



NATIONAL BLACK COALITION OF CANADA-EDMONTON

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2012



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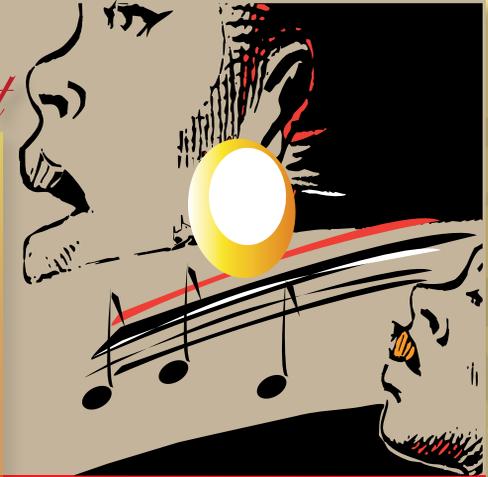


NBCC Edmonton Presents * 26th Annual Black History Month

Gospel Concert

FEATURING:

Soul Fuel: Mr. Hugh French
 Essence of Praise: Mr. Barrington Simpson
 New Season of Praise: Mr. Colin Forde
 Streets of Gold: Ms. Genieve Simpson
 Progress: Mr. Timothy Noel
 All Nations Full Gospel Choir
 Ms. Nana Antwi-Darkwa
 Bethel Apostolic Sr. Choir: Ms. Jessica Daniel
 Fresh Manna Fellowship Choir
 North Edmonton SDA Youth Choir



GUEST SOLOIST'S

Miguel Brown
 Cheryl Allen
 Dwayne Brown

Tickets
 \$20

Saturday
February 11 @ 7pm

FOR TICKETS:

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Jubilee Auditorium
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NATIONAL BLACK COALITION OF CANADA-EDMONTON

The year 2011, including the events for Black History Month was very productive and successful for the National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC) - Edmonton.

We are looking forward to 2012 as we strive to set a healthy pace for unity & diversity, to build bridges, foster good citizenship and good intercultural dialogue, in an effort to speak to, and strengthen diversity for Albertans and Canadians at large.



Our theme for **2012 is "United by Diversity - United by our Differences"**, this enhances celebrating co-operation between different groups of people in a single society that describes a sense of oneness.

Canada officially recognized black history month in December 1995, when Jean Augustine the first African Canadian elected to parliament introduced the motion to declare the month of February to be black history month, in Canada. This is our **26th year** of presenting Black History Month in Alberta.

During the month of February our organization will be hosting several events and programs in the city of Edmonton to celebrate and promote our culture as a part of a prosperous and vibrant province.

Please join us in celebrating civic pride Black History Month 2012.

"Let our differences Unite & not Divide us". Let's remember that culture connects us to our communities, our province, and to the world.

Yvette McFarlane
President of NBCC
- Edmonton



NBCC EXECUTIVES 2011/2012

President - Yvette McFarlane
Vice President - Joy Thomas
Treasurer - Constance Thomas
Secretary - Carl Wilson
Assistant Secretary - Claudja Cyrus
Program Coordinator - Joanne James
Assistant Program Coordinator - Latoya Farrell
Public Relations - Desmond Francis
Youth Representative - Tiffany James

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Edmonton, Alberta T5L 3C7
p: 780-425-0319 f: 780-452-0383
www.nbccedmonton.ca e: info@nbccedmonton.ca



PRIME MINISTER . PREMIER MINISTRE



I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone marking Black History Month in Edmonton.

For over 400 years, Black Canadians have played an integral role in the building of our great nation. This month provides all Canadians with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the values of perseverance and achievement that have defined the black community in Canada, and to highlight the invaluable contributions that Black Canadians have made to the diverse and prosperous country we enjoy today.

I would like to commend the members of the Edmonton Chapter of the National Black Coalition for their ongoing commitment to the promotion of Black history. I am certain that the many events planned to commemorate this month will be a magnificent reflection of the proud heritage of Black Canadians.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable Black History Month.

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.

