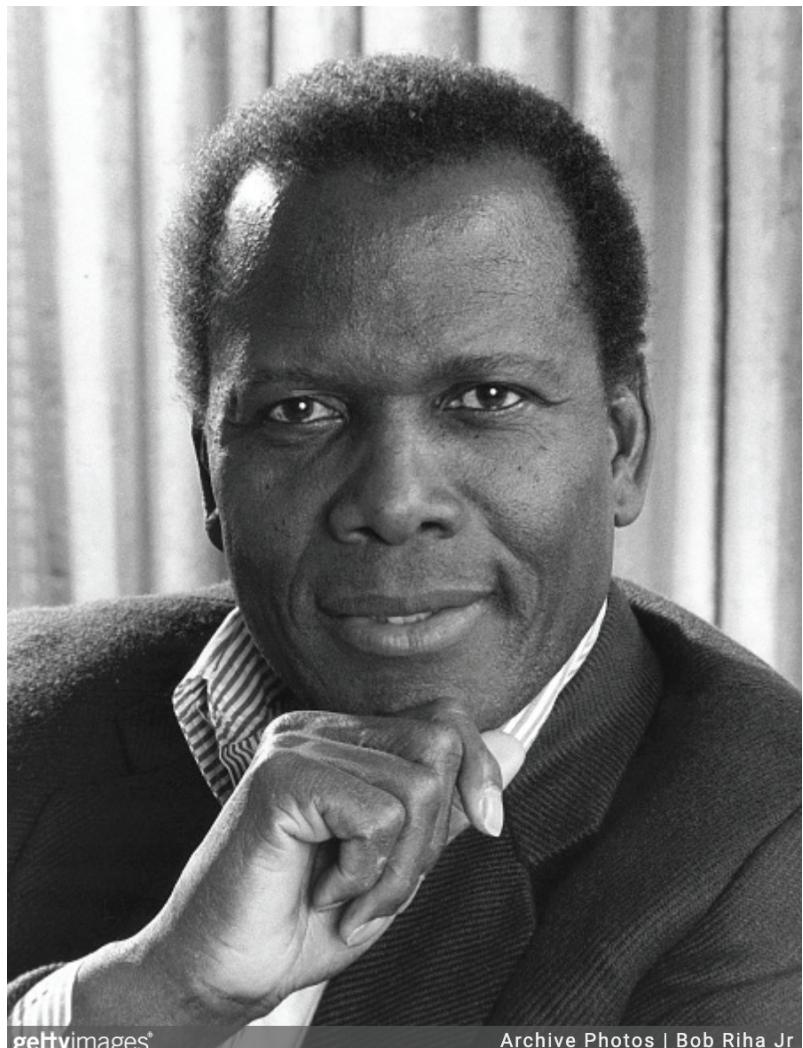
LEGENDS

# Sidney Poitier

Sidney Poitier made his film debut in the 1950 film *No Way Out* and would go on to forever change Hollywood. He broke the color barrier and was the first African American to win an Academy Award for best actor (for his role in *Lilies of the Field*). Critics have applauded Poitier as sophisticated, charismatic, and cerebral. He played roles that African Americans could be proud of and refused to play stereotypical roles. He forced white Americans to see the humanity in black people and opened the door for many black actors to have a choice in the roles they played.

In the Oscar-winning film In the *Heat of the Night*, Poitier played a black detective who is embroiled in a murder investigation. In one scene, a rich white racist plantation owner slaps him and Poitier immediately slaps him back. This was provocative cinema and encouraged a generation of black people to demand respect no matter who was in the room. In *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, Poitier plays a doctor who is engaged to a white woman. Her father does not approve. While it was filmed, interracial marriages were still banned in many states before being struck down by the Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967, 6 months before the film hit theaters.

In addition to his acting, Poitier was a capable director, having a knack for creating comedies that showed the joy of black people. His films *Uptown Saturday Night* and *Stir Crazy* were box office hits, with *Stir Crazy* grossing over \$100 million. Poitier was the first black director to accomplish this feat. In 2001, he earned an Academy Honorary Award "in recognition of his remarkable accomplishments as an artist and as a human being." In 2009, former President Obama awarded Poitier the US Presidential Medal of Freedom. On screen and off, Sidney Poitier showed us what we all can aspire to be.



gettyimages\*

Archive Photos | Bob Riha Jr

**"Living consciously involves being genuine; it involves listening and responding to others honestly and openly; it involves being in the moment."**

**– Sidney Poitier**