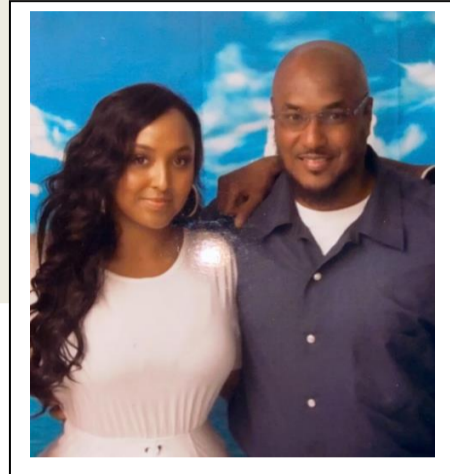
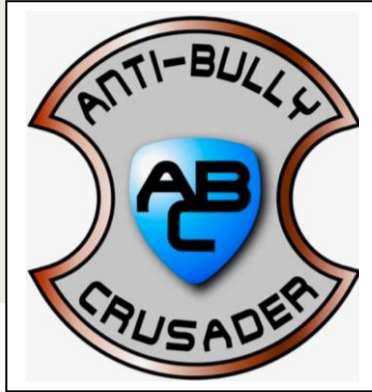


# MYLIFEMATTERSTOO

## CHANGING THE NARRATIVE OF MASS INCARCERATION



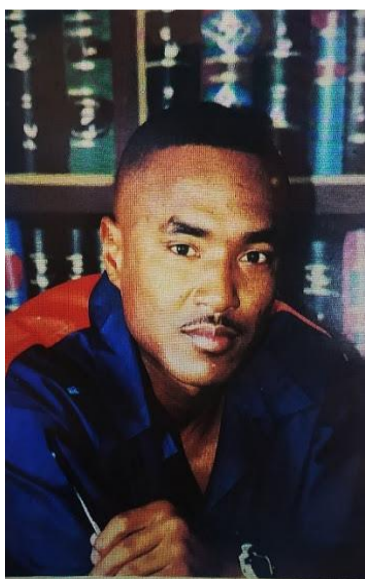
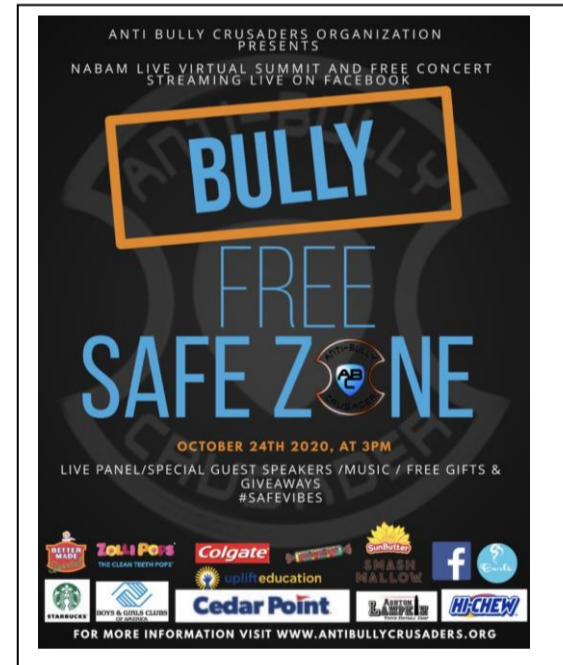
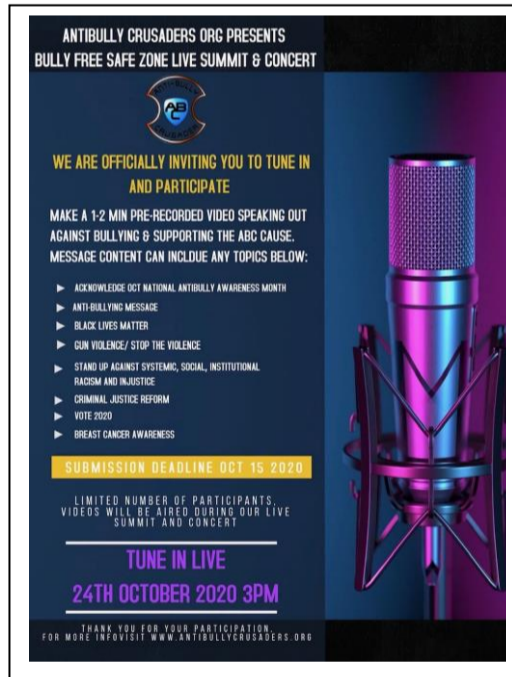
Founder of MLMT – Quentin Jones, Michigan DOC



**Don't use COVID as an excuse to inhumanely treat incarcerated men and women!**

QUENTIN JONES

(Sept. 18, 2020) It has been six months since the Corona Virus first swept through the Michigan Department of Corrections. The most recent protocols which have been implemented by the MDOC are said to be in an effort to stop the spread of Covid-19. These protocols include disallowing housing units from interacting with one another during recreation time. How is this logical when men from different housing units continue to go to work and attend religious services together?  
(continued on p. 2)



*My birth name is LeRoy Washington and I'm incarcerated in the Michigan Dept. of Corrections. I go by my chosen/given name, Saalih Siddiq, on all my work which is a part of my transformation. I have an MBA in Business Administration and am cofounder with my daughter of the Anti-Bullying Crusaders Project (ABC).*

Read more about the work of Saalih Siddiq (LeRoy Washington) and his daughter, Lauren Washington, on page 2. On October 24<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. there will be a live virtual Bully Free Safe Zone Summit and Concert. Read more about this event here: <https://antibullycrusaders.org/events/> ...

## Anti-Bully Crusaders (ABC) Organization

### THIS ISSUE:

- COVID-19 AND PRISON
- MICHIGAN REP. JEWELL JONES
- C.W. (WILLIE) FLEMING POETRY

- ANTI-BULLY CRUSADERS
- WORDS HAVE POWER

- PRISON FRIENDSHIP
- STICKS AND STONES

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U.S.A.

