

# GRIOT

ANGELICA RILEY, EDITOR  
JOSEPH GOINGS, REPORTER

IN THE RECORDS OF WEST AFRICAN HISTORY, "GRIOT" (PRONOUNCED GREE-OH) WAS THE HONORED NAME BESTOWED ON WISE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE STORY TELLERS ENTRUSTED WITH THE TASK OF DOCUMENTING TRIBAL HISTORIES AND GENEALOGIES.

## Star Students

### Tennis Scholarship Helped Student Graduate

ANGELICA RILEY



Josh Burris, who graduated from Colorado State University in December, is a talented tennis player. The athlete is notable for his skill and technique on the court, but it was his love for the sport and the community that granted him scholarships for both the 2006 and 2007 school years.

Burris recalled the events in his life that lead up to his success as a student athlete. "I have been playing tennis since '99. That would be 9 years," Burris said. As a child, Burris decided to play tennis because of his cousin. She had been playing tennis for a while and got him into a summer program. "That's when I first started. I ended up really liking it and I was a natural," Burris said. He began teaching tennis in high school

and has been doing so for the past seven years.

When he came to Fort Collins for college, Burris volunteered at the Boys and Girls Club of Larimer County as an assistant tennis instructor. He had the opportunity to teach young people both tennis and life skills. This helped Burris land scholarships with a tennis program called First Serve.

Now Burris has graduated and is seeking to work with a non-profit organization like Big Brothers Big Sisters. "I am not sure where that will lead me, but that is where I want to start off. I want to work with inner city kids and families," He said. He is even interested in coaching football in the future.

Although he is moving into the next stage of his life, tennis will always be important to him. "I think I may have missed my window for professional," he said. "But I will always play just because I love it so much ... Tennis has been a really big part of my life, every since I started playing. Playing, teaching, and even helping me through college, it has blessed my life."

*“Playing, teaching, and even helping me through college, it has blessed my life.”*



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### Hard Work Pays Off

JOSEPH GOINGS

Hard work can take you a long way in life. Just ask Andrea "Dre" Hart. She has been hard at work ever since she set foot inside a CSU classroom. Hart was born in Aurora, Colorado and attended Eagle Crest High School, where she excelled in her classes. An accounting class encouraged her to major in accounting.

Hart is a junior here at CSU. In addition to achieving a high grade point average, she has also been involved in several extra-curricular activities. She is a member of Black Student Alliance and worked for the Office of Black Student Services last year. She is

currently coordinating a tutoring program. For this school year, Hart received the Howard Family Scholarship for her academic prowess.

Her ultimate goal is to receive her Certified Public Accountant license and open up a night club, or enter the sporting industry. With her hard work and desire to be the best that she can be, Andrea Hart will surely succeed in all of her future endeavors.



## Big Event News

### Hip Hop Explosion

ANGELICA RILEY

November 10, 2007 marked the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Hip Hop Explosion hosted by Black Student Alliance. The Hip Hop Explosion is a step show that showcases the talents of Black and Latino Greek Letter Organizations. Four sororities and one fraternity competed for first place: Pi Lambda Chi Sorority Incorporated, Lambda Theta Nu Sorority Incorporated, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.



Pi Lambda Chi, Sorority, Inc.

corporated. The Ladies of Pi Lambda Chi Sorority, Inc. took first place.

The Hip Hop Explosion carries on the tradition of stepping. Stepping is a physical art form that originated in Africa but has grown in popularity predominantly on historically black campuses. It involves rhythmic stomping and chanting, in which the body is used as a drum. This year, the tradition was held at the Lincoln Center in Fort Collins.

The event was hosted by comedian Steve Brown, who entertained the audience with physical antics and lip syncing.

Despite mixed opinions about the show, most students said that they

### Chance and Possibilities

ANGELICA RILEY

On February 4<sup>th</sup> Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, Inc., and ASAP joined forces to prepare for Valentine's Day. They hosted an event called "Chances and Possibilities," a speed dating extravaganza. The program was hugely successful and drew in over 200 participants.

