

INTRODUCTION: Hello, this is Michael Eure and I'd like to invite you to the Michael Eure show featuring student hosts and very special guests talking about a variety of interesting topics. You can find us on the Eagle Stream YouTube channel.

MICHAEL EURE: Good afternoon and welcome to the Michael Eure show.

Today we have two very special guests, Pryce Baldwin and Dr. Michael Wood, and both of them have so much information.

But I'm gonna start off by asking them because the theme for July is life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

If you can give us a brief 30-second, kind of, what do you think that means based on all of your experiences? Because today we're going to focus on African American males and men of color.

But what do you think that means?

For example, and I'll.

I'll start with price.

PRYCE BALDWIN: Well, I think it means in my mind that they have access to, that is African American males, have access to a good life and a good life leads us to a good education.

And once you get the good education, you can see the liberties that abound from that, and it allowed them to pursue happiness in their lives and for too many African American males, that is not true.

And so, that's been my life's work and my life's focus.

EURE: And we're glad you're still doing it, 'cause we need it.

BALDWIN: Right. Yes.

EURE: Dr. Wood.

DR. MICHAEL WOOD: Good afternoon gentlemen. Hopefully all is well with each of you.

I'd like to start with a little parable my dad left me many years ago. He said

Son, once you get in education, no one can take it from you.

And I think this is very, very important because as the men of color and that black males, we need to base with strong education, it may not always be a formal education, sometimes it may be a technical education.

I think it's very, very important that we, as men of color, seek opportunities to educate ourselves and the society for better help ourselves, our families and those we love the most.

I think as education, as the backdrop and the underpinning for all that we do as men of color and particularly in today's society and what we're facing, we need education and [indecipherable], be strong and be productive men.

EURE: Alright.

And we're gonna have a shout out right now for your HBCU, because Pryce is a graduate of North Carolina A&T and Dr. Wood's a graduate of Norfolk State and they're rivals. and [inaudible.]

BALDWIN: No longer though because we're out of the league.

WOOD: Until next year.

BALDWIN: Behold the green and gold.

EURE: They were rivals in CIAA and then they became riavels in the MEAC. So it's just a constant flow that changes and Norfolk State [indecipherable] A&T, just like [indecipherable] way Hampton is.

But I'm gonna start now with interviewing with Price.

So Mike, you can just mute your mic and we're gonna come back to you soon as I finish with him.

Alright, so Pryce I've I've known all the work you've done with Helping Hands and tell us a little bit about that and how that program worked with mentoring African American males in Wake County public schools.

How did that come about and what did what... just give us a little, umm, [indecipherable.]

BALDWIN: Well, it happened early in Dr. Bob Bridges tenure, he was the first African American Superintendent for Wake County schools.

EURE: Okay

BALDWIN: And around '87 – '88, he had written a paper, I guess, for his doctorate at some time and talked about the disparities for African American males in Wake County schools.

He was the first that I remember talking about the 3rd grade syndrome. And that is that when African American males get the 3rd-grade, all of a sudden the charm is turned off and they become monsters so to speak.

And don't achieve as well as they had in the prior first three years.

And so, he was looking for a remedy and the remedy he thought, was to provide male mentors who worked in the school system to actually mentor boys in elementary school.

So we started in '87-'88 year and our focus then was just a third graders. And I guess we had about 20 mentors across the system because, you know, there's a disparity in black males in the schools to start with. And so that was part of the issue.

Uh. And so we would meet with the kids after school. Uh, and do activities with them and help them with their homework and encourage them and provide some kind of guidance in terms of being in the school setting.

And so that went on for a few years.

And then in 1992, the guy, the person who was head of the program, decided he wanted to go back to into the classroom, back to the schools, to be a principal. And so, Dr. Bridges asked me if I would serve in that capacity as the coordinator for the program. And so we did.

And there, we did a lot of things. I believe this, that a child learns better when they are, where something took place as opposed to seeing it in the book.

And so, we thought exposure was important. We went all over the country, on the East coast anyway... Uh, with those kids. To the Outer Banks, some of them and never been, and I'll share this story with you.

One of the kids in my group, uh, we went to the Outer Banks and stayed in the hotel. I think I had about six boys in the room with me and five o'clock in the morning, I hear one of the kids say, hey man, get up, let me show me some show you something. Let me show you something and I woke up to see what he was gonna show me.

And sure enough, he was showing him the sun rising, something they had never seen. And it just boggled my mind that kids have not seeing the sunrise.