OTTAWA
2012



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6K 2B6



Message from Honourable Alison M. Redford, QC Premier of Alberta

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to everyone participating in Black History Month 2012.

Alberta's diversity is its strength. Our province is home to a wide range of cultural communities, each bringing their own customs and traditions to every corner of our province. The relationships and connections built between these communities is what make Alberta a truly unique and vibrant place to live.

Every year, we take the time to recognize and honour the legacy of our Black community by celebrating Black History Month. Black men and women have contributed greatly to building the strong and prosperous Alberta we enjoy today and continue to enrich the social, cultural, economic and political fabrics of Alberta's society.

Black History Month provides an opportunity for people of all cultures to gain insight into the experiences of Black Canadians and Albertans, and the vital role these individuals have played throughout our shared history.

I want to express my sincere thanks to the organizers and volunteers for dedicating countless hours to showcase the Black community in Edmonton and around Alberta. I look forward to the vast array of exciting and educational events you have planned and encourage all Albertans to learn more about the fascinating history of Black people in Alberta's history. I hope you all enjoy the celebration.

Alison M. Redford, QC

February 2012



I would like to give thanks to all those who are celebrating Black History Month 2012.

We are so fortunate to live in a province where different cultures are celebrated and accepted. The National Black Coalition of Canada is an organization that has deep roots here in Alberta, and plays an important role in fostering a strong sense of community spirit. Your mission to foster communication and solidarity among Black Canadians, while striving to create positive impacts in the community is truly an admirable one.



One of the Alberta government's goals is to foster a sense of belonging and pride in all citizens regardless of their cultural background. By promoting inclusiveness in our province and our country you are helping us reach this goal. Together we can, and will, build a better Alberta.

I would like to thank all of the organizers and volunteers who have devoted their time to making sure that this Black History Month is a memorable one. You should all be proud of what you have accomplished from John Ware to Jerome Iginla; it is through your dedication that Alberta remains the best place to live, work and raise a family.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Blackett
MLA for Calgary-North West



On behalf of my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, I'm pleased to offer my support for Black History Month activities and celebrations throughout the Capital Region, and my gratitude to the National Black Coalition of Canada – Edmonton chapter, for organizing these events.

It's important that the contributions of all people be acknowledged and recognized; in that way, Black history is very much Alberta's history.

I wish you continued success.

George Rogers, MLA
Leduc-Beaumont-Devon



Message from His Worship Mayor Stephen Mandel

On behalf of City Council and the people of Edmonton, Alberta's Capital City, I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone celebrating the heritage, traditions and culture of African-Canadians throughout February 2012, Black History Month.

This month is an important opportunity for the City of Edmonton to recognize the past and present contributions African-Canadians make to our city in areas such as education, medicine, art, public service, economic development, politics and human rights. Edmonton has been greatly enriched by people from many different ethnic backgrounds and it's important we take time to celebrate the history of those who played a key role in building this city.

Thank you to the National Black Coalition of Canada – Edmonton Chapter for working hard to ensure that the history of Black people is kept alive. As a nation with such diversity, all histories need to be known and all voices need to be heard. Your ongoing efforts to foster communication and solidarity among African-Canadians will help ensure we can live in social, racial and cultural harmony.

I wish you all the best for a successful and memorable Black History Month 2012.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Mandel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Stephen Mandel
Mayor

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TIME: 11AM-12 MIDNIGHT

LOCATION: Garvey Cultural Center
12526-126 Ave

COST: \$10 (includes dinner, dance,
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AGES: 13-19

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Tiffany

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Bro. David Fraser, Chairman of C. F. C.
Bro. Robert Lewis, Grand Treasurer
Bro. Carlyle Ross, Past Grand Master**

**Congratulations and Best Wishes
to the NBCC Organizations on the
2012 Black History Month Celebration
from Mount Sinai Lodge #3**



**Bro. Edward Andrew
Bro. Francis Marshall J.W.
Bro. Carl Wilson, P.M. (Secretary)
Bro. Al Mathison, S.W.
Bro. Desmond Francis, W.M.
Bro. Aldin Evans, P.M.**

**Not included in this picture
Bro. Bernie Ohlhauser, P.M.
Bro. David Opoku Otoo, P.M.
Bro. Neville Toppin, Past S.W.
Bro. Mike Adam, P.M.
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Meet a Psychologist



Ganz Ferrance, Ph.D., R.Psych.

