

ZONE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023

ARIZONA **I** NFORMANT

Finding The Antidote: Event Group Brings High Time To Desert

Making a splash in the arid Arizona heat is High Time in the Desert, a unique event from Antidote Productions that expands upon your standard fine dining experience with comedy from The Gateway Show, gourmet infused food, and a live performance from Emmy artist Drazé. The event will host 300 guests at The Clayton House, just in time to end (or start) the week on a high note on Sunday, June 18.

Guests will be served eight courses of gourmet tapas (small savory dishes) that includes: Tuna Tartare, Braised Beef Short Rib and Citrus and Herb Crusted Salmon. The main dishes will also be followed by a selection of desserts, and guests have the option to self-dose each course – or not – according to their own preference with cannabis tinctures provided at each table.

“That means you won’t smell a thing,” Antidote owner Michael Sallis said. “Most people are turned off by cannabis because of the smell. With tinctures, the taste of the food isn’t altered, either. It’s a classy way to experience cannabis in a fun, controlled environment.”

Through each course, the room will be rife with laughter from Billy Anderson’s Gateway Show, where the comedians perform their first set sober, then return to the stage high for their second set of jokes.

“In the second set at our last event, the comedians sometimes couldn’t remember what they were gonna say next,” Antidote co-owner Kimberly Pierson said. “They’d start a sentence and the audience would just start cracking up. It was hilarious because it was real. It was all in the moment.”

Emmy Award-winning hip-hop artist Drazé, most known for his contemporary infusion with the mbira and marimba of Zimbabwe, will also be performing live. Drazé will be accompanied with beats from DJ L Rock The Party, who will keep the vibe going throughout the night.



Michael Sallis



Kimberly Pierson

continued on page 9



Jenell M. Jones

Shaping The Pieces

Special to the Informant

Meet Arizona native Jenell M. Jones. Jenell is an early education entrepreneur, currently operating multiple early learning centers, which specialize in providing high quality learning experiences to children who experience trauma in low-income areas. Her education background includes earning a bachelor’s degree in business management and a master’s in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on autism spectrum disorders from Arizona State University.

An adoptive mother with over a decade of experience as a biological, step and foster mother with a heart to love and serve, Jenell began her journey as a foster mother in 2005 after taking on the responsibility of her son unexpectedly. Her experience was great and inspired her to adopt more children and continue opening her home to shower children with love.

In 2015 she took in her daughter who shifted Jenell’s perspective on the adoption experience when she began noticing undisclosed life-altering dysfunctions in her child.

continued on page 9

Biden To Make Commencement Speech At Howard

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA

Howard University President Wayne A. I. Frederick has confirmed that President Joe Biden will deliver the commencement address at the historically Black university’s 155th ceremony. Officials have scheduled commencement activities for 10am May 13 on the Upper Quadrangle of the main campus.

Erica Loewe, the White House’s Director of African American Media, stated that in addition to Biden’s address at Howard University, administration officials plan to attend commencements at HBCUs nationwide.

According to the White House, President Biden’s impending visit to Howard, the alma mater of Vice President Kamala Harris, follows the administration’s record-breaking investment of nearly \$6 billion through



HOWARD.EDU

the U.S. Department of Education to support HBCUs since 2021.

“Securing funding for the more than 100 HBCUs in the United States has been a prominent feature of Biden’s domestic agenda,” Loewe wrote on Twitter.

In addition, the visit coincides with the publication of new data showing the lowest Black unemployment rate in U.S. history.

“It is an honor and privilege to welcome President Biden to deliver the 2023 commencement address and

celebrate the 2023 graduating class,” Dr. Frederick said.

Biden will also receive an honorary Doctor of Letters degree during the commencement.

“This honorary Doctor of Letters is much deserved for his years of transformational service as U.S. Senator, Vice President, and now as President of the United States,” Dr. Frederick stated.

“We are excited to receive the president as this year’s distinguished guest and recognize him for his relentless work uplifting our communities that have been historically left behind.

“I look forward to honoring President Biden, our honorary degree recipients, and graduating seniors at the Commencement Convocation.”

Biden was the first of four children born to Catherine Eugenia Finnegan

Biden and Joseph Robinette Biden, Sr., in Scranton, Pa.

The Biden family relocated to Claymont, Delaware, in 1953.

Biden attended the University of Delaware and Syracuse University School of Law and served on the New Castle County Council.

The Wilmington, Delaware, Amtrak station bears Biden’s name.

The president was among the youngest individuals ever elected to the United States Senate at age 29.

At 80, Biden has confirmed his candidacy for re-election, and a victory would make him the oldest elected president in American history.

Harris became the first African American and female vice president.

Biden would be the seventh incumbent U.S. president to deliver Howard’s commencement speech.

