



SoulVision[®]

M A G A Z I N E

**Sophia A. Nelson
Challenges Us to
Look Within**

June 2022

EDITORS NOTE

BK Fulton



Photo courtesy of BK Fulton

! “Our children are our most important resource.”

Our children are our most important resource. They are the future. We can not continue to lose our babies to senseless gun violence. I am a veteran and believe in responsible ownership of firearms. Even so, I also believe in sensible rules to govern who can own them, what type can be owned by civilians, and under what conditions they can be concealed. People who are not well are not ready for gun ownership. People who are violent are not ready for gun ownership. People who are not trained are not ready for gun ownership. I’m willing to balance my second amendment rights with

BK Fulton June 2022 (continued)

community safety because I love our nation and the youth who must take us forward. We've given this issue enough lip service. Fully 80% of the nation believes in some form of rational gun control. We must do the hard work to find common ground if we want to end the increasing trend of violent homicides in the US. Why do we have to do this you might ask? We have to do it for our children. I am a parent, and like any loving parent I want my children to grow up to be what God has made them to be.

These are my boys. I am smiling because they make me happy. I am proud of them. I love them more than they will ever know. I want them to grow up knowing that Mommy and Daddy did all they knew how to do to raise them the right way. These are MY boys. Soon they will be men and it will be their charge to raise their sons (and daughters) to be all that the Lord has blessed them to be. I don't want them to become a statistic. I want them to be inspired by what good people did to keep them safe.

In this issue of SoulVision Magazine we keep the community uplift going by sharing the inspiring story of

Ms. Sophia A. Nelson and her pioneering journalism that asks us to look deeper as we solve the most pressing issues facing our society. We also share with you stories on lawyer and novelist Leslie T. Thornton, artist Karen Terry, and singer and actress Beverly Ann Booker. We also give you a look at chef Jacoby Ponder's new cooking class. Finally, we share a traditional recipe from chef Sharde' Dantzer, support the fundraising goal of Girls For A Change and honor the legacy of Tusla lawyer and author, the late B.C. Franklin.

“We must do the hard work to find common ground if we want to end the increasing trend of violent homicides in the US.”

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CELEBRITY

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within



Sophia A. Nelson. Photo by Andrew Sample.

| “Move your community and country in a positive direction.”

Sophia A. Nelson, Esq. remembers the day she stepped onto the 40,000-person campus of San Diego State University and saw a melting pot of cultures. She was a small-town girl from South Jersey (Camden County off exit 3) whose high school classmates were the same as her kindergarten class. “I only knew Black and white people growing up,” Sophia says. “I had never met anybody who was Latino. I had never met anybody Asian. And that was pretty much my view of the world.”

Sophia’s mother, a nurse with an associate degree, was adamant about her eldest child and only daughter going to college. She wanted her to make the most of her time here on Earth. Neither of her parents attended a four-year college, but both had two-year Associate’s degrees. Sophia was a military baby, born in Munich, Germany in 1967. Her father was stationed at Checkpoint Charlie, the most famous Berlin Wall crosspoint during the Cold War, and then re-settled in South Jersey in 1968. Sophia’s childhood household was turbulent. Her father was a heavy drinker and at times verbally, emotionally, and sometimes violently abusive towards his family. Sophia’s mother wanted better for her. Her mother gave Sophia two options: be a doctor or be a lawyer. Sophia wanted to become a journalist, but that wasn’t something her mother felt was a true profession with stability. So, she chose the law instead.

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within (continued)