And so with that, let me know right then and then here's a very common thing in the world the sun rising... kids had never seen until we did that. We did a lot of other stuff with them.

We had programs at the end of the year where kids were on it for whatever they had done in their in their particular schools.

We had Olympic events at schools where the kids participated and you know, of course of boys are always athletic, so they always look forward to that.

So it's a mixture of things to provide support and guidance, not only for the kids, but for their families and their parents as well.

And most of the parents were, I can tell you, single moms.

EURE: Alright, so over the past five years and you help post these students, last year we've been having a group of high school students come from Cape Town, South Africa.

But you were instrumental in doing preservation work with a Rosenwald School so would like to talk a little bit about the Rosenwald's and also what you did with those students.

And Mike and I are gonna go over to the side, or all of us, you know, and if you could just let us know what all of this is?

BALDWIN: Okay. Well, this is a school at my church, St. Matthew Baptist Church, and I need to do some background on it.

I grew up in eastern North Carolina, little town called Lake Waccamaw in Columbus County, about 30 miles from Wilmington, and the first school that I went to was a Rosenwald school.

It didn't look like this school, but it was a little bit bigger and similar.

First year school I went to that particular school.

The next year, uh, this was an elementary school that I went to, so the next year we went to the high school. And of course, they had built a high school that housed students from about five different Rosenwald schools.

Because Rosenwald schools were community schools, most of them were built near churches. And of course, there was input from Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington. There was input from the community. There was input from the white community as well. Uh, and that's how the school got built.

And so in 1994, I believe it was. '91. We had been housing adults, families in that school because the school was no longer used and we had two families renting apartments in it.

And then finally it got to the place, it was so dilapidated that we decided to do away with it.

We call the Volunteer Fire Department to burn it down and in the interim, a young lady by the name of Kelly Lawley, who worked for Wake County Preservation, visited our church. And she saw the building and she said that's a Rosenwald school.

And of course, I didn't know what it was called because, you know, when you grow up, you, your parents don't tell you everything. They can't tell you everything, because they don't

know everything, but when we did some research on it, we found out it was a Rosenwald school. North Carolina had over 800 Rosenwald schools, and today there are probably less than 100 still standing.

Ours happens to be the only one in Raleigh that's still standing, and we were able to preserve it through the efforts of Vernon Malone, who was a county commissioner, also a member of our church, and of that community, got us a grant to do the roof on the building. And from that we proceeded on to preserve it.

So it stands today as a beacon, I think in the community to let people know that this is what blacks had to endure in order to get an education.

And so this year we got uh, that Michael has the pictures up here, shows students from South Africa who were visiting in the triangle area and they came to our school to see it.

And, some of the students from the church, this is a group of students from my church who posted them and guided them around and showed them the facility as it as it exists today.

And so, but this COVID thing going on, we can't, haven't been able to use it much, but I look forward to the day when we can use it as a great resource.

And this is a picture of the group, this is the South African students, along with our students outside the building.

EURE: Okay, and thank you.

And now you're an author, and we're gonna probably let you talk about that in a little bit, but for now, I'm gonna bring Dr. Wood in. But I would definitely let you talk about it.

It's Isaiah's World, is that...

BALDWIN: Yes.

EURE: But thank you Pryce and Mike, we're gonna let you kind of guide us starting with, um, the workforce development book that you did. That you were particularly focused on retention for African American male students at community colleges.

Can you tell us about that book review first?

BALDWIN: Sure Michael.

EURE: We'll turn off our mics and listen.

BALDWIN: Thank you so much.

The book that we have had the opportunity to write a chapter in that's called *Workforce Development Guidelines for Community College Professionals*.

This is a book that was edited by Dr. Rothwell, Gerity and Carraway, and I had to pleasure writing a book chapter in that in that book and had the idea that to extend my, continue to extend my research.

Most of my research was done around retention of black men at the community college in collegiate levels.

I extended that research to also beginning include Latino men and STEM as well. Really focused upon two particular things; one was, William Sellars non-cognitive development theory and Sean Harper's anti-deficit thinking model. And we married the two initially to get a better understanding of how our students are successful. What are some of the success stories and what was expected of them when they went into the community colleges?

And we also have tried to provide best practices for professionals as they work with students and men of color.

One of the challenges that many of our young men face is a deficit mindset. And I think it's not only after the elementary school, the K level, also at the community college and collegiate level. Many of our instructors teach them when they come to our students, teach from a deficit position.