Before the evening of chances began, I asked some of the women what they wanted to see in a man. "He has to be goal oriented. He has to be able to make me laugh and he has to treat his mother well ... He has to be fine and he needs to smell good and take your breath away," said sophomore Sara Anderson.

With this information in mind, I decided to join in on the speed dating fun and see how these guys would measure up. By the end of the two hour event, I interviewed 22 promising young men. Here is what some of the men had to say. Take notes, ladies.

#### What do you like in a woman?

"She has to be funny and also a little weird. If you're not weird, you're boring so I surround myself with weird people."  
- Taylor Smoot, Senior

"She has to make me laugh ... and hold a decent conversation that is entertaining."

- Mark Johlgrén, Freshman

#### What bothers you about women?

"I think that women are dishonest with themselves when they say they are not good enough. I like girls who are secure about themselves."

- Alex Mazzola, Junior

"The fact that they can talk to each other telepathically ... and I don't know what's going on."  
- Scott Little, Freshman

#### What are your future goals?

"I want no responsibilities every day of the week. Wouldn't that be great?"  
- David Perloe, Senior

"To make a lot of money, travel, get a good job, get married and have a family, and live happily ever after."  
- Ashton Williams, Senior

"I want to be a smoke jumper ... a fire man that leaps out of plains to put out fires."

- Cayman Ham, Sophomore

#### Are you funny?

"I think so ... How much does a polar bear weigh? Enough to break the ice."

- Patrick LaCount, Freshman

"On the occasion. I'm funny at night from nine to five."  
- Ryan Alders, Freshman

#### What do you want women to know about you?

"My phone number."  
- Tim Stansbury, Junior

Overall, both men and women at the speed dating event said that they had a great time. Maybe some of them even found a special date.

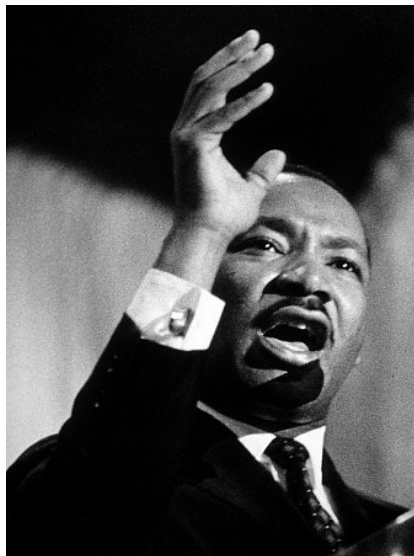


Sam Alemayehu speed dating.

## Holiday Special

### *Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

JOSEPH GOINGS



Charismatic. Powerful. Strong. These are just a few of the words that are often used to describe Martin Luther King Jr. Perhaps the most well known Civil Rights Activist during that era, Dr. King stood for many things. He stood for nonviolence, he stood for the little person, and most importantly he stood for equality.

His first taste of civil rights activity came in 1955 when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus. Parks inspired King to lead the Montgomery Bus boycott of 1955.

As a minister King advocated non violence, a value he took from influential figures such as Mohandas Gandhi. Despite protesting discrimination without violence, King and his followers endured police dogs and fire hoses. He led several marches, the most famous of which being the March on Washington. It was then that Dr. King delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, in which he called for an end to racial segregation and promoted harmony. King spoke out about the segregation in schools and demanded meaning-

ful legislation regarding civil rights.

Tragically his life was cut short. King was shot outside of his hotel room in Memphis, Tennessee, an act that led many to riot around the United States. The reaction to his murder was so strong that some say he was just as influential in death as he was in life. Dr. King was not only a huge figure in black history, but also in American history. He has left an indelible mark on this country and his effort in the 1960s has changed this nation for the better in many ways.