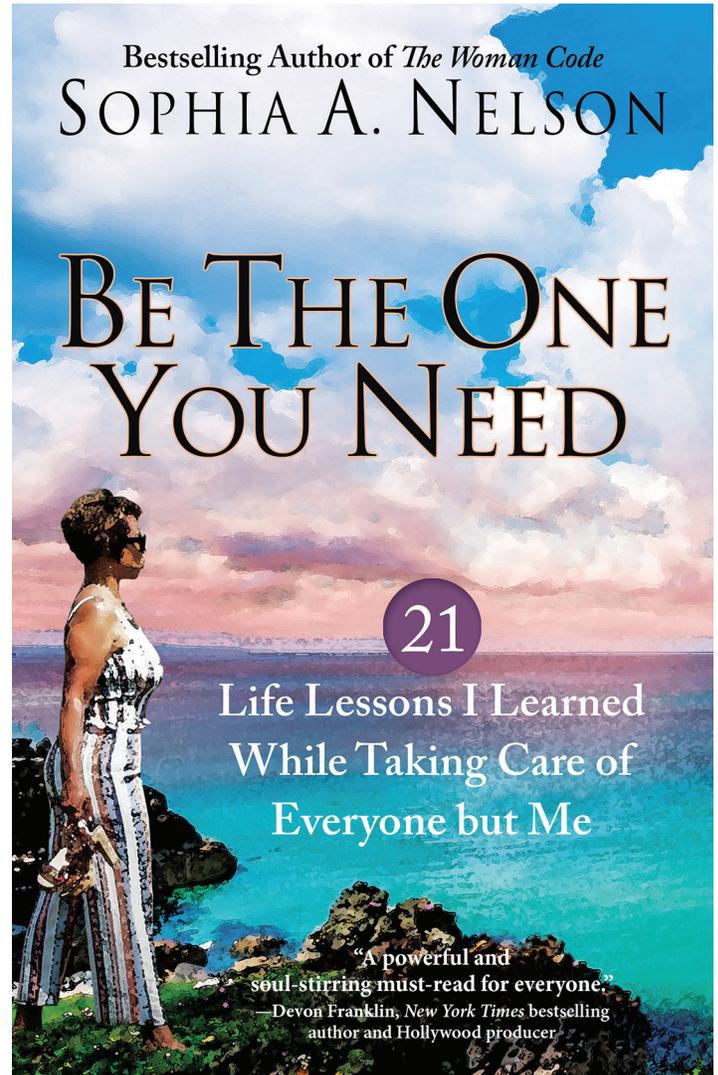
Sophia with Oprah and former First Lady Michelle Obama at the Maya Angelou Forever Stamp unveiling in April 2015.

Photo courtesy of Sophia A. Nelson.

In many ways, Sophia is her mother's dreams manifested. "I think she was really clear that there was something better beyond the life we had growing up," Sophia says. "I think she was very clear that she wanted better for us and she never wanted me as her daughter to be stuck in a situation where I had to endure what she did as a wife and a mother. She wanted me to be in a position where I could make my own choices. I guess she succeeded in that."

Sophia's high school Latin teacher, Ms. Joan E. Daniels, a white woman, was a Freedom Rider in the 1960's. She was an important person in Sophia's life. After Sophia's guidance counselor discouraged her from pursuing law because there weren't many Black female lawyers in the 1980s, Ms. Daniels told Sophia, "You know she's a jerk. Don't listen to her. You got the goods and you can go as far as you want to go." Ms. Daniels made it clear to Sophia that breaking out of her social class would be tough and the system was designed for that to be so. "She was very inspirational in sending a lot of us working-class kids to college who might have not otherwise gone," Sophia says.

As a Black woman now in her 50s, seeing Black women in the positions of Vice President and Supreme Court Justice is a dream come true. "These are my age cohorts," she says. As a little girl, Sophia said she wanted to be a Supreme Court Justice and while this is not something that happened, she feels good about what she has ac-



Sophia's memoir *Be the One You Need: 21 Life Lessons Learned While Taking Care of Everyone But Me* (Simon & Shuster/HCI Books) releases on June 28, 2022.

complished. "The day I felt most proud was the day I got sworn into the bar of the United States Supreme Court," she says. "Being sworn into that bar in those hallowed halls was just like when my first book got published."

As a young woman in her twenties, Sophia would sit in Barnes and Noble and the now-defunct B. Dalton and dream about the day she would see her name on the front cover of a book. Her first book, *Black Women Redefined: Dispelling Myths and Discovering Fulfillment in the Age of Michelle Obama*, went on to win a 2011 Best Non-Fiction Book Award and was Pulitzer

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within (continued)

nominated in Letters. “Getting my books published by major publishers and being paid to do what I love—that’s something most people only dream about,” she says. “Very few people get to have the success of walking into a bookstore and seeing their book on the bestseller list or being interviewed by major outlets and having their book literally change people’s lives.”

But when is one’s success enough? This is something Sophia thinks about when looking at our current culture. “I think that you begin to feel like you have made it when you can take the trips you want, buy the home you want, buy the cars you want and not have to worry about money or, that you have to keep climbing and striving,” she says. “I think that in our current culture having enough is very difficult because the usual trappings of success are rarely enough, and that is a problem. Because there needs to be a point when one has enough things and when you realize you’ve turned out to be a good human being. That should be the truest measure of our success.”