**Letter from the Editor**Author: my female student's English Exam Essay  
Spring 2014*Tell People What  
They Mean To You*

I want to start this text by saying that I have been a witness to bullying which ruined a boy's life. And that it is both really easy and really hard for me to put words to it. It is easy for me because it is the only thing that

goes around in my head all day, everyday. It is really hard for me because it is a horrible situation, and it has affected my own life in a really negative way.

My own little brother was bullied since he started school, for no reason. He was a smart, beautiful, normal boy. But for some reason he became a victim of bullying. The other kids thought it was funny to see and get him angry. They picked on him for everything everyday. After a long time he stopped showing up at school, because he knew someone would say or do something mean to him. December 2013, one week before Christmas Eve, he killed himself. 15 years old. No messages left, just a dead body. Why didn't I do something? I knew how he felt. Even if he had a great home and family, I didn't do anything to stop the bullying at school. Our parents tried, his teachers tried—but what do they know? I know that if I just had sat down and talked about it with him it would have made him happier. I could just tell him more often how much I loved him. How good he looked. But I didn't. Because I never knew he didn't want to live anymore. And you never know. So why wait to tell the people you love that you love them? Tell them.

I want to make a difference for other people, just tell them how much they mean to me and to others. I know by doing that it will save a lot of lives. It is really easy. Everyone can do it. It does not have to be someone you know really well either. If you see someone who is sad, alone or whatever – just ask him or her how they are. Just so they feel noticed, it will make the day for that person. We can never stop bullying – that's how the world is. But we can make people happier by showing them we care. Everyone has someone they love or care about, so show it! I know it will make a huge difference in people's lives. I know that.

It is so terribly sad that this had to happen before I really learned that we need each other. That everyone needs you. You need someone. We need someone. And I don't want anyone else to need to be in my situation to see what we need to do to stop it. You never know when it is too late.

But how can I make everyone understand? How can I make a difference in the world? For sure, just a little word or conversation can help one, two or three people, but I want to help everyone. How do I do that? How can you do that? Well, I think the media is one great option. I have a blog, I can write my story there, and make people share it and maybe do the same thing themselves. Write something that makes people understand and share it. If we do that, I really hope people can see what a terrible world we live in, and how easy it is for you to make it better.

My conclusion is – be nice to people. Help others. Give someone a compliment. As I said – you never know when it is too late. You never know how people feel inside themselves. By just doing one little thing, we CAN really change the world. It CAN really make a positive difference for someone, and other people. Show your love, it doesn't hurt and it isn't hard. Trust me, losing someone you care for or love is the worst thing in life. And everyone can help that not happening to them too early.

**COVID AND INHUMANE  
TREATMENT CONT. PAGE 1**

QUENTIN JONES

Perhaps this newly implemented "protocol" is nothing more than an attempt by the MDOC to avoid future litigation regarding their lack of adequate and appropriate prevention of the spread of Covid-19 from the onset of this pandemic.

Recently at Gus Harrison Correctional Facility in Adrian, Michigan, a nurse tested positive for Covid-19. Any positive test is concerning to me as Gus Harrison is where I'm currently housed. GHCF administration made the decision to place the porter (incarcerated worker), who works in Health Services, and his cellmate in quarantine due to possible exposure. Approximately nine days later, another seven were placed in quarantine for possible exposure. The reason given was possible exposure. This is illogical at best and indifferent at worst, of the decision making of this administration as well as the MDOC as it continues. Men are packed in two men cells that are similar in size to an average size home bathroom. The likelihood of one man contracting it, is slim to none. One is definitely pondering what the true motives are behind these illogical decisions. If the motives were prevention of the potential of Covid-19, clearly all fourteen men would have been placed in quarantine. Not to mention said quarantine would not have been delayed nine days.

It has been clear from the inactions of the MDOC, since the onset of Covid-19, the health and well-being of incarcerated men and women have not been a priority. For example, men who previously tested positive were transferred to GHCF and placed in an isolated unit. Up until that point, zero men had tested positive for Covid-19. Soon after these men arrived, GHCF began to see the first positive cases and the numbers steadily climbed. I had an opportunity to speak to all the men who were recently quarantined. They reported the inhumane treatment they experienced and conditions under which they were quarantined. It has become clear that quarantine was tantamount to segregation. Men were deprived of their personal property. Under the guise of quarantine, men were only allowed three showers a week. Neither were they given reading materials nor writing utensils. In addition, these men were only given one five-minute phone call per week. Essentially their constitutional rights were violated and their right to be treated with dignity as human beings, as men, was disregarded. During the time these men were isolated in segregation, not one person spoke to them about their health. Yet, all of this was done under the pretense of avoiding the spread of Covid-19. This callous disregard for the humane treatment of those who may have been exposed to the virus, the men who were directly impacted say, was traumatic. The treatment of these men is problematic for a number of reasons. It should be noted, as word of this mistreatment spreads throughout the facility, it could have dire consequences. Men, who may really be in need of health care, will likely choose to suffer in silence, which could potentially cost them their lives.

It is my opinion that Health Care Services are using this pandemic as an excuse to deny medical attention, particularly to those with pre-existing illnesses. Due to the seriousness of this virus, there should be a limited number of men seen by Health Care Services. However, those of us who had serious ailments prior to the pandemic should be the exception. My friend, Elijah Robinson, has a stent in his kidney that should be changed every 90 days with 180 days being the maximum before adverse effects can occur.

**Covid-19 continued on  
page 3**

## ANTI BULLY CRUSADERS (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

*LeRoy & Lauren Washington, father & daughter tandem create ABC*

## INTERVIEW

LEROY & LAUREN WASHINGTON, FATHER AND DAUGHTER TANDEM CREATE NATIONAL ANTI-BULLYING PROJECT TO CHANGE & SAVE LIVES  
[www.antibullycrusaders.org](http://www.antibullycrusaders.org)

Goal: To make all schools a "Bully-Free Safe Zone"

Q & A interview with MLMT writers Quentin Jones & Ricardo Ferrell and LeRoy "Saalih" Washington & ABC Founder, Lauren Washington.