In Fort Collins, members of the community gathered at Colorado State University to remember the struggle for civil rights. The snowy weather on Martin Luther King Day was not even enough to end the celebratory program, it was simply moved inside. Whether Americans march or give speeches, we are thankful for the efforts our predecessors made to ensure equality.

### *Kwanzaa*

JOSEPH GOINGS

Still a very young holiday, Kwanzaa is the brainchild of Dr. Maulana Karenga who is the former leader of the Black Nationalist US Organization. Created in 1966, Kwanzaa is widely celebrated by African Americans in the United States. The holiday was created “To give a Black alternative to the existing holiday and give Blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and history,” according to [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org). The name “Kwanzaa” comes from a Swahili phrase “matunda ya kwanza” meaning “fresh fruits.”

Kwanzaa is a seven day celebration from December 26 to January 1, each day representing one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa. The seven principles

and their English translations are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).

The customs for Kwanzaa are symbolic and colorful. Houses are decorated in African cloth. The mkeka (mat) is placed on the ground next to other symbols like the kinara (candle holder) and the Mishumaa Saba (the seven red, green, and black candles). The centered black candle, which represents the people and is the first candle lit followed by another each day, is flanked on both sides by red (left), which represents the struggle, and the green candles (right) that

represent the hopes for the future.

On the last day the kikombe cha umoja (Unity cup) is placed on the mat and pours out liquid in remembrance of our ancestors. Books are also placed on the mat to symbolize a commitment to learning one’s heritage. (All information courtesy of [www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org](http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org)).

The office of Black Student Services also held their own Kwanzaa celebration, educating others and celebrating the holiday as well.

Junior Aaron Green who participated in the celebration said, “It’s a great celebration and a time for reflection and to rekindle family values.”

## Thanksgiving Dinner

JOSEPH GOINGS

Turkey, ham, dressing, stuffing for some, sweet potato pie, potato salad, and mustard greens all on one plate. After that hearty meal you did the only thing that should be done: get seconds. Even after that your eyes wanted something your stomach couldn't handle but you tried thirds anyway. About a quarter of the way through you realized that you were getting sleepy. You, sir or ma'am, had an affliction known as "The Itis." A meal of

that magnitude and bringer of the 'Tis' can only happen on one day, Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is one of the greatest holidays. Every year my grandmother cooks up everything already mentioned and more. I get giddy with joy when I think about that good home cooking. After three months of dorm food, Thanksgiving was greatly appreciated.

Now we all know about the Freshman Fifteen, but unbeknownst to many there is another phenomenon just like it. That one is called the Thanksgiving Ten. And this number does not even account for the heaps of leftovers. But that's a small yet plump price to pay for three to four days of Turkey Day bliss.

## Black Santa

ANGELICA RILEY

When snowflakes tumble from the sky and colorful lights twinkle from rooftops, children everywhere perk their ears for Santa Claus. The more adventurous little ones might sneak out of their bedrooms to catch a glimpse of the man in red crawling out of the chimney. The more imaginative children may even believe they saw Santa, they always say he was a big man with cherry red cheeks and a long white beard. And while all of these children agree that what they saw was indeed Santa, they may not agree exactly on what he looked like; at least to my little cousin, Santa Claus is black.

I have a black Santa figurine at my dad's house. I remember a visitor to the house thought the black Santa was strange. He wondered why people would even want to change Santa Claus. As I think about the black Santa and what he may mean, I don't think he has really been changed at all.

We have heard the stories of good old St. Nick. And Kris Kringle was actually a real person. But I have to break it to you, even our modern concept of the white Santa hardly reflects that person. Our Santa Claus was first used by Coca Cola to advertise. That Santa wore Coca Cola colors (red, white, black) and was fat

and happy because he was so enamored with the cola. Basically, Santa Claus was really a fictional character dreamed up for commercialism. Over time, Santa Claus has become much more than an ad. He has come to embody the very spirit of Christmas. We teach our children stories about

Santa Claus because they are part of our culture and warm winter memories. Santa Claus is now a symbol of gift giving, childhood and family.