This month, Sophia is releasing her fourth nonfiction book, a summer memoir *Be the One You Need: 21 Life Lessons Learned While Taking Care of Everyone But Me* (Simon & Shuster/HCI Books). After reading Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Bruce Perry’s 2021 bestseller, *What Happened to You?*, which talks about how to deal with our past traumas in a more compassionate way, Sophia seized on the key themes in the book, which is to shift from asking “what is wrong with me” to instead asking “what happened to me?” A shift that changed Sophia’s perspective on how to address her own life traumas.

Sophia began to ask herself this question during the pandemic when she contracted COVID twice. “The first time I got COVID was February 2020 and I almost died from it,” she says. “When you face your mortality, it makes you ask some hard questions.” Sophia had a parent who was home sick with a disability at the time. She was the sole caregiver for her mom for two years. In her memoir, Sophia tells the reader to ask themselves three questions she asked herself: *What do I want? What do I need? And how do I feel?* “Self-care is something that I really had to get



Sophia poses with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA) undergraduates in Hampton, Virginia. Sophia is proud to call herself an AKA. Mentoring is a huge part of Sophia’s service to her community. Photo courtesy of Sophia A. Nelson.

a hold of because I was taking care of everybody else my whole life but me and that is something as Black women, we are particularly conditioned to do,” Sophia says. “That dates back to slavery and how much we had to endure and just push it down and keep going no matter the trauma or abuse we endured.” Sophia cites the fact that nearly 3 million women dropped out of the workforce during the pandemic. “It was huge because women had to make a choice between do I stay home with my kids or work or do I try to do both? Something’s got to give. I am only human. I can only do so much,” she says.

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within (continued)

As a Generation X Black woman, Sophia admires younger millennials and Generation Z's openness towards mental health and self-care. "We can look at them and say they are spoiled and coddled because they are always talking about mental health or what they want. Or, we can see that we didn't express our feelings or deal with our issues. Which was also unhealthy," she says. "We had a lot of things that we should have talked about and worked through and we did not." Her generation, like the Baby Boomers before them, often let these issues fester into conflicts in marriages and in relationships, inadvertently hurting their children and loved ones along the way. "We have to find ways to talk about these issues by taking care of ourselves first and not having that be a bad thing or a negative thing. Because if I don't put my mask on first, then I can't save you." Sophia continues, "I can't be a good sibling, a good daughter or a good mother because if I die or if I'm not ok or have a breakdown then what happens to everyone else? That is a discussion we need to have."

Sophia is an opinion columnist who writes for major outlets such as *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *NBC* and is a contributing editor at *theGrio*. When it comes to being a columnist and on-air pundit for CNN and MSNBC who speaks on the political issues of our time, she consistently asks herself how she contributes to the public square. "I think that one of the challenges of our times is that opinion has become fact and has been deemed journalism," Sophia says. "And it is not. Journalism is when I am doing a story and I am looking at facts, timelines, and the players involved. I try to write objectively (as any of us can be) as human beings. We all have biases, but as a journalist, you have a code of ethics." As an opinion columnist, she must fight for her voice and firmly stand by what she has written. "I have to battle daily with my editors because sometimes my editor is very liberal and won't allow me to talk about certain issues," Sophia says. "And sometimes my editors are very conservative and don't want me to talk about other issues." Sophia pushes the envelope and doesn't hold back punches for anyone. "I don't just pick on one side or the other," Sophia says. "If it is wrong and

I think it is wrong then I am going to say it. If I think it is right then I am going to say it." With each piece she writes, Sophia aims to inform and side with the opinions of the people. "I do my best to watch public opinion to see where the country is so that I can be someone who sheds light on unifying people and not dividing them."



Sophia with her mother and youngest niece, who is on active duty in the United States Army. Photo courtesy of Sophia A. Nelson.

To contribute to the political discourse effectively, Sophia created the *One America Podcast* based on the founding motto of America, *E Pluribus Unum* or "Out of Many, One". Sophia designed the *One America Podcast* as a platform where different viewpoints about American life—culture, sports, politics, and entertainment—can be shared freely. Sophia wants the actual discussion to be a staple of American life again. "I think the big failing of our country this time is that we do not want to have courageous conversations and we don't want to talk through things," she says. "We want to be offended at everything, to yell, we want to blame, we want to fight, and we want to be done and go to our respective corners. And that is breaking our country. If we don't watch ourselves, we are going to lose it."