BULLYING HAS GAINED NATIONAL ATTENTION in the past several years. October has been named the National Anti-Bullying Awareness Month (NABAM) by Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center. Last year 20.1 percent of students nationwide experienced bullying on school property according to a Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance report by the DHHS and Centers for Disease and Prevention. During that same period, 16.2 percent of students were electronically bullied through emails, chat rooms, instant messages, websites, and texting.

In this issue we bring you an exclusive interview with one of our very own LeRoy "Saalih" Washington and his daughter Lauren Washington, founder of the Anti-Bully Crusaders (ABC) Nonprofit Organization. This dynamic duo has been doing commendable work in the community changing and saving the lives of our youth! Lauren, is a Michigan native, Texas University graduate, entrepreneur, and criminal justice reform advocate. She now adds, Director of the Anti-Bully Crusaders Nonprofit Organization to her successful career. Her father, Saalih (LeRoy), an inmate with the Michigan Department of Corrections, has spent the last 24 years of his life behind bars. Since his incarceration he has earned an MBA in Business Administration-Management, currently works on a Doctorate in Education, and has an extensive resume of accomplishments.

Together this unusual tandem has created a unique approach to address one of the most pressing and fundamental issues involving young people today - Bullying.

In a program they call the Anti-Bully Crusaders Project, together they dynamically and effortlessly impart the most thought-provoking and profound truths of the human bullying experience. Prepare to be inspired, entertained, and transformed by this close encounter interview:

Q - MLMT: WHAT IS BULLYING?

A - LAUREN: Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior towards another that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time and includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Q - MLMT: WHAT IS THE ANTI-BULLY CRUSADERS PROJECT?

A - SAALIH: The Anti-Bully Crusaders (ABC) Project is a social movement that takes a realistic approach towards the growing epidemic of bullying in America. Our goal is to eradicate bullying and to start by making all our learning institutions a "Bully Free Safe Zone."

Q - MLMT: HOW DO YOU DO IT?

A - SAALIH: We've created an effective model and mechanism for teaching and learning. Our therapeutic self-help course provides participants with instructions on how to curtail intimidation, crush cruelty, and reduce violence.

LAUREN: This groundbreaking interactive program equips young people with the personal life skills and tools necessary to develop positive thinking, attitude, and behavior toward peace, acceptance and tolerance. Our hope is to provide educational opportunities and support systems that enhance the future and impact the lives of our young people.

Q - MLMT: HOW DID ABC COME ABOUT?

A - LAUREN: During my freshman year I was working on a research paper and came across some startling information about bullying related suicides. So I asked my Dad to help me create a program that could change and save lives. We worked on a curriculum for a few years. Once we had a proven formula, a couple of my girls and I founded the Anti Bully Crusaders Organization.

The rest is history.

SAALIH: It is noteworthy to mention, being incarcerated, the MDOC won't let me be a major part of ABC or anything positive in the real world. So, I just write corrective behavior curriculums and provide a little advice here and there. Of course, all FREE of charge. I love helping and working with our troubled youth! This is my way of giving back, somewhat of a partial repayment to society.

Q - MLMT: WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT ABC FROM OTHER ANTI-BULLYING ORGANIZATIONS?

A - LAUREN: Most anti-bullying organizations are symposium-based. Merely, a one-time group meeting or discussion. Although we believe they mean well, their methodology does not equip participants with the necessary tools to understand the problem, let alone change the narrative. Therefore, they are less effective. No organization does what ABC does. We offer an interactive curriculum that is engaging, thought provoking, and actually causes change in the Thinking, Attitude, and Behavior. Basically, we are teaching young people how to think. Not what to think. And that's important. It's education in its truest form, tapping into the experiences of the participants to elicit "the exchange of information." We create an environment in which a group can together explore issues of bullying, drawing forth from one another a deeper understanding of how these issues affect our lives as individuals and as a society. These experiences inform the readings. The readings illuminate the experiences. The exercises open everyone to the process.

Q - MLMT: WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART OF THE PROGRAM AND PROCESS FOR YOU BOTH?

A - SAALIH: For me, I've received two rewards from this project. One, seeing my work in action, helping change young people's lives; and two, working with my daughter on such an impactful project. She's my hero (female superhero)!

A - Lauren: I would agree with my dad. Just seeing his (our) work help so many young people has been the most rewarding for me too. And I love working with my dad. Not many young people have been blessed as I, when it comes to having a relationship with an incarcerated parent. *(continued on page 4)*

## QUENTIN JONES

## THE INHUMANITY OF COVID, CONTINUED

It has now been fourteen months since Elijah's stent has been changed. Since the onset of the pandemic, I was having trouble hearing in my left ear. I was scheduled to be seen by an Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialist. This appointment was postponed due to Covid-19.

Currently, I have just about lost all of my hearing in my left ear. I also have a severe injury to my left shoulder that has gotten increasingly worse over the past six months. I was scheduled to get a cortisone shot and go to physical therapy. That was also postponed due to Covid-19. The problem is my medical conditions are getting worse. Whereas, we may not have contracted Covid-19, we are suffering from other ailments. Under normal conditions, Health Services are already inadequate so this only justifies them not giving us proper medical attention.

To date, there have been 72 deaths. This number

includes three staff members and 69 incarcerated men and women. One can easily deduce these deaths are directly related to the MDOC's negligence in avoiding the rapid spread of Covid-19 within its institutions. Though the administration is constantly espousing how we should practice social distancing, they are keenly aware that the conditions of incarceration make social distancing virtually impossible. The sheer number of men and women packed into these small overcrowded plantations does not lend to the practice of social distancing. Cells and bathrooms are shared spaces.

If the state of Michigan were serious about stopping the spread of Covid-19 within its prisons and institutions, any numbers of steps could have been taken. The Governor would have given an executive order six months ago mandating testing for all staff members entering any facility. Governor Whitmer would have taken steps to reduce the prison

population by releasing more than just 1,000 people. It should be noted, these men and women were already past their earliest release date.

