

# HILLCREST NEWSLETTER

**Inside this issue:**

<b>Guest Speakers: Tony Dugger, Executive Director of Commission on Fathers, Men, and Boys and Rahman Branch, Director of Office of African-American Affairs</b>	1
<b>Walmart Reneges on Skyland Deal</b>	2
<b>Hidden Ways to Boost Your Tax Refund</b>	2
<b>A Trip to Harrington Raceway and Casino</b>	3

**GUEST SPEAKER: TONY DUGGER, DIRECTOR OF CFMB**



Please welcome the Executive Director of the Commission on Fathers, Men, and Boys to our March 2016 meeting. Tony Dugger accepted the position in June 2015. Mr. Dugger represents the Commission's legislative, political, and social agenda as it relates to the educational, economic, and public safety issues affecting fathers, men, and boys of color.

His office develops and implements the Commission's strategic plan as well as oversee program initiatives designed to academically enrich boys of color and young fathers in their post-secondary educational and vocational achievements. Additionally, the Commission supports this population's efforts to establish and maintain healthy relationships with children, families, and community. Mr. Dugger as the executive director oversees the Commissions implementation of public forums and meetings. And enhances the Commission's overall capacity to advocate for fathers, men, and boys by sustaining agency and community partnerships.

Mr. Dugger has worked extensively in the child neglect and abuse prevention movement in the District of Columbia. As Director of North Capitol Family Strengthening Collaborative/East River Family Strengthening Collaborative he oversaw multiple programs involving capacity building, parenting, fatherhood, truancy, mentoring, fundraising and donations.

Dugger holds master's degree in Public Relations and Marketing Management from American University.

**Special points of interest:**

- **Hillcrest Community Civic Association Meeting**  
 Hillcrest Recreation Center  
 32nd and Denver St., SE  
 Saturday, March 5  
 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM
- **PSA 606 Police Community Meeting**  
 East Washington Heights Baptist Church  
 2200 Branch Ave., SE  
 Wednesday, March 16  
 6:00 PM to 7:00PM
- **ANC 7B Monthly Meeting**  
 Ryland Methodist Church  
 3200 S St., SE  
 Thursday, March 18  
 7:00 PM to 9:00P

**GUEST SPEAKER: RAHMAN BRANCH, DIRECTOR OF OAAA**



Rahman Branch was originally scheduled for the February meeting but had unforeseen circumstances that prevented him from attending. He is happy to be joining the association with his colleague for the March meeting.

Please welcome the Director of the Office of African- American Affairs to the February 2016 meeting. Rahman Branch joined the team of Mayor Muriel Bowser in February of 2015 as Director of the Office of African-American Affairs.

Motivated by Mayor Bowser's desire to ensure that the African-American residents fully partake in the revitalization efforts that are underway in the city, Mr. Branch is committed to enhancing opportunities for African-American residents, through unique partnership and new initiatives in government agencies.

The Mayor's Office on African American Affairs (OAAA) seeks to engage the

## WALMART RENEGES ON SKYLAND DEAL

### The Response of the Media

On Friday, January 15 of this year *The Washington Business Journal* broke the news that "Walmart has canceled long-standing plans to build two stores in D.C.," one of which was the anchor store planned for Hillcrest's Skyland Town Center.

The news rocked many who were involved in planning and building this project which lies entirely within the boundaries of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association. *The Washington Business Journal* went on to note that the proposed project, estimated to cost \$220 million and to sit on 18 acres has "faced tremendous hurdles over the years and the developers have said it is not viable without Walmart as an anchor."

WUSA (Channel 9) apparently was the first TV station to cover the story from the actual Skyland site that same Friday, Jan. 15. It was **Hillcrest's own Ms. Delia Goncalves**, a reporter for Channel 9, who stood near the construction project as the TV cameras rolled. She interviewed former Mayor Vincent Gray. "This is an outrage," he said, "they think they can do this to us and we will roll over."

*The Wall St. Journal* reported the next day (Jan. 16) that Walmart's "stock fell nearly 2% on Friday...and is down nearly 29% in the last 52 weeks." On that same day *The Washington Post* reported that "District leaders [were] furious over [the] Walmart pullback."

One local Hillcrest resident noted that Walmart's action was "classical Walmart. They never make a lease they can't break." Mr. Courtland Milloy complained in his column in *The Washington Post* on Jan. 20: "To make way for the new Walmart-anchored Skyland Town Center...the city had demolished a tattered but vital neighborhood economy...Some apartments were demolished, and residents were displaced."

Mr. Milloy went on to state that "there probably will not be any consequences [for Walmart] to renegeing on the deal...A dirty deal."

*The Afro-American* (Jan. 30) reported on an Advisory Neighborhood Commission meeting held on Jan. 21 which was attended by "District government officials and the Skyland Town Center developer [Rappaport]." The residents attending were told by the above officials that "they will continue to search for a retailer to replace Walmart."

Continued on Page 4...

## HIDDEN WAYS TO BOOST YOUR TAX REFUND

According to Intuit Turbo below are a few tips that can boost your tax refund.

### **Rethink filing status to boost your refund**

One of the first things that affect your tax liability is your filing status, especially if you are married. Filing separately gives each spouse a lower adjusted gross income (AGI). If one has a lot of medical expenses, such as COBRA payments resulting from a job loss, computing taxes individually allows that spouse to reach the needed AGI percentage based on his or her own income.

Or, a spouse who spends a lot of time on the road and in the air might have travel expenses such as baggage fees that merit separate filing. Expenses can add up for an unemployed spouse looking for work -- long distance calls, resume preparation, career counseling and networking -- and could be a sleeping miscellaneous deduction that reduces taxable income. However, choosing to file separate returns has drawbacks, such as losing credits available to joint filers, that you must weigh to maximize your refund potential.