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within (continued)

Sophia is a woman who has built a global brand in the digital age. For Sophia, it isn't just about using the tools of our time. Building a brand is about your sensibility as a human being. "What kind of human being are you and how do you treat people? Do you have good manners? Do you say thank you? Are you a person of grace or are you out here saying all types of things that divide and hurt people?" she questions. She advises young people to be careful about the images they put out into the world. "Unfortunately, companies now look at your social media footprint. I don't know how I feel about that. I don't know if that is fair," she says thoughtfully. As a proud member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Sophia mentors young women who have ambitious dreams. She advises them to value community over self in that other people matter just as you do. "If you want to be a professional and have some kind of professional success, you should be a light in the world, be inspirational," Sophia says. "Spotlight that you are somebody making a difference. Be somebody that is doing something that is moving the world. Move your community and country in a positive direction. Be an inspiration. That is what is going to build your brand and get you noticed and get you to where you want to go and be in life."

For someone like Sophia who is paid to talk and share her opinions on the topic of the day, it is important that she has time to turn off the switch. "The people who truly know and love me and who are in my ecosystem, know that I am actually not at all like the public persona," she says. "I cook up a storm. I love to garden. I am kind of quiet and don't necessarily say a whole lot when I am with those I love and trust. I like to chill out." To get away from it all, Sophia heads down to her house in Charleston on the beach. She plans to settle down south later in life where her paternal family roots began in the 1700s.

To ease her mind from the rush of the news cycle, Sophia plays her acoustic guitar and drinks wine with her friends and family. But socializing with friends and wine isn't just a relaxing pastime for Sophia, it's also a serious pursuit for Sophia. She is a serious wine connoisseur, maker, and seller. She partnered with Breaux Vineyards to create Wine for the Woman's Soul.



Photo by Andrew Sample

For Sophia, no amount of success can compare to being an aunt to two now grown women. "They are like my children. I just adore them beyond words," Sophia says. "The greatest of all my accomplishments is being an aunt to those two once little girls and having the privilege to see them grow up, have spent time with them and have poured into their lives— to watch them turn into two beautiful, smart, successful young women."

Writing is the thread that connects Sophia's life. It relaxes her. She is proud to call herself a writer and will write two more nonfiction books before getting into fiction writing. Her first two books, *Black Woman Redefined* and *The Woman Code*, have been optioned for television, and *E Pluribus ONE* is being looked at as a spin-off series about the founding fathers. But one of her biggest reve-

Sophia A. Nelson Challenges Us to Look Within (continued)

lations is that she plans to run for office in the Commonwealth of Virginia. “I am not going to say what yet or when, but I will do it before I am 60. That gives me about six years and if I don’t do it by then, then I won’t,” she says.

Sophia wants to run for office in the Commonwealth because she is worried about the state of our democracy. She is worried about the state of our discourse. She is also tired of how, at the statewide level, mostly white men are in charge. “Nothing against white men,” she says. “I like white men. They can lead, sure, but I would like to see some people of color and some different people generationally. I would like to see more younger folks get involved in the political process. And I would like to be a spark and a light for these changes. I think I would be good at it and I think I have been preparing for this my whole life since high school when I came to Washington as a congressional intern, then as a US Senate intern in college, and ultimately as the first black female Republican Committee Counsel staff in the House of Representatives in the late 1990s.”

Sophia reiterates her bid for public office, this time with a more declarative statement. “Within the next few years, I will make a decision that either I will do it or I won’t, but I’m leaning heavily in the direction of doing it.”

To learn more about Sophia A. Nelson, visit her [website](#) and follow her on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