It is evident that Covid-19 is the latest demonstration of the MDOC's disregard for the lives of the men and women incarcerated here in Michigan. In fact, some may say this pandemic has been used as an excuse to further treat us inhumanely. The MDOC is blatantly and continuously disregarding the health and well-being of incarcerated men and women during this pandemic which reflects a much bigger issue of America's continued inhumane treatment of those incarcerated throughout this country. Fyodor Dostoevsky once said, "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons." America continues to claim to be the greatest country in the world - Not if you enter Gus Harrison Correctional Facility or any other prison in America.

**Anti-bully Crusaders continued**

**LeRoy Washington (Saalih Siddiq) and Lauren Washington**

MLMT - WHAT'S COMING IN THE FUTURE FOR ABC?

A - LAUREN: Pre-Covid-19 we were scheduled to host the largest Anti-bullying conference in the country for NABAM (National Anti-Bullying Awareness Month) of October, in Detroit. Unfortunately, our plans were hindered by the pandemic.

So this year we'll be hosting an online virtual "Bully Free Safe Zone" Summit and Free Concert on Facebook Live Oct. 24, beginning at 3:00 pm. We have a great line up for the panel and entertainment, such as Detroit's very own hometown favorites, Big Sean, Terry "Southwest T" Flenory, Loni Love (The Real), and many more international artist and celebrities as well. We'll also be gifting 10 Laptops, 10 Phones, Shirts & Hats to students whose property was damaged or destroyed as a result of an act of bullying. And hosting an anti-bullying essay contest for scholarships. I'm officially inviting everyone to tune-in and participate.

Q - MLMT: WE NEED ONE LAST FINAL THOUGHT FROM YOU BOTH.

A - LAUREN: Getting bullied is not always an easy conversation for a child or young adult to have with a parent, teacher, or person of authority. Sometimes it takes an expert to shed light on the subject. That's where we come in. ABC is the solution.

Our aim is to challenge young people to change by giving them the tools and resources to do so.

Our goal is to create "Bully Free Safe Zones" in all schools. No child should have to go to school and be bullied. This culture must change and it's up to us (the people) to change the narrative.

SAALIH: All Praises be to God! Through Him all things are possible. Thanks to MLMT for having us. I leave you with this, "Our parenting is literally a fight for the lives of our children. It is a noble battle that must be fought hard and relentlessly. It's not always easy, but when you can touch the lives of a few in a positive way, it is so rewarding. If we can help a few of these young people realize their potential and give them the tools to become change agents, we would have made a difference. Prevention is the key because damage control is far more costly."

MLMT: We love your relationship and respect for one another. One can only imagine the obstacles you've faced during this journey. What you two have been able to create and accomplish together is simply AMAZING!

There you've heard it! The ABC project is an evolving set of principles that provide avenues of hope, meaningful educational opportunities, and creative strategies that curtail intimidation, crush cruelty, and help to reduce senseless violence. This life changing program is definitely a game-changer when it comes to addressing the issues of -Bullying.

For more information about ABC visit their website at: [www.antibullycrusaders.org](http://www.antibullycrusaders.org) or Facebook/AntibullyCrusaders, <https://www.facebook.com/antibullycrusadersorg/> or Instagram@Antibullycrusaders.

Until the next time... Practice peace, acceptance and tolerance!

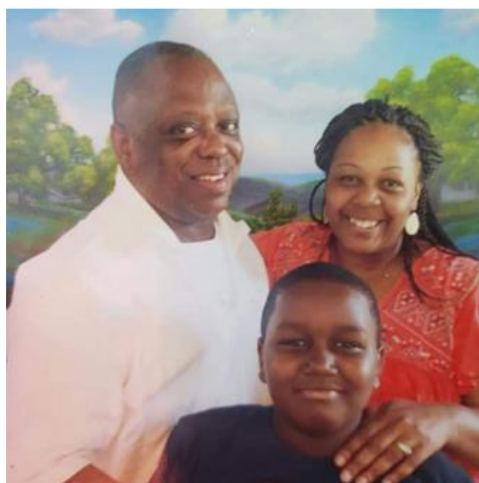
MyLifeMattersToo... Ricardo & Quentin signing off!!!



**Bully, let's be friends!**

by Willie Fleming, #1762908, Texas Department of Corrections, Huntsville, TX

It was embarrassing being your source of fun.  
 I imagined your family had tons of guns and shot Reindeer for fun.  
 I didn't know your Mom was a paraplegic.  
 You never cared about your grades. You just did mean things to get attention.  
 You were even happy to go to detention.  
 I didn't know it was to hide that you couldn't read or write.  
 When you beat me up and broke my glasses;  
 it was the worst day of my life.  
 I wished with all my might that I could just fight back and win.  
 I didn't know your Father got drunk and beat you too.  
 When you didn't come to school, the teacher said you had COVID-19.  
 She said it went from your lungs down to your spleen.  
 I was going to your window to laugh at you and get my revenge,  
 but your Mother was in her wheelchair by your bed when she saw my head.  
 She told me your story while you were asleep.  
 Instantly I began to weep.  
 She smiled and thanked me for being your friend.  
 So I was wondering, when you get well can we really be Friends?



*Willie Fleming was featured in our Mother's Day Issue with his poem, "Momma, You Were Right". We will feature more of Willie in our December issue as he is also an author. A sneak preview is put for you here. C.W. Fleming Books - <http://cwflemingbooks.com/> Read on the next page his poem, "Bernard's Blues".*



**“BERNARD’S BLUES” BY WILLIE FLEMING**

It’s like being on a six by ten raft with a stranger stranded in the middle of the ocean.  
 I drifted for so many years that I quit counting time and only hoped to one day make it back to land.  
 I finally saw dry land. People were waving at me to come in.  
 My salt-crusted eyes shed human tears. My Comrade and I shared a hug in a moment of joyful relief.  
 At that precise moment unbeknown to us, a massive Tsunami triggered an unbelievable tidal wave that seemed bigger than the whole world.  
 My friend and I were submerged for what seemed like hours.  
 I emerged battered, bruised, breathless and helpless – holding on to the legs of a plastic chair.  
 The Brother that was with me never came up. The land I had just seen was gone. The People who had waved at me were floating by me dead, bumping against the chair.  
 As the Tide began to subside, I saw the writing on the chair, PROPERTY OF COVID-19 NUCLEAR REACTOR.  
 My Journey stops atop a glass-domed nuclear reactor.  
 I look down to see hoards of people all yelling, “THEY CAN’T BREATHE!”  
 Holding up signs that read, “BLACK LIVES MATTER!”  
 That is how it felt for me after doing twenty-four years in prison and receiving parole during the COVID crisis  
 and to have my Mother die of COVID before I was released on June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2020 in Texas.