Families invite Santa Claus into their home. They bake cookies for him, and children wait for him with excitement. For many, Santa is the very reflection of Christmas at home with the family. But what if your family is not white? Can a white Santa truly reflect what it feels like to be home with the family? Is he really so much different? Other than color, I feel that the black Santa is exactly the same as the white Santa. He is still a round man in red with a long white beard. And whether Santa Claus is in the mall or



at home, children of all colors recognize him as Santa no matter what his color is.

When my uncle dresses up for Christmas, he is a black Santa. When he puts decorations up around the house, there are lots of black Santas. These Santas all stand for Christmas and family. I think that for many households, the black Santa feels familiar and reflects their own family better. And isn't family what Christmas is all about?

I say we should bring out all the Santas. I think every family should be able to choose the Santa that represents their family the best.



# CREATIVE CORNER

## Letter to the One I Love

JOSEPH GOINGS

I wake up each morning eager to see your beautiful face, ready to see that bright smile, longing for that first day's kiss, only to realize that you're not there. But how can this be? I saw your face so vividly, so crystal clear in my mind...or maybe that's just it, it's only in my mind. Was I dreaming? Am I going insane, imagining things that aren't and can't be? Surely this can't be the case, but alas it is.

This is what it has come to, dreams and thoughts of you. I'm being forced to accept the fact that you aren't here. It tears me up inside that I'm unable to do the things I want with you. I can't go to see you if I wanted, I can't hang out with you if I just wanted to chill for a while, I can't even hug and kiss you when I crave it, when I desire it...when I NEED it.

They say that absence makes the heart grow fonder. Well I say that separation makes the heart ache with pain. Some nights I just want to drop to my knees and cry, cry and

question why, why is this happening to me? Am I being punished? What did I do to deserve the pain that I have to endure?

And then your smiling face seeps into my mind again, and my tears go away, my heart stops aching, and I sit back and say to myself, "I'm not being punished. I'm being tested. I'm being made into a stronger person for this. This pain I'm enduring isn't anything that should be shunned away as something dreadful. No...no...this is love I'm feeling..."

I should be ecstatic that there is someone as unforgettable as you, no matter how near or far, to make me feel the things I feel for you. And that's when I call you up, anxious to hear your soft, sweet voice in my ear. I call to ask how your day is going, to ask what you're doing, to pick your brain of every single thing that I can until we have exhausted our conversation for the day...and then we stay on the phone not saying a word and not needing to. We are just happy to know that the

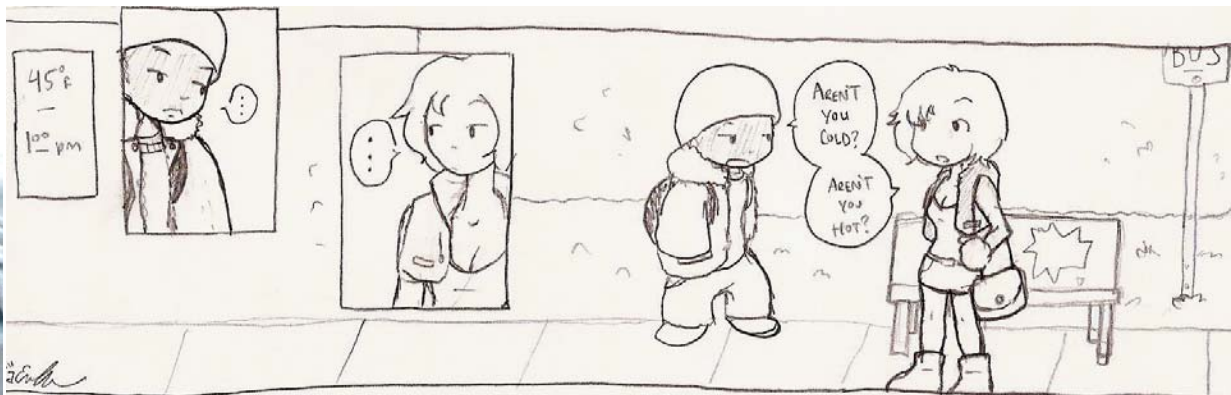
other is there, perfectly content hearing each others' gentles breathes blow.