Leslie T. Thornton: Writer at Heart



Photos by Lisa Damico

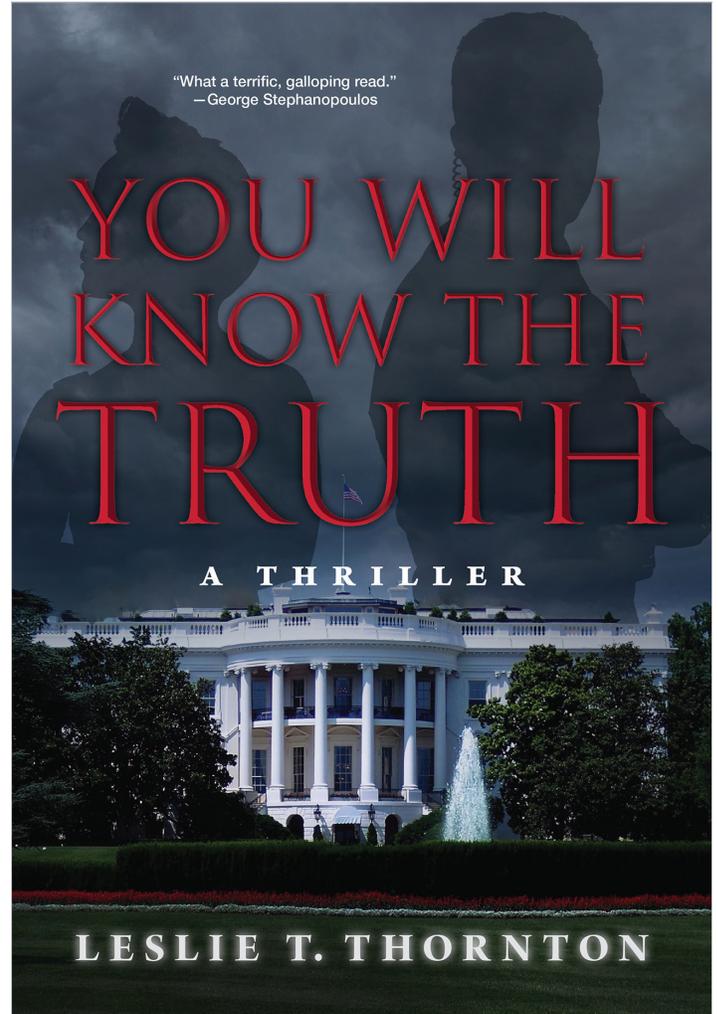
| “This novel came from a lot of my own experiences.”

Leslie T. Thornton grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs of Mount Airy. After graduating from Georgetown Law, Leslie worked for the Public Defender Service (PDS) for the District of Columbia as a staff attorney. In her more than 30-year career as an attorney, Leslie worked in the Clinton Administration as chief of staff for the Department of Education, became a partner at two top DC law firms, and served as general counsel and vice president for WGL Holdings. “I’ve actively practiced law in different capacities for, let’s just say, a long time,” she says.

Today, she is a corporate director, serial volunteer, and first-time novelist. While she has written op-eds for *The Wall Street Journal*, *National Journal/Legal Times*, *The American Lawyer*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Washington Times*, among others, writing fiction allows Leslie to bare her soul.

Her debut novel *You Will Know the Truth* is a legal crime and political thriller. The novel opens with a real murder case from the ‘80s that took place when Leslie was a PDS attorney. The protagonist Nicki Jo Lewis is based on a friend of Leslie’s who was a defense attorney on the case. “The novel came from a lot of my own experiences,” Leslie says. In the novel, Nicki Jo Lewis is caught up in a murder case that involves the White House. Thurgood Marshall Jr., former DC Attorney General Ron C. Machen Jr., and George Stephanopoulos have praised the novel for its engaging plot, compelling characters, and authentic portrayal of Washington, DC.

Leslie T. Thornton: Writer at Heart (continued)



You Will Know the Truth (Sweet Read Publishing)

Leslie has written a story that is both entertaining and authentic. “I heard, saw, and then wrote the characters (and plots) with a soulful voice, and I quite intentionally pay homage to Black culture throughout my book.” This is experienced through chapter headings, the prose and the narrative, and in the characters’ names and their styles.

Leslie is currently working on the sequel to her debut novel, titled *And the Truth Will Set You Free*. Disney’s 20th Television is interested in turning her books into a TV series. “Who knows what will happen with all that, but it is exciting,” she exclaims.

To learn more about Leslie Thornton, visit her [website](#) and follow her on [Instagram](#), and Twitter.



BUSINESS

Chef Jacoby Ponder Brings Families Back to the Dinner Table



Photo by Keith Saunders

| “A family that cooks together, grows together.”

Chef Jacoby Ponder is known for cooking up his best dishes for celebrities like Bruce Willis, but this summer he will be working with couples to strengthen their bond and awareness of healthy cooking. On June 25, Jacoby will stop in Richmond, Virginia, for his Couples & Singles Cooking Class: Surf and Turf. “My cooking classes come from my gift of teaching and my passion for culinary arts,” he says.