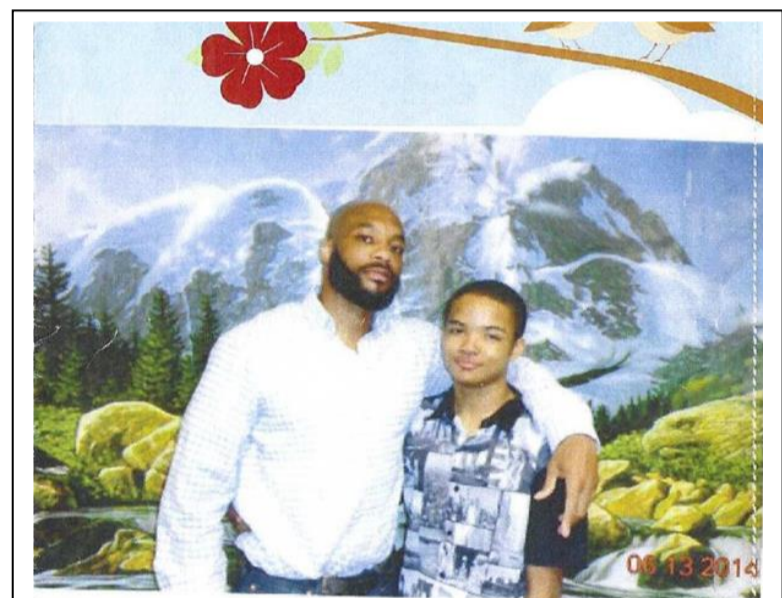
**WORDS HAVE POWER** by Jonathan Roden

There are over 4,400 deaths by suicide each year attributed to young people who are bullied by others.

The concise definition of Bullying is: "To seek to harm, hurt or intimidate others (someone perceived as vulnerable)". The concise definition of Anti is: "Opposite". Anti-Bullying therefore means the opposite of hurting or intimidating someone who may be perceived as vulnerable. What is the opposite of hurting or intimidating others? Helping and Comforting others; Healing and Consoling others; Repairing and Empowering others; or even Assisting and Encouraging others. These are the simplest descriptions of Anti-Bullying behaviors. Anti-bullying means more than simply not picking on those perceived as vulnerable. Anti means we also promote the opposite. Just like Anti-Slavery did not simply mean not owning slaves. It meant you promoted and perpetuated freedom and equality. Understanding what anti-bullying consists of is important. Our personal principles are shaped by our understanding. Once the concept is clearly defined, we have a better chance to achieve our end goal of preventing bullying. I personally think about ways in which I can adopt an anti-bullying mentality in my life. I strive to repair and comfort, assist and encourage, heal, and console in the relationships and interactions I have in my life. This is the simplest way to anti-bully.

One practical way to promote anti-bullying is through words. Words have the power to heal as much as they have the power to hurt. Oftentimes we use words to hurt others and bring them down rather than to encourage and lift them up. Write down the words HURT and INTIMIDATE. Then under each word write down every word that you can think of that means the opposite. Put this list somewhere you can see it each day and commit yourself to using these words every day. Incorporate them in daily interactions you have with others. As we begin to use positive and uplifting words each day, we will begin to see the change in ourselves and in others. We will be less likely to engage in bullying type behavior and less likely to accept or internalize bullying behavior by others.

This is a proactive strategy to make anti-bullying behavior a principle in your life. Think about it? If we will live lives of healing, repairing, assisting, and encouraging others, then we will become beacons of inspiration and hope to our closest relationships, as well as our daily interactions, leaving no room for bullying of others. It all begins with understanding what anti-bullying means and adopting positive behaviors such as using the power of words to uplift and encourage.



*Jonathan Roden was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is a prodigal son of Western Michigan. Jonathan has been in prison for 20 years and he founded a publishing company, 5 Minute Books, and published his first work, a series of essays Building and Maintaining a Relationship Despite Incarceration. We will feature more of Jonathan’s work in our December issue.*

**STICKS AND STONES** - Anti Bullying – by Shannon Keys

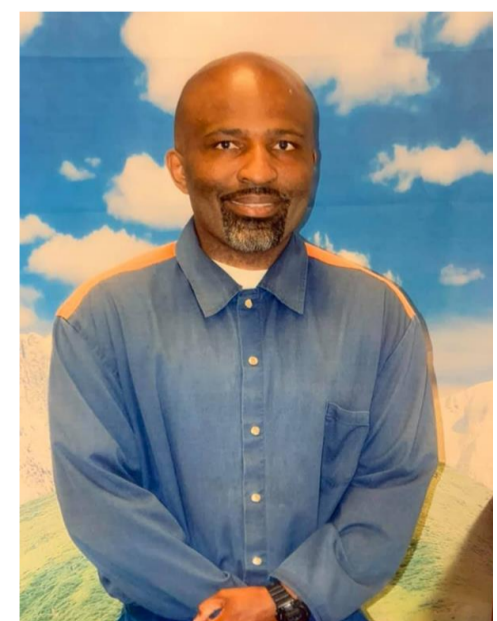
"Sticks and stones will break your bones, but words will never hurt you." That’s what many parents taught their kids in order to fight against bullies when I was young. In retrospect, that was one of the greatest lies ever told to us because words can and do hurt people.

