

# GIVING U INSPIRATIONAL LIVES THROUGH OUR YOUTH

# GUILTY Inc.

"We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day" ~Edith Lovejoy Pierce



## HAPPY NEW YEAR - Family & Friends:

We hope that everyone had a Happy Holiday and a safe entrance in to the New Year. Resolutions have been made and now it is time to see them through. We wish you all happiness, success, and blessings to and through the year of 2009. Again, thank you for continuing to support our mission and efforts!!!

In the September 2008 edition of our newsletter, we mentioned that we were invited and honored on August 23, 2008 to the Ebony Magazine and Pine-Sol's Sisterspeak Luncheon series, in Charlotte NC. This inspiring luncheon series celebrated the unique sisterhood of African-American women that are making a difference for our children, schools, and communities. GUILTY's founder, Jamila R. White was one of five women honored as an unsung hero at the luncheon."

We are happy to announce that **GUILTY, Inc. is featured in Ebony Magazine's January 2009 - Collector's Edition** honoring the Person of The Year Mr. Barack Obama (*subscriber's edition only*). If you subscribe to the magazine or have the opportunity to view the subscriber's copy, please read our article. We are thankful for the support and encouragement from you, our family and friends.



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# GIVING & INSPIRATIONAL LIVES THROUGH OUR YOUTH

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Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right." ~Oprah Winfrey

## Linked Partner Spotlight

By Michiko Dowdy

### Family First Community Services, LLC



**Our Focus:** Our focus is to provide quality community mental health services to children/adolescents and their families with emotional and/or behavioral challenges within their natural environment.

**Our Efforts:** We have been committed to focus on child/family's needs and provide quality services to all clients. In order to accomplish this, we have been very selective of who we hire and what type of training we provide to each employee. Our clients/families can access our services 24/7/365, so we can provide a wraparound services. We are also committed to collaborating with other agencies in the community. We truly believe that it takes a village to raise a child, so we depend on other professionals as much as they depend on us.



**Upcoming:** As of January 2009, in addition to Community Support Services and Comprehensive Assessment, we will start providing hourly respite care service and outpatient treatment service to children/adolescents population. Our goal is to provide comprehensive services to any families in need, so hopefully this will be one step forward to accomplish our goal!!

**Contact information:** 704-804-0689 or [www.familyfirstcommunity.com](http://www.familyfirstcommunity.com)

**GUILTY's Linked Partnership** is a voluntary coalition of businesses, nonprofit organizations, public/private agencies, educational institutions, health services, group/foster homes, correctional institutions individuals, and more that are committed to restoring and sustaining the lives of our youth and the community. The partnership promotes comprehensive resource management, information and service exchange, citizen involvement, and coordination of efforts.

Become a Linked Partner... <http://imguilty.org/linkedpartnerships.html>



## Give Back to the Community



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"The best way to prepare for life is to begin to live" ~Elbert Hubbard

## An Evening with Dr. Cornel West: A Blues People, Hope on a Tight Rope

By [Charla Davis](#) Photography by [John Ryals](#)



On December 15, 2008, I was grateful to be amongst hundreds seated to capacity, and standing room only to witness the spirit filled "neo philosophical" words of Dr. Cornel West. An eager crowd awaited the kick off, eating and softly chattering, while enjoying the smooth melodies of a live jazz band.

The historic evening at the Neighborhood Theater hosted by Bluz, fully delivered on his promise of a night that would "feed our mouths and feed minds". Bluz introduced the pre-event line up featuring 3 gifted Charlotte poets, "Poetry that Moves", i.e., Marina the Poet, CP Maze, and Melissa Noelle

Green. Pastor Howard Brown delivered final words, speaking on "Faith, intellect, and hope." Our minds were indeed fed through their words, encouraging us to "close our minds in order to see things better." Sentiments echoed of our world being a people who are starved for hope with a strong need for resolution by "letting the hunger begin by asking for more than enough."

Best-selling author Omar Tyree introduced Dr. West, with words of pride, glad (we) intellectuals "brought it to Charlotte"! As Dr. West reaches the podium, the two exchange a warm hug; the audience becomes alive, greeting West with applause, cheers, and shouts.

Dr. West in turn greets us, "I'm happy to be here Charlotte, North Carolina, right here in the Neighborhood Theater." West begins with recognition and thanks to the pre-event line up who set the tone for his deeply anticipated arrival, deeming the poets and pastor "legislatures of the world... offering an alternative world in the midst of a bleak one". West gives props to Darren Vincent, owner of Real Eyes Bookstore and Charlotte Literary Festival Organizer, author Omar Tyree, as well as, thanks to the audience for our presence that night. His final props were to jazz greats Coltrane and Monk who hail from North Carolina.

The main themes that Dr. West presented were based upon his indication of a strong need for our young generation to have "hope on a tight rope" like our generation before. He goes on to say, "Anytime this nation has the blues we need to look to the best of its own blues people. If we choose not to, the world will be a dismal place."