We are hoping to tell our professionals that we need to instruct from an anti-deficit position.

The old model that we have now is, I cannot must I will.

How can we impart that on the young men and young women that we work with when they come in to the community college level for their overall success?

EURE: Tell us now about our program that you are associated with Boys State University.

BALDWIN: Sure. The program, the two-part program at Boys State University.

It's a center of research and mentoring of black males and student teachers. We call it CBM. Thank you so much for putting one of the pictures up.

The center director is Dr. Julius Davis. I had the pleasure meeting Dr. Davis little over a year ago through another colleague, and just I just love his energy and the opportunity he provides for men and women of color on the campus of Boys State University.

He has been a real stalwart in regard to ensuring the success of black men.

I will also say the picture you see in front of you is the black male teacher initiative and consortium.

So there's two parts to the programs that we have put in place for Dr. Davis' lead.

We have gathered, he has gathered individuals from around the Maryland area.

The different counties, Montgomery County, PG County, Washington, DC, Baltimore and they've come together, even the KIPP schools in DC.

We all come together on the 3rd Thursday of every month to collaborate and speak to the initiatives that we would like to do in the support of black men.

As you can see, there are some young ladies in our group as well. I think it's very, very, very important that we collaborate across the spectrum.

We have some students, some students leaders in in the program as well.

We have some business leaders in the program and we have some great educators. And it's a multitude of great people doing great things for men and women of color in the Boys State.

Umm, the next program that I would like to talk to you about is the program we started at Penn State University called the Black and Latino Male Empowerment Group.

This group was started by myself and Dr. Andre Wilson and facilitated by Mr. Dorian Wright.

Though I am no longer at Penn State University, this program was the benchmark for what we attempted to do at Penn State University and the program is actually still going on today.

It gives us an opportunity to again help men of color and give them a safe space.

That particular program was very well supported by Dr. Marcus Whitehurst who is the Vice Provost of our Educational Equity at Penn State. And a good mentor and friend, Dr. Vernon Caraway and Edgar Farmer.

So ,I would say that that particular program has been a real Godsend to myself, and it helped me to keep much of my research at Penn State. Between Penn State and Norfolk State University.

As you can see on the on the website, the Black and Latino Empowerment was initially started as a black male empowerment group. And about a year and a half in, we were approached by the Latino males to provide the same services that we're providing to black men.

So, I think it's been an excellent opportunity and Mr. Kenney, who is now the Focal Point director at Penn State University, has been a Godsend as well in that space and continue to move forward with that particular project.

EURE: Alright. Thank you, Dr. Wood.

And we get ready to do a little break and we're gonna get to check out the North Carolina anti, what they call the steel, the called cold, steel drummers.

And then in the end, we're gonna do Norfolk State with their Million Dollar Funk Squad.

So right now, what do you think about that Pryce, until the band comes, do have any questions for Michael, or comments?

BALDWIN: I can tell you this. As we look at how we can improve a lot of black men in this country, there has to be a program from birth to death to get us there, and each one of us can contribute a little something along the way. That's my plight in life.

EURE: Well, what about you, Mike, do you have any comments about what he talked about earlier?

WOOD: You know, I would like to talk about that in general, but also they're not, you know, it's classroom instruction and outside of classroom instruction we call it non cognitive development. So those are the things that we looked look for. I look at non-cognitively.

You know the extra-curricular programs that universities and schools offer to our students that attract good students to come to our university.

For us, I was a Spartan Legion, and in the Funk Squad in in the band, it was wrestling teams, it was basketball teams, football teams, men's and women's soccer, volleyball team, bowling team. Things are all important part of the student experience.

The cheerleading squad, all these, all these young men and women, have been provided opportunities to participate, and they've come to participate because of what the university offers. I think it's very, very important that we have these noncognitive things.

And in the era of Covid, we know it's gonna be a struggle, but we're hoping that our students have opportunity to continue to move forward with some of these programs.

EURE: Alright.

Well, thanks both of you. We're getting ready to have some [indecipherable] time.

[NCA&T band playing]

Alright, thank you, Sarah.



Sarah's in the background, making sure all of our audio visual works, but that's a shout out to you, Pryce and Aggie pride.

That's right, Mike and we're gonna to let you get some Spartan pride.

WOOD: That's right.

EURE: I think the HBCU's are so important and working at a community college, I think that we need to connect our students much more intentionally with the HBCU's because they don't really know what they're missing. And I think it's a much better fit than they might understand.