I’m a survivor of bullying. I say survivor because some kids couldn’t handle the onslaught of bullies and decided to end their own lives. I endured a lot of bullying as a kid which planted seeds of insecurities. Those seeds grew and sprouted into trees of self-hate that I wasn’t able to uproot until I was in my late twenties. I lived my adolescent years wishing I was more handsome, lighter, taller, and had what people called, "good hair". I didn’t like who I was and often wished I was someone else.

Most parents teach their children not to be bullies and to speak up when others are being bullied. However, there are mean and cruel people whose sense of self-worth seems to be predicated on hurting others. Whether it’s due to being mean spirited or being a victimizing victim ie., (hurt people hurting people) bullying is something that we have to deal with -- for now. Many bullying victims don’t have the mental capacity to cope and would rather commit suicide than suffer. That’s why Anti Bully Crusaders must fight to eradicate bullying.

In the midst of the fight, it’s imperative that we armor the vulnerable with bully-proof vests to help them repel bullies. The most effective repellent against bullying is self-love. It’s not enough to wait until someone is being bullied to tell them how smart, beautiful, worthy, special, precious, amazing, and blessed they are. We have to reinforce these self-esteem building adjectives daily because bullies are always on the prowl to break the morale of others.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." Although I don’t believe being yourself is the greatest accomplishment – world-wide peace and love are; it is indeed a great accomplishment. An accomplishment that we all should aspire to. An accomplishment that can once and for all make us impervious to bullying.



*Shannon Keys #210418 is incarcerated at Carson City Correctional Facility 10274 BOYER Rd CARSON CITY, MI 48811*

MICHIGAN HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE USES PLATFORM TO COMBAT BULLYING

# An Extraordinary Man Doing Extraordinary Things

BY SAALIH SIDDIQ IBN L. WASHINGTON

AMID THE COVID-19 CRISIS, the Honorable Jewell Jones (D-Inkster) is working equally hard from home, as he does in the office. He loves to lead; a skill he learned and cultivated at an early age, but didn't realize just how much he loved to build teams and motivate people until elected to Inkster's City Council as the youngest member in Michigan's history.

Becoming the voice of the people, representing newly innovative ideas and his relentless drive, catapulted his career to the next level. Jones won a seat at the Table of Legislators, as a Michigan State House Representative. Since then he has had an extensive and successful career in politics. Now seeking his third consecutive and final term, he plans to add to his legacy by changing the bullying narrative, not just in his district, but in all Michigan Schools.

It's 9:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning and I reach out to Jewell. He's in traffic, on his way to praise the Lord. Handling his business via two cell-phones, he accepts my call, I hear him say, "Hey, I gotta take this call. Let me put some thought to it and I'll get back with you... ~ Peace." He turns his attention towards me, we chop it up with a few subtleties then get right down to it. I pull out my pen and pad of questions and fire away.

MLMT-Saalih: Why Politics?

JJ: I wanted to make a difference in my community. The age gap was creating a distinct difference in forward thinking and this was preventing new ideas and younger voices from being heard. First, I just wanted to bridge that gap. Then I realized I can really make a difference. Bringing about change has become my primary mission in life.

MLMT-Saalih: Speaking of change. Bullying transcends: race, culture, gender, status, geography, age, religion -we see it everywhere. What made you take on this issue as part of your mission for this term?

MLMT-Saalih: In recent years we've seen an influx of bullying activities and the level of bullying related suicides amplifies the problem. Speaking with parents of victims, educators, and my colleagues we decided that acts of bullying must be taken more seriously to help prevent suicides and violence. Create meaningful policies that would force schools to be held more accountable, not only report incidents but also become proactive by implementing programming and support preventative measures. If we're going to change the bullying narrative we have to reshape thinking, attitudes and behaviors.

MLMT-Saalih: This issue is something that's so much more compelling than a lot of issues we've seen over the years. How big is the problem?

JJ: To put it in perspective and to contextualize the issue: No child should have to face bullying in our learning institutions. One death, as a result of bullying, is to many. For us to stand by and do nothing is a social injustice in and of itself. As legislators we have a grave responsibility to our constituents, communities, and especially to our young people.

MLMT-Saalih: How do you plan to bring about awareness?

JJ: As a legislator I have a powerful tool at hand. I can and will continue to use my platform to spearhead change, speak out and inform. The more people who learn about why it happens and how it can be prevented, the better! The more the public is aware of this issue, the more support goes into legislation to create preventative measures. I aim to make sure these issues will no longer be ignored, dismissed or pushed to the margins of our political and social agendas.

MLMT-Saalih: Amid the Covid-19 crisis what's the plan now?

JJ: Well, that's a good question. Pre-Covid-19, my team and I, partnered with ABC to host the largest Anti-bullying conference in the country for NABAM (National Anti-Bullying Awareness Month) of October. Unfortunately, our plans were thwarted by the novelty of the pandemic.

Covid-19 may have hindered our work, but we are not on a vacation! When things are somewhat back to normal we'll be faced with the same problems we had prior. To some degree things will be even worse.

So this year we'll be hosting the conference and a free virtual concert on Facebook Live October 24, beginning at 3:00 pm.

After this event we hope to attract more strategic partners such as legislators from both sides of the aisle, civic leaders, parents, student bodies, companies, and religious organizations; in an effort to place ABC's curriculum in all schools across the nation beginning with the Detroit Metropolitan and surrounding areas.

MLMT-Saalih: You could have picked any anti-bullying organization to partner with. Why ABC?

JJ: The ABC approach speaks volumes about their understanding in what our children need. They're ahead of the curve and a clear leader in reaching our youth. It's the best in-class program in every way. ABC's interactive curriculum tends to be especially skilled at motivating young men and women, building leaders, teaching social skills, addressing social and individual distractions, developing and cultivating self-esteem, and so much more. It's an honor and I'm proud to be teaming up with ABC and all its affiliates. It's time to get it done.

MLMT-Saalih: Digressing... What's important to Jewell Jones and what's the plan for the immediate future?

JJ: The most important thing in life to me (after God and Family), is how my life's works affects those around me. That's the true measure of one's worth! My immediate future is to bring change for better to the people. We have some ideas and detailed plans of implementation So stay tuned-in.