A&E:
‘Unfinished Business’ Eyes WNBA

– 8 –

LIVING:
May Is Stroke Awareness Month

– 11 –

SPORTS:
Pop Warner In Motion

– 15 –

MGM+ Greenlights Docuseries 'Hollywood Black'

MGM+, a premium linear channel and streaming service, today announced a greenlight for the docuseries "Hollywood Black," from Justin Simien's Culture Machine, Forest Whitaker and Nina Yang Bongiovi's Significant Productions, and the Academy Award-winning creative production company RadicalMedia. Based on the book by historian Donald Bogle, this four-part docuseries – directed by Justin Simien (Dear White People), whose upcoming Disney film *Haunted Mansion* will be released this summer – tells the epic story of the actors, writers, directors, and producers who fought for their place on the page, behind the camera, on the screen, and in the credits. It is a definitive chronicle of a century of the Black experience in Hollywood, and a powerful reexamination of a quintessentially American story – in brilliant color.

"We are thrilled to work with Justin Simien, Jeffrey Schwarz, RadicalMedia, and to expand our prolific creative partnership with Forest and Nina,"

said Michael Wright, head of MGM+. "Hollywood Black, like other recent MGM+ docuseries, is an entertaining and thoughtful look at a vital part of American culture, examining the evolution of Black cinema and the talented artists who built it. It is a timely and relevant look at the Black experience in Hollywood."

"Hollywood, like many American industries, was built on Black culture and Black talent, even though it excluded Black people from many of its origin stories," said Justin Simien. "This series seeks to illuminate present-day controversies, from #OscarSoWhite to the almost regular 'blackface reveal' of prominent white celebrities, told through the lens of Black individuals throughout Hollywood history. It's the most important story I've been able to tell to date, on such a large scale, and I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to tell it with this team."

"We love collaborating with visionary filmmakers, so it's an honor to team up

with Justin Simien/Culture Machine and Radical Media on Hollywood Black, especially alongside such immense support from Michael Wright and MGM+," said Forest Whitaker. "Through this meaningful exploration of Black history in cinema, we're excited to celebrate its future."

Culture Machine's Justin Simien (Dear White People, Bad Hair) and Kyle Laursen, Significant Productions' Forest Whitaker and Nina Yang Bongiovi (Godfather of Harlem), and RadicalMedia's Dave Sirulnick, Stacey Reiss, Jon Kamen (*Summer of Soul*) and Jeffrey Swartz will all serve as executive producers. Amy Goodman Kass is showrunner, and Simien is set to direct. The docuseries will be internationally distributed by MGM.

"Hollywood Black" is the latest addition to MGM+'s library of acclaimed docuseries, including: Amityville: An Origin Story; Murf the Surf; Emmy-nominated Laurel Canyon; Helter Skelter; Slow Burn; My Life as a Rolling Stone; NFL Icons; and Blumhouse's Compendium of Horror.



Shattered Details Foster Journey

continued from page 7

Her latest book, *Shattered* tells the story of her deepest pain as a mother and uncovered the truth about fostering, adoption and fighting for her child's life. In the end, justice is necessary and peace is questionable.

The book is set to release on all digital platforms and e-readers May 15, with an official book signing and release on May 27. The release of this heart wrenching story lands just in time for the celebration of Foster Care Awareness Month.

Jenell offers an honest take on the adoption and foster care system – and how to navigate the system without necessary support, the lack of accountability for those who victimize children, and how to advocate for the often-overlooked and voiceless victims in the foster and adoption care system.

Learn more about *Shattered* at JenellJones.com.

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continued from page 7

"Draze's music is one of a kind," Sallis said. "It's not your everyday hip-hop. It's light. It's airy. It's a get off your seat and dance sort of feel."

The event will start with a pre-party at 6pm for Platinum ticket holders, who will have access to the outdoor lounge, early samples from The Dab Slab™ and extra gifts from the event's sponsors. Draze and Gateway Show comedians Billy Anderson, Mike Glazer, and Carmen Morales will also be in attendance at the pre-party for an exclusive meet and greet with photo ops. By the event's

official start at 6:30pm, the patio dab bar will be open to all guests and serve a variety of infused beverages as well as traditional and faux drinks.

Antidote Productions was started by Sallis and Pierson during the COVID-19 pandemic, when feelings of isolation were at their peak. Sallis, a self-taught chef, organized gatherings with family and friends to share infused meals that eventually led to a successful event held in Castle Rock, Wash., in 2022. High Time in the Desert is Antidote's second event, and one of many that are soon to come to other legalized states.

"One of our biggest reasons for founding Antidote was to create some-

thing you don't normally see. It's not just dinner and a show," Pierson said. "Our events are a unique way to enjoy your food and your entertainment in a new class of recreation. We want everyone to have that experience. That's what we're about: creating infused memories that last a lifetime."

This Mother's Day weekend is the best time to score tickets to High Time in the Desert. Tickets are on sale at 20% off, with up to \$100 in savings on a limited time special from Friday, May 12 to Sunday, May 14. Tickets can be purchased directly at the event page at <https://posh.vip/e/high-cuisine-comedy-night>.

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National Black Authors Day

The first-ever National Black Authors Day was May 4, 2023.

Arizona Informant Foundation celebrates Black authors with upcoming BlackLit events.

Learn more about the May activities (interviews, public readings and more) and how to participate at:

<https://knowledgefest.carrd.co>

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