So, tell us a little bit, before we go further. What about your experience, I know, Michael, you talked about it a little bit and Pryce, you did too.

Do you think that your matriculation at A&T and Norfolk State really helped you in realization of doing the work that you do now?

WOOD: I would like to say, that without a shadow of a doubt. My experience in the university I compared it second to none. Without NSU and the people who were there and the mentorship that was provided to me during the time I was in Norfolk State. And even now the connections I have now with our university, umm, like I wouldn't trade if anything in the world and I've had the pleasure of being in several universities and the PWI, and I'll say this much.

I love my green and gold and I would do anything in the world to support them and students who wanna go there. But any HBCU across the country.

I think it's important that men and women of color support HBCU's. We have a lot going on in the society today and our HBCU's are struggling in some particular places. We need to support our own.

So, we can have the, you know, so we can produce, to continue to produce great students and great leaders.

This is what HBCU's do across the country and without them we would not be where we are.

BALDWIN: Absolutely. I concur. I went to A&T at the time of revolt.

So, I don't know if it's in my genes or not, but I sure saw what it was like and coming from a small town in North Carolina, it enlightened me to the point that I began to see things I've seen before, but seeing them in a different light.

And just being there and being among the students, matter of fact my wife had lived in New York for a long time and that, we met at A&T.

So for me, yes, it was a great experience and a lasting one as well, so.

EURE: And I would like to say on A&T's behalf, they did get the credit for starting the sit-in movements at Woolworths and it was started by four freshman students and they have a monument on that campus.

So, as we talk about all these Confederate monuments coming down, we should also make sure our people go to our monuments and the HBCU's themselves are monuments.

BALDWIN: Absolutely.

EURE: Right now, Pryce, what I wanna do is talk a little bit about your books that you that you wrote.

BALDWIN: Okay.

EURE: And what... well, I guess you're still writing them associated with your grandson. Go ahead.

BALDWIN: Yes. Yes.

Well, I sort of mentioned it a minute ago when I talked about from birth to death.

Uh, but becoming a grandfather is as grand as becoming a father, I think. Umm, and to have a grandson at first. Umm, I live in Garner, NC, and of course, my daughter lived in Maryland at the time, when she had Isaiah.

And so we what we did with Isaiah was on Thursday, umm, we would take Isaiah to Petersburg, Virginia, and meet Mom and dad there and deposit him with them.

Then on Sunday we'd go back to Petersburg and pick him up and he'd spend the week with us.

And so, I'm a photographer and I just started taking pictures, man, you know, with the digital cameras, you can take a thousand pictures in a day and you know, so I just started taking pictures of him.

And one day it dawned on me. Maybe I should write the book so he can actually see the book. And I did.

And then it dawned on me again. I need to be sharing this with kids in the community who are who are preschool age kids because I mentioned the 3rd grade syndrome.

If our kids are not reading before they get to school, they're already behind the curve.

And so here was an effort to introduce them to books that have pictures in them of kids that look like them. Umm, so I've written seven of them. And I have six about Isaiah and the 7th is about his sister Isabella.

Of course, you know how women are. If you're doing something for a man or boy, you need to do something for the girl too.

So, we did the one on Isabella and all the others are about Isaiah and the one in particular, the one in the middle that says The Worlds of Isaiah and the Small World and the Big Men in It are men in his family who are productive.

You see him in the middle? That's his grandfather, he's sitting on the lap of. That's his father in the middle. That's his great grandfather on the right. So, we put some history in the book as well.

And so, it's an effort to, I mean, every I have been in the car all the time and I go to the store wherever and I see a kid with his mother. And I say to the mom, how old is he?

And she'll tell me. I say, well, is he reading yet? Sometimes. Let me give him a book.

So, I sign the book and give it to him. And I've had people to buy their books from us as well.

They're all on Amazon, so it's an effort to continue what I'd started years ago. That's it.

EURE: Aright.

Well, thank you, your motivational to everybody, and...

BALDWIN: Let me say one thing before I go, before we go.

Uh, Michael, I've known you for a long time.

EURE: Oh yeah.

BALDWIN: And so, listen. You have really stepped up.

I mean, I'm proud of the fact that you're doing this because our community needs to know who we are and what we are and what we are all about.

And oftentimes we don't know.

So, thank you for doing what you're doing.

WOOD: I would like to concur with that Mike, thank you for the opportunity to come on board.

I'm gonna say for us, by us, and we have to tell our stories.