As far as bullying goes, I can and will continue to use my platform to speak out, help change and create laws, but the real challenge is getting everyone involved. Together we can change the narrative because Bullying is not something that has no cure, it can be fixed!

MLMT-Saalih: Give us one final thought.

JJ: Everyday we must work a little bit harder to become a little bit better. The one thing we all should have learned from this crisis is that we must **MOBILIZE, UNIFY, AND UTILIZE ALL OUR RESOURCES.**

In the meantime, and in between time, we have to take this virus seriously, and wait it out to survive.

MLMT-Saalih: Well said. We salute you young Prince for your selflessness and for continuing to spread light during these tumultuous times. It's men of your character and caliber that will change the world.

On behalf of the MyLifeMattersToo Family, I thank you and look forward to working with you in the near future, changing and saving young lives!

~ Peace Be Upon You



Rep. Jewell Jones

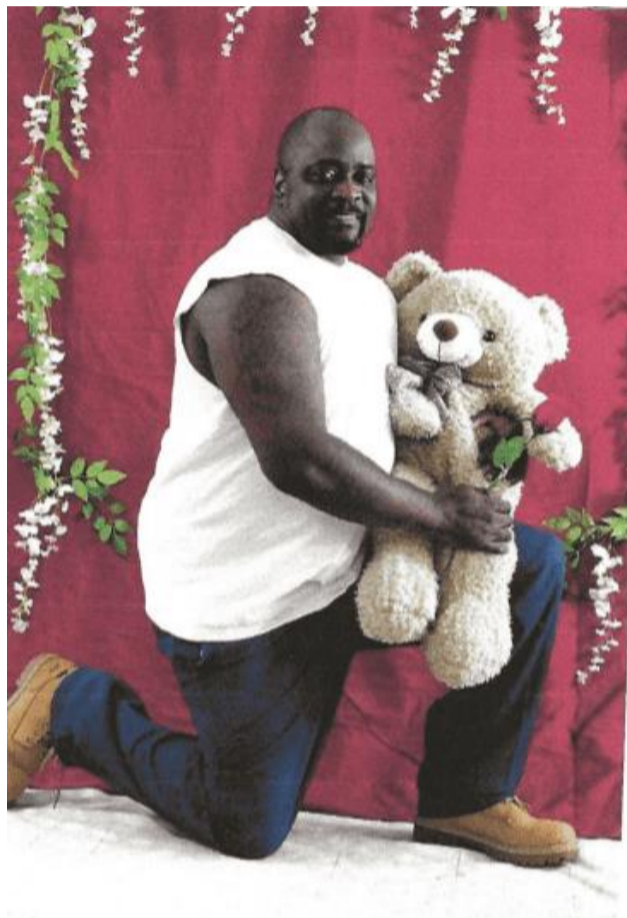
(D) District 11, Inkster  
MVC, House Military, Veterans and Homeland Security Committee



**PRISON FRIENDSHIP: "OUR MISSION IN CREATING OUR PRISON PENPAL SERVICE WAS TO PROVIDE A WAY FOR THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED TO MEET NEW PEOPLE."**

"We do understand the importance and value of having healthy, positive relationships no matter your circumstances... Especially for those in prison and doing time alone is a terrible thing. As many prisoners have limited contact with their families or nobody at all. We also believe that having support and encouragement while in prison is essential to their transition back into society and reducing recidivism. And no one can deny that there needs to be change when it comes to the prison system. So it is for these reasons that this website was born. Reach out to a PF member today, write a prisoner and become a part of the solution." Visit their website at <https://prisonfriendship.com/> You can also subscribe to their brochure by mailing them at [prisonfriendship1@gmail.com](mailto:prisonfriendship1@gmail.com) or by writing to: PrisonFriendship LLC, P.O. Box 24481, Dayton, OH, 45424.

Following are contributions by t of their members:



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**Just My Opinion**

I pray that my opinion does not offend anyone because it is not meant to or disrespect their ideals in any way.

These are simply the views of a man who is attempting to find his way in an existence that cannot seem to find the ever-eluding light at the end of the tunnel.

Looking at the world I can only feel filled with sorrow for obvious reasons.

We as a people, as a culture, need to find a way to push beyond the past, stop pointing fingers, and come together.

For as long as I can remember I've heard how we have been stripped of our heritage and I agree; but the same way something was taken away from us something was given also.

We all know that unfortunately life is not fair. If it was, the playing field would be equal for us all and we would all have the same opportunities, but that is definitely not the case.

When individuals speak on certain things, I don't feel they think them through before they say it out loud; and sometimes people say things just because they think that's what wants to be heard.

That being said, how can the following not make sense: If we were to remove all the black people from the United States and return us back to what we call the motherland, America would not be who she is today. I say that based on facts not assumptions. For example, if you take away all the blacks who work in undesirable jobs; or who work for our cities; or build our cities, cars, and even the homes we live in (the list goes on and on); the things we know and at times take for granted could not be.

Just think about it! How many times have you been grateful for the man that bags your groceries, and the man that pumps your gas, or even fixed your car so you could go to work.

This is where that saying, "It's a dirty job but someone has to do it," comes from.

Not to sound racist but let's look at the athletes of America:

Before blacks were allowed to compete, sports were nothing more than a pastime. Now look at them! Sports have become entertaining and inspirational for the world.

I said all that to say this! Everyone and everything of significance has made a contribution to the planet; and just maybe our contribution as a culture is to show man how hard work and dedication can persevere -- even in the worst of circumstances.

If we would've somehow miraculously been put back in Africa, there would be no Harriet Tubman, no Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King jr., Malcom X, Muhammad Ali, Michael Jordan, Mike Tyson, James Allen, Michael Jackson, Oprah Winfrey, Jackie Robinson, Kobe Bryant, Shaquille O'Neall, or Jay-Z -- and the list goes on.

All these people matter and they are what dreams are built on, not just for us but for the world. And the truth is that it would be a crime if these people were to never exist.