After seeing and joining the efforts of former First Lady Michelle Obama’s Chefs Move to School program, Jacoby was made aware of the communities affected by food deserts in the Hampton Roads and Richmond, Virginia areas. He was determined to have a continued presence in these communities. “I was inspired to educate the community, so I acted on my aspirations by putting together cooking, fun, and education. I am bringing families back to the dinner table,” he says.

Chef Jacoby Ponder Brings Families Back to the Dinner Table (continued)

PRIVATE CHEF
Chef Jacoby Ponder
EST. 2008

PRESENTS
**COUPLES
& SINGLES**
COOKING CLASS
Surf and Turf

- + Delicious Pan Seared Salmon
- + Grilled Herb Chicken Breast
- + Perfectly Cooked Asparagus
- + Creamy Risotto

JUNE 25
6:30PM^{EST}

POWERED BY: **Glomius**
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801 VIRGINIA CENTER PARKWAY
GLEN ALLEN VA 23059
*LIMITED SEATING AVAILABLE

With his new cooking class, Jacoby hopes that food will not only strengthen the bonds of couples but also strengthen the health and wellness of the whole family. “What better place to start with health and wellness than with mom and dad,” he says. “Couples seem to enjoy the getaway and the unorthodoxy of date night. Cooking together increases laughter and creative teamwork, which builds a bond that will last a lifetime. A family that cooks together, grows together.”

To learn more about chef Jacoby Ponder, watch him on [YouTube](#) and follow him on [Instagram](#). To get tickets to his Couples & Singles Cooking Class: Surf and Turf, click [here](#).

Chef Jacoby Ponder's Couples & Singles Cooking Class: Surf and Turf comes to Richmond, Virginia, on June 25 from 6:30 – 9:30 PM EDT at 801 Virginia Center Parkway.

Karen Terry: Life Is Art



Re-birth of a Nation

“I am an artist and that’s not a title or something you can pick up or put down when it suits you. It is life.”

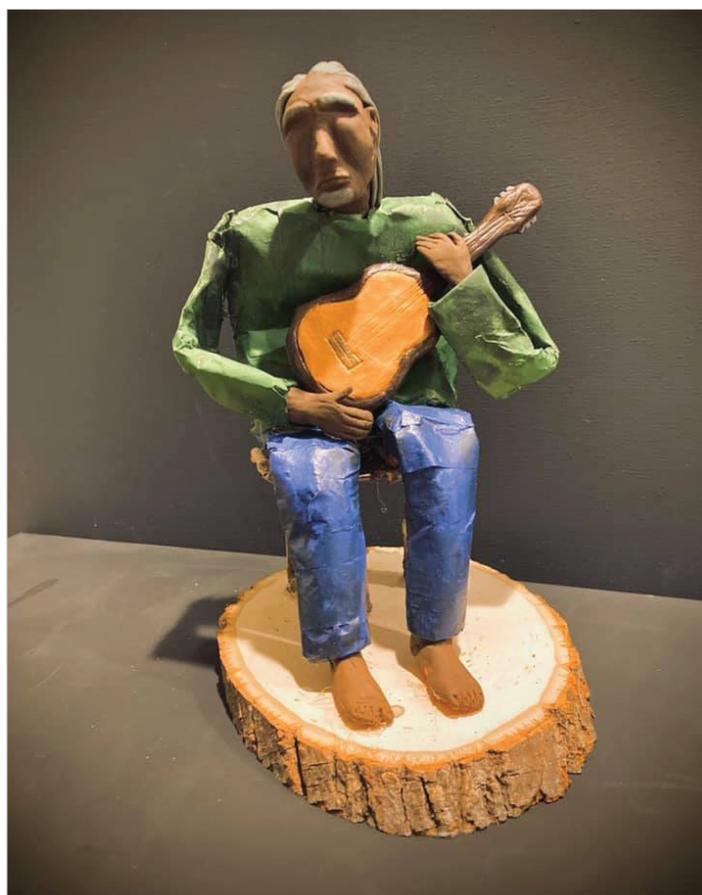
Karen Terry is a visual artist whose work is inspired by the past, the present, and the thought of healing. “A song, a scent, a conversation will stir my creativity,” she says. “My craft honors and keeps memories—the joys, sorrows and hopefully promotes healing. I create with emotion, so my style and medium are all over the place. I have a reflective heart.”

Karen’s current artistic medium is sculpting. Her clay, wire, and paper sculptures show life and everyday people fishing, dancing, playing music, and living their lives. “I want people to understand my assignment when creating each piece. I want to stir emotion and thought,” she says. Karen wants her work to speak for itself. She wants those who come across her work to get an idea of who she is based on the work alone. “No boundaries—I am an artist and that’s not a title or something you can pick up or put down when it suits you. It is life,” Karen says.