Dr. Ganz Ferrance has been a resident of Edmonton since 1968. He attended the University of Alberta graduating with a B.Sc. in Psychology. He later spent six years in the U.S. completing an M.A. in Educational and Developmental Psychology as well as a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. Once coming back to Alberta he spent eight years in Fort McMurray before again settling in Edmonton. During his time in the States "Dr. Ganz" worked extensively with disadvantaged Black and Hispanic youth in Chicago, IL and Benton Harbor, MI. Through these and other experiences, he learned several things:

1. There is more that makes us alike than there is that makes us different - we ALL come from the same source.
2. Everyone has a "back story". Once you understand their story even the most puzzling behavior makes emotional sense.
3. Whatever you focus on (consciously or unconsciously) - you get more of that thing.
4. Small changes have huge effects once given enough time.
5. True change comes from the inside out.
6. The only way to be truly free is to choose WHO you want to be in each moment - not responding in kind to other's negativity or being a slave to family or cultural programming.
7. Compassion drives away fear, frustration and anger.
8. At the end of the day we all want the same things - to feel connected, to succeed at challenges and to have a sense of significance.
9. Character keeps showing up.
10. Keep your perspective and sense of humor (especially about yourself).
11. The bigger you live the more you can give.

These insights have formed the foundation of Dr. Ganz's philosophy for his life and his psychology practice. For the past 20 years he has worked with his one-on-one clients to help them change the way they think, feel, and interact with others so that they can experience the health, happiness, love and success that they deserve. This is his way of improving the world - as his client's bigger lives have a ripple effect through their families, workplaces and communities.

For the past 10 years Dr. Ganz has been devoting more of his time to public speaking and working in the media to bring positive change and psychological principles to a larger audience. He spent several years as Director of Public Education, and later, Vice President of The Psychologist's Association of Alberta. Dr. Ganz has been quoted and featured several times in the Edmonton Journal and other publications. He has also been interviewed on CBC Radio, and appears regularly on CTV News and Alberta Prime Time as standing member of that shows Health Panel. One goal in all of this exposure is to put a friendly face on the field of Psychology. Equally important goals are to represent the Black community to the larger community and to show Black and other minority youth one more option for life and career.

As part of this mission Dr. Ganz's tips for a bigger life can be found at www.DrGanzFerrance.com, on Facebook, Twitter and on Youtube. Dr. Ganz can be reached at 780-428-LIFE (5433).

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NATIONAL BLACK COALITION OF CANADA-EDMONTON

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION BRUNCH

Marcus Garvey Center
12526-126 Avenue
Sunday January 29, 2012

12:00pm-3:00pm

Adults \$15 per plate

12 and under \$10 per plate

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CALENDAR

***NBCC* Church Service**

Saturday, January 21 6:00 PM

FREE

Join us in worship as we celebrate "Unity in Diversity" Refreshments will be served
Location: Good Shepherd Catholic Church 18407 – 60 Ave
Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

Soul Fuel

Friday, January 27 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

FREE

Soul Fuel is a place where you can show your spirit some T.L.C. A place where you can let everything go and just breathe.
Location: West Edmonton Seventh-day Adventist Church 9949-149 Street
Contact: Colin Forde (780) 293-1241

***NBCC* Opening Ceremonies**

Saturday, January 28

FREE

Performance begin at 11am-6pm. Official ceremony will commence at 1pm.
The official opening ceremonies of Black History. Speaks, exhibitor, and a talent extravaganza by our richly diverse community.
Location: West Edmonton Mall New Cap Radio Stage (near HMV) 1755, 8812 - 170 Street
Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

***NBCC* Celebration Brunch**

Sunday, January 29 NOON

\$15 Adults \$10 Kids

Come join us in celebrating black history month enjoy the wonderful cuisine of the Caribbean islands.
Location: Garvey Cultural Centre 12526 – 126 Ave.
Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