We have been blessed with something called evolution, and if we have proved nothing else we have shown that we are resilient.

Now before I can accuse you of attempting to do harm to us, shouldn't we address the drive-by shootings, the gang violence, and the raping of our mothers and daughters? \*\*\* The father abusing and abandoning his own seeds as well as what should be his Queen.

Internally we are in complete disarray, but we are far from lost. All in all, black lives do matter. They always have, even when his persecutor is the mirror reflection of himself.



## Rest In Peace & Remember Me

### *Rest In Peace*

I'm tired of hearing people bragging about how "Turnt up" that their hood is.  
I used to do the same thing because people hurting WAS my amusement.  
But, what about my family? Or the people that I was close to?  
I lost enough to the streets...  
But I'm going to let you know what I'm going through.  
I had a little homie named Jamesz, from Desota Bass, who loved to fight.  
He was in the club one night, and his reppin' got too hype.  
He went outside to throw some blows, but their intentions weren't that.  
A bullet went straight through his heart, now Jamesz isn't coming back.  
Two other people were shot at least three times a piece and didn't die;  
But it only took One shell for Jamesz to be taken before his time.  
REST IN PEACE to my little homie. You were a star in this cold world.  
But you died because you wanted to beat some dude up in front of his girl.  
What about Mario from the block? The one way in Dayton View.  
I had all of the clips for their guns to shoot, so they called me to come through.  
I WAS ON MY WAY!!! But I stopped at my brother's house.  
People rolled up on the block and shot Mario in his mouth.  
REST IN PEACE... He died quickly.  
He was gone before they got to the stop sign.  
His little brother was doing good! His bitterness has him now doing time.  
How many people are we going to watch die because of us?  
A "STRAY" bullet can hit our family, but we don't care because we think that we're tough.  
I had another little homie...  
Little B, whose life stopped.  
Selling Heroine, he went from stealing cars to buying three of them off of the lot;  
In a month and a half...  
He went from being broke, to having money stashed away.  
So the vultures came out. My other little homies and they saw Little B as prey.  
They zapped his phone, got his clientele and dared Little B to step up.  
You see, Little B never was a punk, and he didn't learn how to duck.  
He was shot four times, then he got up and went to the truck...  
Then he came back and tried to dump... His pride just got him slumped.  
That is ANOTHER one of us gone...  
Toe tagged...  
He's in the dirt...  
Little B got merked, because he was trying to sell work.  
Will we EVER realize;  
There's only two ways that life will end?  
Like, living to die by the gun;  
Or we can go ahead and do life in the Pen.  
My homies Heavy was set up by some chicks and they got him killed.  
Mar-Mar got EIGHT to the chest and Kantron's brains were spilled.

I had a lot of my people taken!  
I hear, "Man, charge it to the game."  
But "The Game" isn't playing fair.  
The rules need to be rearranged.  
My homie Tom-Tom...  
He was known for robbing the whole city.  
He put fear in people's hearts...  
No mask so they saw who did it.  
He called me to come hoop,  
But I was on the other side of town...  
Thirty minutes later I got another call...  
Tom-Tom got put down...  
Three people came up on the scene, with a nine, a four-five and an AK.  
The one with the AK;  
Shot Tom-Tom in his face.  
He stood over him when he dropped, and he unloaded the clip.  
Tom-Tom was shot four times in his face and they tried to shoot up his casket.  
LIFE IS TOO SHORT!!!  
Choose to live and not die;  
By the lies that have shaped our lives, so that we don't have to try not to cry.  
I write from a place...  
That bleeds MASS from my past wounds.  
But what if I had Christ back then?  
Right now, my cell wouldn't be my tomb!!!

### *Remember Me!!*

Remember me;  
Blazing throughout history?  
You can't domesticate unsubmitiveness at its peak...  
This is more than what you can see...  
Migraine's unexpectancy;  
While slowly making your breath cease;  
I flow internationally.  
Toastmasters mobility;  
But life is what I desire most...  
Even though you can have me;  
And not even know.  
Quiet fire flame;  
Proclaiming lives at every spin.  
Quitters never prosper;  
So my fight might not ever end.  
Consider sanitarianism  
By "Social Distancing" from the ones you love...  
Aw yea, use hand sanitizer before and after gloves.  
Government officials have NO idea as to what to do.  
And Marion Correctional Institution...  
Their infirmary still only gives ibuprofen;  
Even though your symptoms grew.  
The unequivocal and resoundingness of this epic truth;  
Is proof as to how unimportant inmates' lives are to this institute...  
BUT YOU;  
Can remember me...  
I'm telling you that I can't breathe;  
Yet ALL throughout history;  
You've treated me AS Covid-19.  
I had a twenty-dollar bill that was fake...  
Is THAT what made you put your knee under my face;  
And hold it on my throat;  
Until my life was taken away!?  
Almost NINE minutes past...  
Over and over and over and over...  
I saw my life flash  
"MAMA!!"  
I need you by my side;  
To see me as I pass



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I love you mom...  
As you can see your son did NOTHING bad.  
I COOPERATED EVERY ONE OF THEIR REQUESTS!!!  
I was STILL killed by a BADGE!!!  
Didn't the police take an oath?  
Was THEIR oath to take MY life?  
Was I so worthless to YOU that it didn't matter if I did EVERYTHING right?  
During a global pandemic YOU said, "Let's stay at home TOGETHER."  
YOU then brutally and senseless EXECUTED my future ALTOGETHER.  
Almost every street is in the street;  
To protest over what YOU did to me.  
Will the AVENGERS be useless to help this peeled scab;  
That makes this country bleed?  
WILL YOU REMEMBER ME!?  
Because of the awareness that I personified?  
ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE!!!  
My death is EQUALITY'S open lie...  
MY LIFE MATTERS!!!  
Remember me throughout this nation's raging cry...  
"NO! YOUR LIFE DON'T MATTER!"  
That is what I saw in that cop's eye...  
But can YOU Remember me?  
PLEASE???  
"Say his name...  
What's his name!?  
What are their names!?  
When will this stop???"