

**AZ One To Perform On BET**



Springfield's Own "AZ One" To Perform On BET's 106 And Park --- "Wild Out Wednesday Show!"

July 12, 2006  
6 PM (ET) 5 PM (CT)

Ayanna & Niambi Rowland See AZ One on page 7



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**The Making Of Dreamgirls**



(L-R) Stars Jennifer Hudson, Anika Noni Rose, Beyonce Knowles and Jamie Foxx are part of the cast from DreamWorks Pictures' and Paramount Pictures' upcoming movie Dreamgirls. (PRNewsFoto/DreamWorks, Carlo Allegri)

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**National Achievers Inductees**



■ Springfield/IL... The Springfield Urban (SUL) recently inducted students into the National Achievers Society (NAS), a national honor society that recognizes the academic achievement of African American youth and youth of color. The ceremony, representing eleven different Springfield schools, was held at the Center for the Arts and included about 100 students with a 3.0 grade point average or higher from the 3rd to the twelfth grade. In honoring their achievement, each student was presented with a certificate of merit.

The keynote speaker for the NAS ceremony was Nicole Gales, principal of Springfield Ball Charter School who shared some of her experience.

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**Women Of Influence For 2006**



■ Springfield/IL... Security Bank in partnership with the Springfield Business Journal recently held their third annual "Women of Influence" recognition program.

Women of Influence honored five local women for their contributions to the Springfield area community. Selected by their peers through submitted nominations, all have made important contributions to the community at large. One of the Women of Influence for 2006 is Jackie Newman, Executive Director of the Springfield Housing Authority (SHA). In addition to her job at SHA, she and her husband, Rev. Roy Newman are leading their own-Fresh Visions Community Church. Newman is active in several organizations. She has three degrees-an associate from Robert Morris College, a bachelor and master

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**Graduate's Mom Is 8,000 Miles Away**



■ Nacogdoches/TX... Stephen F. Austin State University graduate Amelia Mayeaux displays a greeting for her mother, Romona Mayeaux, who was 8,000 miles away in Bagram, Afghanistan watching her daughter graduate from college. Romona, a chief warrant officer 2 with the National Guard,

was connected to the Web as her daughter received her Bachelor of Business Administration degree in marketing.

(Photo: Hardy Meredith/Stephen F. Austin State University)

**5-Year-Old Philosophy Winner**



■ Washington/DC...Tanjah Tolson, 5, of Washington D.C., is this year's winner of the Most Philosophical Kindergartner in America for the National Philosophy Challenge at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. on May 8, 2006. Tanjah Tolson is a student at Noyes Elementary School who submitted a drawing depicting herself hiding in the attic with the caption, "When I am alone." In response to the question "Which is more powerful, fear or hope?" More than 5,000 entries were received from around the world for the sixth annual National Kids Philosophy Slam. (Photo-Michael Temchine)

**Making HBCU History -- Farrah Gray Becomes the...**

**Youngest Doctorate Recipient**



(L-R) Dr. Leah Fitchue, President, Payne Theological Seminary; Dr. Farrah Gray and Dr. Charles E. Young, President, Allen University  
Photo Credit - Bennie Brown

**Columbia/S.C...** Allen University recently conferred the Honorary Doctorate degree of Humane Letters to Farrah Gray in recognition of his ingenious economic mind and distinguished commitment to the development of values such as leadership, integrity and scholarship. Gray, at the age of 21, is the youngest person to receive an Honorary Doctorate in the history of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Recently Gray was also named as one of the most influential Black men in America by the National Urban League's Urban Influence Magazine.

"We wanted to pay homage to Mr. Gray's contribution to education and his dedication to utilizing his skills to open doors for persons who desire to go into business," says Allen University's President, Dr. Charles E. Young.

Gray, raised in the projects of Chicago's Southside, defied all odds by becoming a self-made Millionaire by the age of 14. His meteoric rise from poverty to national and international prominence as an entrepreneurial icon and pre-eminent power speaker has inspired millions around the world. Gray's entrepreneurial career began by watching his mother work tirelessly at three jobs to support the family. To help, at age 6, Gray sold hand painted rocks and homemade body lotion door-to-door. At 7, he carried business cards that read "21st Century CEO." However, he didn't stop there at just helping his own family. At 8, he became co-founder of Urban Neighborhood Enterprise Economic Club (U.N.E.E.C.) on Chicago's Southside.

U.N.E.E.C. was the forerunner of New Early Entrepreneur Wonders (NE2W), the flagship organization he opened on Wall Street. NE2W enlisted, educated and engaged "at-risk" youth by creating and developing legal ways for them to acquire additional income.

His sense of social responsibility motivated him to create the non-profit organization, The Farrah Gray Foundation. Among other programs and initiatives, his Foundation focuses on inner city community-based entrepreneurship education and provides scholarship and grant assistance for students from at-risk backgrounds to attend HBCUs. He donates his honorariums from speaking engagements (which can be upwards of \$15,000) and the proceeds of his book to his foundation, in what he refers to as his "self-imposed"

youth tax.

Gray is a spokesman for the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Bone Marrow Donor Program. His sister, Greek, is in dire need of a bone marrow transplant and he works tirelessly to raise awareness about the need for African American marrow donors who are greatly underrepresented in the Donor Registry. He has consulted with companies and organizations from JP Morgan Chase to the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Development Agency.

The Farrah Gray Foundation is in partnership with the Kauffmann Foundation, launching entrepreneurship programs in inner-city schools across the country. Gray has been given the keys to the cities of Dallas, Shreveport, and Cincinnati. He has received proclamations from the Governors of Illinois

and Nevada, the Mayors of Chicago, Las Vegas, St Thomas, New Orleans and Clark County Nevada commissioners. Earlier this year, First Premiere Bank and Diamond Financial Products unveiled its newest debit card, The Farrah Gray Prepaid MasterCard, which features Gray's likeness. He was also the youngest member of the "African-American Leadership" Roundtable, where he was invited by President George W. Bush. He is the author of the best-selling book Reallionaire, which was endorsed by former President Bill Clinton and Stedman Graham. Gray's book and his journey to succeed against the odds have become required reading and part of classroom study from elementary schools to college and university campuses such as Harvard University.



"Enjoying IAMG Conference" (L-R) Peggy Lewis LeCompte, Keynote Speaker for the Illinois Association Of Minorities In Government (IAMG); Ted Thomas, Jr., Board Member, IAMG; and Carl Officer, Mayor of East St. Louis, Illinois were in attendance at the 18th Annual State Of The State Minorities Training Conference held May 10th thru May 12th at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield, Illinois. (Roy Williams, Jr., Executive Director, IAMG)