BALDWIN: Absolutely.

WOOD: Often times others get opportunity that don't look like us to tell our stories.

It's time that we tell our stories and I appreciate the opportunity to tell our stories. Thank you so much.

EURE: Well, thank you.

And I was gonna give you 30 seconds for your [indecipherable].

Thank, but if you have anymore, you got 30 seconds, and then we're gonna check out Norfolk State University's Million Dollar Funk Squad.

WOOD: Pryce?

BALDWIN: Yes.

WOOD: Go right ahead.

BALDWIN: Well, listen, I was gonna say, uh, it's a great opportunity to meet you, Dr. Wood, and...

WOOD: Likewise.

BALDWIN: I will look for some of your research, you said... well, I can see it on the show.

The books that you've done, because you know we need it, we need to, we need to be broad-minded enough to bring in enough stuff to us.

I'll tell you a quick story. I grew up 30 miles from Wilmington and, umm, I went to school in North Carolina. I went to College in North Carolina. I went to New York for 10 years, came back to North Carolina in taught history and English in the middle schools.

And four years ago, actually it was three years ago, I found out about the Wilmington Massacre.

That's how important what you're doing and what we're trying to do is to our people.

EURE: And thank you for bringing that up.

And because people know about Black Wall Street and what happened in Tulsa, but that happened in North Carolina.

BALDWIN: Absolutely.

EURE: We had integrated governments in 1898. That's a long time ago.

BALDWIN: Absolutely.

EURE: Well under history.

But because you did that Pryce, I'm gonna have to bring you back.

To talk about some other things. And the whole month of July dedicated to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So, don't you all be surprised if I ask you to come back later on.

BALDWIN: Sure. Thank you, Michael for the opportunity.

EURE: Mike?

WOOD: Yeah.

Well, one of the things I want to say in particular to men and women of color. I would say to find a mentor. Find mentors. I think it's very, very important that you find someone that you can align yourself with, who can help guide you. The real-life challenges that they might be.

I know for myself I have had some great mentors over years that guided me, both educationally, personally and professionally.

I'm speaking of one Dr. Carray Banks of Norfolk State University, and I've mentioned Dr. Edgar Farmer at Penn State.

These two gentlemen were really important in my life and my lifestyle and provided me with the opportunity to be successful in the career of education.

I think it's important that our young black men find those persons who they can they can call mentor, and they can go to and learn how to become successful in their inner space that their work [indecipherable.]

But again, Mike I just wanna say thank you so much. We appreciate you.

You know, I gotta shout out to my members of the green and gold crew, and my members of the [indecipherable] fraternity incorporated.

And we're getting ready to watch The Million Dollar Funk Squad.

EURE: [indecipherable.] And I neglected to say that people could have made comments in the chat, but some of did, and thank you very much.

And you can like and join and you'll get notifications for the upcoming shows.

BALDWIN: Michael, I know Dr. Edgar.

WOOD: Do you know Dr. Farmer?

BALDWIN: Yeah, he's from North Carolina. [indecipherable] are good friends.

WOOD: Yeah, he was my academic advisor at Penn State and he was at what, A&T? I think he was at A&T for several years.

BALDWIN: Right.

WOOD: I think he was at NC State for several years before you came back to Penn State.

BALDWIN: Right.

WOOD: You got a long lineage because Dr. Farmers a graduate of Norfolk State University. Is one of the first students from Norfolk State to go to Penn State and get and get a [indecipherable] degree.

BALDWIN: Wow.

WOOD: And he opened up along with some others, opened up pipeline for the students at Norfolk State University and Penn State to get their PhD. So, my hats off to him.

He's just a good gentleman. He and his wife put their arms around me when I got the Penn State and show me a lot of love.

BALDWIN: Right, right.

EURE: I know we're not saving the best for last. I want you to know that Michael Wood

Also, will be every Thursday from 12 to 12:30 during lunch hour.

Just join us and you can also share with your friends that they weren't able to be with us live today. It is on YouTube and they can check it out beginning this evening.

So, thank you, everybody.

And we'll see you next week.

BALDWIN: Thank you.

WOOD: Thanks, Mike.

[Norfolk State's Million Dollar Funk Squad performing]

EURE: Thank you.

And, we'll have, we'll do a battle of the bands with Norfolk State and A&T in the future because they do do it when they play each other.

WOOD: That's for sure.

EURE: Thank you everyone for participating.

WOOD: Thank you.

BALDWIN: Thank you.