Karen Terry: Life Is Art (continued)



Young Isabell



Uncle Hubert



Healing

Karen is getting into another visual medium: film. Her recent short film *The First 20* will debut at the Tribeca Film Festival this month. In addition to film, she has a few photo series that she would like to share with the public. Her photo series *We Went North* is a collection of her family photographs from the 1930s to the early 1960s. “They were hidden away in an elderly family member’s home and discovered after their passing,” she says “The collection conveys their life in Harlem, New York, their fashion and their hairstyles. It’s really informative and cool.”

To learn more about Karen Terry, follow her on [Instagram](#).

Beverly Ann Booker's Promise to Herself



Photos by Candy Rachelle

| “Let your art take your audience to another place.”

Beverly Ann Booker, also known as *BB Jazz*, has an immense love for music and acting. “I think of the two as a marriage and I am the child born from that marriage,” she says. “Music takes me to another place and gives me the ability to communicate with people who want to take a journey to another place with me. Acting adds to that journey and gives texture and definition to the overall experience.”

Beverly was eight years old when she made a promise to herself that she would be on stage. So as an adult, she traveled to Las Vegas to sing her favorite jazz records and connect with people in the industry. Later in life, she was offered an opportunity to act. While unsure of what this new chapter would bring, she decided to pursue acting with the same dedication she gave to her music. For four years, she worked countless hours with her coach Sharon Coleman to get better at her newfound love. In 2015, she made her debut on stage in *Wrags to Ritches*, where she was given the title of co-star.

Beverly Ann Booker's Promise to Herself (continued)



This past May, Beverly performed at the Halloran Center for Performing Arts & Education in Memphis, Tennessee as part of a *Stand-Up Shelby County Fundraiser*. The fundraiser benefits the nonprofit *Mrs. Budget Boss*, which works to end debt and poverty by working with youth in underserved communities. She will be going back to the studio to create new music and will continue to pursue her acting career. She hopes to audition for new roles, whether that is a movie or a stage production.

“When I’m performing as an actor I love getting into character, I leave Beverly at the door and I become that character, this is at both a physical and emotional level,” Beverly explains. “The ability to share that character’s essence with the audience is amazing and one of the best experiences an actor/actress can have in a performance.”

For booking information, email [Carolyn Henry](mailto:Carolyn.Henry).

CHEF'S CORNER

Chef Sharde' Dantzler



Photo by Terance Barbel



Photo by Sharde' Dantzler

Chef Sharde' Dantzler is a Chicago native who works part-time at The Gathering Spot in Washington, DC, under executive chef Martel Stone. While working part-time, she is making her mark in the world of culinary through her business Chef Sharde' & Company. She has been working professionally since she was 16 years old. Chef Sharde' has cooked overseas and worked under some of the best chefs (Marcus Samuelson, David Sears, Antonio Carluccio, Fran Lopez, José Andrés). She is now applying what she learned from them and making it her own.

To learn more about chef Sharde' Dantzler, follow her on [Instagram](#).

“It is all about making sure you honor where it came from. Buttermilk biscuits are a family tradition.”

Rose's Buttermilk Biscuits

Course: Breakfast/Brunch

Cuisine: American

Prep Time: 35 min

Cook Time: 30 min

Total Time: 65 min

Serving Size: 12

Ingredients

- 300 grams all-purpose flour
- 15 grams baking powder
- 10 grams baking soda
- 15 grams sugar
- 5 grams salt
- 80 grams chives or scallions
- 170 grams grated or shredded butter (unsalted)
- 150 grams grated or shredded cheddar
- 200 grams cold buttermilk
- 20 grams all-purpose flour
- 30 grams melted butter
- 10 grams Maldon Salt

Preparation

1. Cut into small cubes or grate the butter and place in the freezer for at least 20 minutes.
2. In a large bowl combine all the dry ingredients and sift. Once sifted add the cheddar, chives, and butter.
3. Gradually add the buttermilk until it all comes together in the large bowl. Dust with flour before removing from the bowl.
4. Dust a flat surface well, roll out the dough to make 5 folds, place on a sheet tray lined with parchment, and let chill for 10 minutes in the refrigerator. Repeat this once more.
5. Roll to desired height and width. Trim the edges to make rectangles.
6. Cut biscuits and place on a sheet tray with parchment paper. Brush with melted butter and a pinch of Maldon salt.
7. Cook at 325 degrees for 12 minutes. Rotate and cook for another 12 minutes.
8. Once golden and flaky in the middle, rest and enjoy.