A Past to Honour a Future to Nurture Sunday, January 29 to Wednesday, February 29

AKWAABA - WELCOME Africa Adorned - A display of African and Diaspora
Location: The Edmonton Public Library, The Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Contact: 780-340-2289 patapaawe2000@gmail.com

JANA Annual BHM Breakfast

Saturday, February 04

\$25.00

Feel the Heart of One Nation
Location: Garvey Cultural Centre 12526 – 126 Ave.
Contact: JANA

MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, February 04 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM \$7.00

The Soul (slave) Trade, from the Castles of Ghana, West Africa to the Americas onto the Caribbean
Location: University of Alberta - Campus Saint - Jean The Grand Salon. 8406 - 91 Street
Contact: 780-721-8671 or 780-340-2289

5 Artists, 1 Love – Black History Month Art Exhibit

Saturday, February 04 to Saturday, March 03

4:00 PM to 11:00 PM

Opening: February 4, 2012 4 PM – 7 PM Exhibit to run from February 4, 2012 – March 3, 2012
United Colors of Soul (music show)
Location: Art Gallery of Alberta
Contact: Darren Jordan 780-238-3699 email: misterdJordan@yahoo.com www.5artists1love.com

Movie feature UN JOUR A KIGALI Saturday, February 04

\$20 for the movie and reception Movie only: \$5 Reception only: \$15

Featured movie UN DIMANCHE A KIGALI
Location: Faculte St-Jean, University of Alberta 8406 91 Street
Contact: 780-819-4015

FOR MORE INFORMATION

OF EVENTS

***NBCC* Gospel Night**

Saturday, February 11

7:00 PM

\$20

Location: Jubilee Auditorium 11455 87 Avenue

Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

Youth Here, Youth There: Bridging the Communicative Gap and Empowering Africa's Future Generation

Saturday, February 11

6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

FREE

Youth Forum aimed at bringing together scholars, students, youth and community members to dialogue about youth empowerment and community development.

Location: Lister Center 87 ave 116 Street

Contact: afa09@ualberta.ca

***NBCC* Hyp'd Up!**

Saturday, February 18

11:00AM to 12:00 AM

\$10 Youth Program 13 - 19 years old

Location: Garvey Cultural Centre 12526 - 126 Ave.

Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

***NBCC* Wine and Spirits Professional Networking**

Friday, February 24

To Be Announced

Location:

Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

***NBCC* Comedy Show**

Saturday, February 25

8:00 PM

\$15 in Advance \$20 @ the door

Comedy Showcase 2012 Featuring Sterling Scott and Company

Location: Rouge Lounge 10111 117 Street

Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

***NBCC* Awards Banquet**

Saturday, March 10

6:30 PM

Adults \$50 Seniors & Youth \$40 Children 12 & under \$20 4 and under FREE

Banquet of Awards and Excellence

Location: Chateau Louis Hotel 11727 Kingsway Avenue

Contact: info@nbccedmonton.ca

KIDUM North America Tour We Are One, Umoja

Saturday, March 17

\$30 In Advance \$35 Door

Location: TBD

Contact: 587-708-6237

Old School Gospel Concert

Saturday, March 31

7:00 PM

Featuring music from some of Gospel Music's Pioneers

Location: West Edmonton Seventh-day Adventist Church 9949-149 Street

Contact: Colin Forde (780) 293-1241

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Council of Canadians of African and Caribbean Heritage

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THE COUNCIL OF CANADIANS OF AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN HERITAGE (CCACH) WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF AFROQUIZ

VENUE: Stanley A Milner Library
 DATE: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2012
 TIME: 1:00 PM

AFROQUIZ: A Jeopardy(TM) styled quiz competition focused on events and people of African and Caribbean Heritage and contested by students from 8-18 years, as well as post secondary students.

Test your knowledge of countries celebrating their 50th anniversaries of Independence:-Jamaica, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, and Trinidad and Tobago. Be a contestant or a part of the audience and win prizes!

Prizes include: Laptops, iPads, iPods and more.