So that's how I will always feel. I won't be sad that we are apart. I will just remember all that we have and all that we will have in the future. I know the day will come when we'll meet up again and those days I shall truly cherish. We will have our summer of love this year, but that's nothing compared to the eternity of love we are soon to have. From the bottom of my heart and from the depths of my soul, I love you as much as a man can.



## Braiden 333

EMERSON BROOKS



# PROFESSIONAL STAFF

## *Welcome Alfreda!*

ANGELICA RILEY



In October of 2007, we sent well wishes to Theresa Grangruth, who moved to Minnesota after six years of working as the Administrative Assistant for the Office of Black Student Services. Now we are happy to welcome Alfreda M. Whaley to our office as the new Administrative Assistant. We got to have a conversation with Freda (as she prefers to be called) to find out more about her.

### **Where are you from originally?**

I'm from Calumet Park, Illinois.

### **What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Every day it was something new and exciting. I wanted to be a doctor and one point and a lawyer in another. When I went to

college I wanted to be a social worker and after I finished college I didn't want to be one anymore ... I think that people's problems have changed dramatically over time and that's sad.

### **Why did you come to Colorado?**

I went to school at University of Southern Colorado for my undergraduate degree.

### **Tell me about your family.**

My family is dispersed throughout the U.S. I have three sisters and one brother. I also have a husband and two sons ages 28 and 12.

### **That's quite an age gap.**

I know. We call it a blessing from God, and a tax deduction. That's our family joke.

### **I hear you like animals.**

Yes, I love animals. When I was a child, we could not have pets. When I found an abandoned pet on the streets, I'd bring it home and my mother would take it back to where I found it. I think I'm making up for that now. I have two dogs, three cats, a pigeon, two turtles, fish, a bearded dragon lizard ... just a lot of pets. Truly, they are a big part of the family. Sometimes I joke that I'm considering applying for federal funding to care for my animals.

### **Before you were hired at Black Student Services, what did you do?**

I worked as Administrative Assis-

tant/Buyer for facilities management at CSU. I was in charge of setting up purchase orders that help run the university.

### **Why did you want to work here?**

I needed a change of pace. And I find that working with students is so rewarding.

### **How would you describe your experience at Black Student Services so far?**

Rewarding. Every day there is something new. I get to learn new things and how they work. Here at Black Student Services, I feel that I am working with genuine, honest people who are bright and innovative.

### **Does this job fit any of your childhood dreams?**

Yes because I'm interacting with students and professional people. I'm also using my social work abilities in this position because I get to work with people.

### **What has been your secret to success in life?**

I try to be honest and treat people how they treat me. I always give people a chance.

### **Anything else?**

I like to be creative. I like to cook. I like sewing ... I want to start making outfits and cross stitching again. I like plants and animals, and I like people!

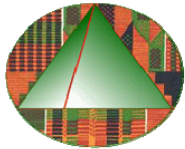
CHECK OUT THE NEXT GRIOT FOR  
THIS YEAR'S BLACK HISTORY  
MONTH EVENTS.

AND IF YOU (OR YOUR CLUB OR ORGANIZATION) WANT TO BE IN THE NEXT GRIOT, SEND IN YOUR OWN PICTURES AND ARTICLES TO:

**ALRILEY@SIMLA.COLOSTATE.EDU**

AWARDS PROGRAM NOMINATION FORMS AVAILABLE AND  
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AWARDS PROGRAM: MAY 3, 2008 @2:00 P.M.  
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*April 2008*

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Award Program Nomination Forms due	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			