Girls For A Change Envisions Its Own Black Space



Angela Patton is the CEO of Girls For A Change. Photo courtesy of Girls For A Change.

“Black women can own property and create the spaces they want in order to address community needs.”

Girls For A Change (GFAC) unapologetically focuses on and nurtures the needs of Black girls. “We are preparing Black girls for the world and the world for Black girls,” says Angela Patton, CEO of Girls For A Change. Over 25,000 girls have gone through the organization and come out better prepared than when they arrived. Girls For A Change gives their girls societal, social, and emotional support, the opportunity to build character, advocacy/social justice training, and access to professional and technical skills.

This year, Girls For A Change is calling on the community to contribute to their One Million Reasons to Build campaign. “This \$1 million fundraiser will help us acquire the funds needed to purchase the space we have been renting, expand it by 40%, and update the facilities and equipment,” Angela says. “While land and property ownership across the country remains majority white and male-owned, Girls For A Change has set its sights on changing that narrative.”

Girls For A Change Envisions Its Own Black Space (continued)



Photo by Terance Barbel

Girls For A Change is following in the footsteps of Maggie Lena Walker, the first woman bank president, and the legacy of the Jackson Ward neighborhood in Richmond, also known as the birthplace of Black entrepreneurship. “It’s time for Girls For A Change to envision its own Black space and in doing so, demonstrate to Black girls that Black women can own property and create the spaces they want in order to address community needs,” Angela says. “We have to have the space to work through issues like colorism, racism, sexism – all the isms – because a lot of times Black girls don’t get that chance. It is important to find communities for Black women and girls while we are on our personal development journey because the ultimate purpose of personal growth is to ripple through the collective and raise consciousness.”



Girls For A Change (GFAC) unapologetically focuses on and nurtures the needs of Black girls. Photo by Kim Brundage.

Angela says the space will be co-created with many professionals in the Black community. Girls in GFAC programs will have input as well. They will participate in brainstorming sessions to come up with needs and solutions to address those needs. They will also have the opportunity to learn interior design, architectural concepts, create surveys, and analyze data from the Richmond community. “Co-creating with Black girls is foundational to supporting them,” Angela says. “GFAC is committed to co-creating with participants and wants them to have some ownership over the building’s overall feel as their home away from home.”

To help support Girls For A Change’s One Million Reasons to Build campaign, make a donation [here](#). You can also join Girls For A Change for its [Diva Bag Auction fundraiser](#) on June 17-19 and bid on a unique, designer bag filled with special products and experiences.

To learn more about Girls For A Change, visit their [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

LEGENDS

B.C. Franklin



Photo courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives

B.C. (Buck Colbert) Franklin was the son of a Black father and mixed mother of Choctaw and African ancestry. During his life, he was an attorney, rancher, newspaper publisher, postmaster general, and writer. After practicing law in Ardmore and Rentiesville, Oklahoma, he moved to Tulsa in early 1921. His law practice – I.H. Spears and T.O. Chappelle – called the Greenwood District, known as Black Wall Street, home. It was in that same year, that a white mob attacked Greenwood, resulting in an estimated 300 dead, mostly African Americans, and the destruction of Black homes and businesses. This would be known as the Tulsa Race Massacre.

After the massacre, the Tulsa City Commission passed a fire ordinance that prevented Black residents from rebuilding their property. Franklin took the city to trial and argued against the ordinance. Franklin went before the Oklahoma Supreme Court and won the case. Greenwood residents could now rebuild. Franklin's eyewitness account of the Tulsa Race Massacre is currently sitting in the National Museum of African American History and

Culture. His firsthand account of the massacre is pivotal in understanding a tragedy that was once "suppressed history." B.C. Franklin's son, the late famed historian John Hope Franklin, and his grandson John Whittington Franklin preserved his legacy in the book *My Life and an Era: The Autobiography of Buck Colbert Franklin*.

**"This is true today and will continue to be true to the end of time: that most great issues are moral, not political; are human, not racial; that the statesman can never be displaced by the politician without harmful dislocations of natural evolutionary processes; and that the entire world is both mentally and spiritually ill today because of this derangement."
– Buck Colbert Franklin**