Website: www.ccach.org/afroquiz
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presents...

Black History Month

Comedy Showcase 2012

Featuring
Sterling Scott and Company

Rouge Lounge
10111-117 Street
Show starts at 8PM
Saturday February 25, 2012

\$15

\$20 at the door





ANDREW G. PARKER

Andrew Gersham Parker also known as A.G.P was born in North Edmonton April 12, 1983. Being one of the three proud sons of Grenada's own Dr. Claudia Parker, West Indian Culture influenced Andrew's life greatly. In the year 2000 Andrew attended M.E. Lazerte high school where he developed his passion for the game of Basketball under the guidance of his hero/coach Thom Elniski.

After Graduating from M.E. Lazerte High school Andrew attended Concordia University College of Alberta where he was heavily recruited for his legendary slam dunking skills and received a scholarship to play basketball for 2 years. While at Concordia, Andrew Achieved the honour of being named the Rookie of the year and he also received the silver medal in the Provincial final (A feat until that date had never been accomplished in school History). After his second year studying at Concordia, Andrew took his talent and intellect to the University of Alberta where he again received a scholarship to play basketball and was named the Most Valuable Player in the 2007 Golden Bears Invitational Tournament. Upon completing his Bachelor of Arts Degree at the University of Alberta, Andrew decided to take his talent to the professional level. Playing basketball all over the world with stops in Germany, Brazil, France and the United States, he continues to play basketball at the Professional level with the Edmonton Energy Professional basketball team.

Currently, Andrew is an assistant coach for the 2011-2012 Grant Mac Ewan men's basketball team and he is also volunteering as an assistant coach for the M.E. Lazerte high school men's basketball team. He is the co-founder and creator of the "Pride of the Northside" Tournament (A community outreach event in North Edmonton promoting positive involvement from the community through the game of basketball). Also, Andrew and his team mate JR Patrick created the Patrick/Parker Professional Basketball academy in Edmonton; to help children of all ages develop basketball and life skills. In addition to his obligations with the Edmonton Energy, in the past 10 years Andrew has been involved with motivational speaking, scouting and individual training of Elementary, Junior high, High school, and various college and As a proud member of the Caribbean Community, a mentor to children, and as a professional basketball player, Andrew continues to leave his imprint on the African/Caribbean community and the game of basketball in Edmonton.

www.youtube.com/user/northsideagp
www.facebook.com/Andrew.Parker.AGP



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Catherine Daniel

Mezzo Soprano



Edmonton Native, Mezzo soprano Catherine Daniel began her classical music studies when she joined the Schola Cantorum Youth choir in 1999. Ms. Ardelle Ries-Admiral was the director and later became her voice instructor. Under her tutelage she attained a grade eight honours level in the *Conservatory Canada* exam and won scholarships from the Kiwanis music festival.

In 2003 Catherine transferred to the University of Manitoba. There she studied with Coloratura Tracy Dahl. She was a regular soloist with University ensembles and participated in collaborations with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Ms. Daniel joined the Manitoba Opera chorus, participating in productions such as *La Bohème* (2005) and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (2006), *Othello* (2007) and *La Traviata* (2008).

Catherine was also very successful in competitions and the Winnipeg Music festival. Highlights include: the Tudor Bowl (2004), Manitoba Registered Music Teacher's Association Intermediate Category (2005), U of M Concerto Competition (2006), MET competition Regional Finalist and Encouragement Award (2007), and the Rose Bowl (2007). She graduated in 2007 with an Integrated Music Education degree.

Two summer programs brought Ms. Daniel back to Alberta: Opera Nuova's production of *The Bartered Bride* in 2007 where she sang Ludmilla and the Banff Centre for the Arts to premiere a work in progress on the life of Portia White in 2008.

In the fall of 2008 Catherine began her two-season apprenticeship with Opera de Montreal Atelier Lyrique. There she sang roles such as Wowkle in *Fanciulla Del West*, the 2nd spirit in Verdi's *Macbeth*, Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and Third Lady in Mozart's *Magic Flute*. She continued her vocal studies with Gerald Martin Moore, Christiane Riel and Claude Webster.