Several highlights presented by Dr. West:

- the epic of the "Southern Strategy" is over, it didn't work in the election for McCain or Palin
- the "Age of Obama" begins with a mess which is our challenge as a nation, the era of Ronald Regan is over
- Hurricane Katrina was the "nail in the coffin of the age"
- usage of "self expression" as the reporter hurled his shoes at President Bush
- unarmed truth and unconditional love NEVER go out of fashion
- listen to those that are suffering
- loath that there is injustice; be a force for good and support it, like in the 1960's
- for over 40 years we have dealt with numerous issues that are not limited to injustice in the school systems, as well as, dilapidated housing; "a blues people is always wrestling with the catastrophic"
- a blues people still has dignity, misery will never have the last word

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"The future depends on what we do in the present" ~Mahatma Gandhi

Dr. West poses several questions to the audience, with an underlying theme of: "What does it mean to be human?" West says, today we need a deep awakening, and who are we going to be in the meantime? What choices will we make? What will our contributions be? What will our legacy be?

- blues takes you to what it takes to be human; our choices as a people and nation
- are choices measured by success? Is success being well adjusted to injustice?
- to be human we need to have courage and vision



West goes on to touch on the brutal lynching of Emmett Till; enlightening us on the reason why Till's mother insisted on a public funeral service, with an open casket to show the world the brutality of the killing of her son. West mentions that the words of Emmett's mother should appear in all textbooks, "I don't have a minute to hate; I'll pursue justice the rest of my life". Mamie Till

Mobley did just that until her death. Other key points stemmed from this discussion:

- young blacks have been inbred not to need whites to have white supremacy; it has been inbred in us to "hate on each other"
- when you put your body in motion you deal with the catastrophe; we are a dancing people too many echoes and not enough voices, Lift EVERY Voice and Sing
- an awakening takes place by listening to the originators that went against the grain of injustice
- don't confuse your day job with your life task, they are NOT the same, find your life task!



Dr. West asks, "What is your calling?" As Christians, we need to pick up our cross, and be free to speak our minds AND follow through. We need to inspire, encourage, and enable one another. One must remain on fire now that the election is over, don't downplay arts programs and education. What level is your commitment for love and justice for something real? The cross is ALWAYS higher than any flag!



Dr. West gives a charge to our young people, "Young people, build onto rich tradition of sacrifice. Do you have what it takes?" He says there is hope, but not optimism. "I am a prisoner of hope, been down so long that down don't bother me no more." We must enable and empower others,

make a contribution to justice...GET THAT BACK! West refers to us as eagles, flying with elegance, with a strong need for each other. We must learn to agree to disagree because our legacy IS our precious children! In closing thoughts, West says that, even as a prisoner of hope, he is going down swinging and empowering everyday people!

**Thank you for empowering me Dr. West!**

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"Time stays long enough for anyone who will use it" ~Leonardo Da Vinci

## Upcoming Community Events & Announcements



### Screen Fitness Boot Camp

For more information, contact Derik Screen: 704.778.5285 \* [Derik@Screenfitness.com](mailto:Derik@Screenfitness.com). Please visit [www.screenfitness.com](http://www.screenfitness.com) for more details. {Linked Partner}

The **Screen Fitness BIGGEST WINNER** weight loss contest will begin on Jan 12, 2009 the contest will last for duration of 8 weeks. Registration for the contest is to end on Jan. 12, 2009. Participants who register after 1/12/09 will be allowed to participate in the contest but will incur a late registration fee. During the contest period participants will be required to attend a weekly fitness/nutrition meeting. Each week participants will compete to see who can lose the most amount of total body fat (in lbs.) based on a percentage of their starting weight. There will be two grand prize winners one male one female. Start 2009 off right and change your life through fitness.

### GUILTY, Inc.

#### 1st Annual Bachelor & Bachelorette Charity Auction: Love Lockdown



Thursday, February 5, 2009 starting at 6:30pm, held at Loft 1523, 1523 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte NC 28204. This event is open to singles and couples, 21 years of age and older. We are asking for a donation cover charge of \$3.00 in advance and \$5.00 at the door. We are also asking the patrons to bring canned and non perishable foods to the venue for donations.

In addition to the auction, we will host a mini Mentor Recruitment drive at the event. It is possible to have fun and give back to the community all at the same time! For more information, to purchase advance tickets, or to become a bachelor/bachelorette visit [www.imguilty.org/bba](http://www.imguilty.org/bba)

#### Become a Mentor

We are accepting applications... Become a Mentor!

All it takes is a caring person, who is committed, responsible, a good listener, and someone that uses their experiences for positive changes. By sharing fun activities and exposing a youth to new experiences, a mentor encourages positive choices, promotes high self esteem, supports academic achievement, and introduces the young person to new ideas.



If you see yourself as a mentor, you will bring new aspirations and dreams to young lives through mentoring, and you will be surprised how much you will benefit, as well.

\*\*\*GUILTY's 2008 Annual Report will be posted February 2009\*\*\*

Add your **Upcoming Community Event/Announcement...**

GUILTY's e-newsletter will be distributed to its email community and posted on the website for **March 2009**. If you would like to add an upcoming community event, **please submit by 12pm, Friday, February 20, 2009...** Email a short paragraph of the event, including date, time, location, contact information, website, cost, and any other pertinent information. [News and Publications](#)

We are all in this together to better the lives of our youth and the community!