Single taxpayers who care for a parent may also qualify for the more advantageous head-of-household status if they paid more than half of the cost of maintaining that parent's residence for the whole year. Your parent need not live with you; when you pay more than half of their cost to live in a home for seniors or rest home, you can claim head of

Continued on page 3...

## HIDDEN WAYS TO BOOST YOUR TAX REFUND *Continued...*

household.

### Don't shy away from tax deductions

Charitable deductions can help your refund cause, too. Record keeping lets you add up the dollars spent doing charity work, in addition to claiming the market value of any clothing or household things you donate. When you bake for a fund-raiser, the cost of your ingredients can be deducted, but not the value of the time you spent baking.

### Timing can boost your tax refund

Taxpayers who watch the calendar improve their chances of getting a larger refund. If you can, pay January's mortgage payment before **December 31st** and get the added interest for your mortgage interest deduction.

Paying property taxes by New Year's Eve could make the difference between itemizing and taking the standard deduction, and thus, a bigger refund. If you're self-employed, you can pay your fourth-quarter state estimated taxes in December, rather than in January when they're normally due, to increase your itemizing potential.

### Become credit savvy and refund happy

Credits work better than deductions as refund boosters. For each credit dollar, your taxes go down a dollar. Yet, 20% of eligible Americans don't claim the earned income tax credit. If you're working and meet the guidelines, you may be eligible for EITC even if you're single with no children. If you have kids, the child-care credit may help you.

For those with children in college, credits related to higher education expenses, such as the American Opportunity Tax Credit, could provide tax relief. "The American Opportunity Credit is great because up to \$1,000 is refundable. That means you could receive as much as \$1,000 even if you had no tax liability," says Miles Brkovich, a CPA with Bennett & Brkovich, LLC in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. "The total credit is \$2,500 and applies only to the first four years of undergraduate higher education expenses. If you're in grad school or beyond, you may be eligible for the Lifetime Learning Credit."

Join the Hillcrest Community Civic Association  
on a trip to



***Harrington Raceway and Casino***  
Harrington, Delaware

### WHERE WINNERS PLAY!

The casino features 1,800 slots, thrilling table games, a variety of dining options, and the excitement of simulcast harness racing.

The cost is \$35  
(with \$15 free play)

For reservations contact: Sheila Brown @ 202-297-3883

Nancy Harris @ 202-575-2696

Please provide your Player's Club information when you make a reservation

Date:  
Thursday,  
March 31  
2016

Depart 32<sup>nd</sup> & Denver  
Street SE at 10am  
Depart Harrington  
Casino at 4:30pm



### Notice to the Membership

Hillcrest Community Civic  
Association members  
who are no longer current  
on membership dues will  
be purged from the  
membership roster.  
Don't get dropped. Pay  
your membership dues  
today!

## WALMART RENEGES Continued...

At that same meeting, according to *The Afro American*, "Rappaport said that Walmart's decision has made it unclear whether construction for the Skyland property will continue. CVS will be moving into ...temporary trailers in the parking lot of the property."

It was over a year ago that the following statement appeared in the February, 2015 issue of the *Hillcrest Newsletter*: "As of this date, no knowledgeable source has been able to nail down a final completion date for the construction of the Skyland Shopping Center."

### HCCA Board

**Michelle Phipps-Evans, First Vice President**  
**Boyle Stuckey, Second Vice President**  
**Deborah Johnson, Secretary**  
**Monica H. Evans, Treasurer**  
**Kenneth Burke, Parliamentarian**  
**A. Frank Anderson, Chaplain**  
**Ruth V. Lewis, Chair, Communications**  
**Jeanne Contardo, Chair, Education and Recreation**  
**Mary Ross, Chair, Environmental and Beautification**  
**Michelle Peete, Chair, Fundraising**  
**Philip Hammond, Chair, Membership**  
**James Perkins, Jr., Chair, Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness**  
**Linwood Robinson, Chair, Streets, Traffic and Transportation**

## RAHMAN BRANCH Continued...

extraordinarily diverse culture of the African American community in the District of Columbia. OAAA works to empower these residents through equipping them with the government resources and services that they need while also providing programmatic support to each facet of the community.

In 2005 Branch joined the administrative staff of Ballou High School as an assistant principal in the Ward 8 neighborhood of Congress Heights.

Branch later served as principal for the past six years before joining the office of Mayor Bowser.

Branch holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, a Master's in Education Administration and an Executive Master's in Leadership.

### Have you paid your dues for 2016?

Your paid through date is on the mailing label of this newsletter. If the date is earlier than 2016, please send your payment now. The cost is \$15.00/year, \$24.00 for two years.

Make check payable to HCCA and send to P.O. Box 30895, Washington, DC 20030 or you can pay by credit card at:

[www.hillcrestdc.com/paydues.htm](http://www.hillcrestdc.com/paydues.htm)

### Got Ideas!

Please email any ideas or articles for the newsletter by the 15th of the month to [hillcrestdc\\_newsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:hillcrestdc_newsletter@yahoo.com)

Follow on Twitter @HillcrestWard7 or write on the Facebook Wall, All Over Hillcrest

Visit our website at [www.hillcrestdc.com](http://www.hillcrestdc.com) or join the conversation on our list serve at [Hillcrestdc@yahoo.com](mailto:Hillcrestdc@yahoo.com)



Hillcrest Community Civic Association

"Working together for a better community"

[www.HillcrestDC.com](http://www.HillcrestDC.com)

P.O. Box 30895, Washington, D.C. 20030-0895