As her European debut, Catherine sang Dido and the sorceress in Opera Studio Netherlands (OSN) production of *Dido and Aeneas* in the fall of 2009. This touring project covered eight cities in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Some of her Canadian projects included a tour with l'Orchestre Metropolitan in December 2009, Mercedes in Manitoba Opera's production of *Carmen* in April 2010, Handel's *Messiah* with Elroy Friesen in November 2010 and the Opera de Montreal Opera gala in December 2010.

Catherine relocated to Amsterdam, the Netherlands in May 2010. That fall, Ms. Daniel sang *La Messagiera* in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* under the direction of Pierre Audi. Catherine also participated in the Jubileum concert at the famed Concertgebouw in Amsterdam!

The 2011 season opened with more concerts and the OSN's production of *Così fan tutte*. Catherine sang Kundry in an excerpt of the Wagner opera *Parsifal* in the fall. Ms. Daniel returned to Winnipeg, Canada in November for 2 projects with Canzona, a baroque style choir under the direction of Henry Engbrecht. Catherine's season ended in the Netherlands with her premiere of the role of *Carmen* in the opera of the same name!

Ms. Daniel will continue to pursue an international Opera career.

Catherine is the daughter of Joan & Julian Daniel. She has a sister Maya.

Growing Together

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IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH
THE EDMONTON HERITAGE COUNCIL
AND THE AFRIKAN HISTORY LIBRARY PROJECT

PRESENT

Salon Africa

Saturday, Feb 25, 2012
Prince of Wales Armouries
10440 108 Avenue

6pm Food + Refreshments
7pm Conversation
Performances to follow

Join us for an evening of conversation about Edmonton & African communities, Caribbean Cuisine and refreshments, and performances by the Wajjo Drummers.

Special guests include Dr. Mode Kete Asante, Dr. Ali Abdi, and Dr. Peter K. Pupilampu.

This event is free but registration is required.

Please RSVP to :

e: info@edmontonheritage.ca

p: 780.429.0166 ext. 233

for more information contact Nii at 780.340.2289

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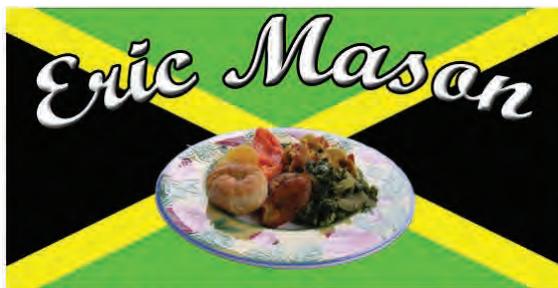
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Frank Santiago Jr.

My parents immigrated to Canada from Trinidad in the late 60's. I was born, the middle child of three boys, in Fort McMurray in 1970. We moved to Sherwood Park in 1972 where we were one of a handful of black families residing there.

I grew up playing sports - from soccer, baseball, basketball to football. Through team sports and pointed parental guidance, I developed the skill of hard work and persistence.

I attended NAIT after high school & became an Electrician; but several years later had an opportunity for a career change as my wife and father in-law started a company called "The Little Potato Company". I worked there for 8 years with hardly a day off and because of wanting to spend time with my 4 children, I reduced my working hours and became a full-time 'stay at home dad'. I truly understand what moms go through!

During that time some friends and I started a business called "Jitterbee" - Shakable Pancakes from a bottle (just add water or milk).

Life isn't without its challenges - being a stay-at-home dad, entrepreneur and going through a failed partnership, I could have thrown in the towel but I persevered and have taken my business to places where I was told I could never go. I have met people that I never thought I would meet in this lifetime, and most of all, I have been able to give to others and the community in ways I could not imagine. My dream is to ensure that one day each child in Canada be given a healthy breakfast provided to them in schools every morning.

My Words of Encouragement are:

- Always believe in yourself!
- Surround yourself with people who elevate you.
- Never let go of your dream and know that if it was easy, "everyone would be doing it".

Frank Santiago and his company Jitterbee, support the Community in many ways including: the Spirit of Christmas with Deb and Steve Kazowski, 3 years of making breakfast and providing Christmas gifts to Inner-City Schools, free pancake breakfast with Progress in Sherwood Park and the 24 Hour Edmonton Easter Seal Relay and Santa's Anonymous. Frank also volunteers with the West Edmonton Raiders Football Team as Director of Football Operations.

Frank Santiago Jr.
www.Jitterbee.ca





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NATIONAL BLACK COALITION OF CANADA-EDMONTON

Banquet & Awards of Excellence

Saturday March 10, 2012

**Chateau Louis Hotel
11727 Kingsway Ave,
Edmonton Ab**

Adults: \$50

Seniors & Youth: \$40

12 & under: \$20

4 & under: free

Cocktails: 6:30pm, Supper: 7:30pm

Music by the band Catalyst

The National Black Coalition of Canada - Edmonton (NBCC) Awards for Excellence recognize and honor individuals and/or groups in Alberta who have made outstanding contributions to our community and society at large.

The Award Categories are:

Rosalind Smith Business Award

Peter Sugarfoot Award

Bill Miller Award

Fil Frasier Award

James Bell Award

NBCC Youth Award

Mary Burlie Award

For 2011 nomination forms and banquet information call NBCC-Edmonton

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Getting to know Rod Knecht Chief of the Edmonton Police Service

When the Edmonton Police Commission went looking for a new Chief for the Police Service, they knew they wanted a wise, experienced police officer. They found exactly what they were looking for in Rod Knecht. He recently sat down to share stories about his policing career.

"I was 18, and at loose ends, when my Mom suggested that I consider becoming a police officer," says Chief Knecht. It was a suggestion that young Rod took under serious consideration. Then on a trip from Calgary to Banff, an RCMP officer pulled him over for speeding. "The officer was courteous and professional . . . it was a very positive interaction. I ended up thanking him for giving me a ticket! "That officer left Rod with such a good impression, that he decided to join the RCMP. On October 19, 1977, Rod Knecht graduated from the RCMP Academy.



A career with the RCMP

"My first posting was to Kyle, Saskatchewan, population 426. It was a small town, but the detachment covered a large rural area. There were four of us in the detachment," he explained. "One of the members was assigned as my trainer. For two weeks, I'd work with him for eight hours, and then do an eight-hour shift. After that, I was on my own. At the end of the training period, my trainer said, '...call me at home if you have any problems.'" Over the course of 34 years with the RCMP, Knecht worked in 33 units, held 32 different jobs, and 16 different postings (that means 16 moves around the country). Some of the postings were so remote they could only be reached by plane. When asked about his favourite posting, he's quick to respond: "My favourite job was being the Criminal Operations Officer in Alberta, with K Division, here in Edmonton. I oversaw all operational policing across the province."

A story from the front lines

Every police officer has one or two incidents that they'll never forget. Chief Knecht remembers a notification that he had to do. A 'notification' is when a police officer must notify a family that a loved one has lost their life. "A young man had been killed in Ontario, and I had to notify the family, who lived in a rural area near Regina," he said. "That one sticks with me because although they were overcome with grief, they invited me in for coffee. We sat down and talked for a bit. I shared that my wife and I had just had a baby. About a month later, I dropped in to see how they were doing, and the wife presented me with a baby blanket that she had crocheted for my daughter. They really were wonderful people."

Career-defining case

One of his proudest achievements was the successful conclusion of the Blood Task Force (Krever Commission). This was a high-profile, international investigation into the blood system in Canada and the creation of a national victim service liaison program for victims of tainted blood (HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis C). "That case changed my life. It changed the way I operate as a police officer, and it affected me deeply. Up 'til that point, I was a pretty traditional officer . . . focused on putting away bad guys, and not all that appreciative of the media nor of defense counsel. As I worked on that file, I found the media and defense counsel to be extremely helpful. I interviewed many victims, and many of them died as the investigation wound its way through the courts.

Words of advice for young recruits

"It's very simple, I would tell them to maintain their principles, and to always do what's best for the public.

Wise words from a wise man.

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