

Black Storytellers of San Diego, Inc.  
Annual Report for NABS 2011-2012  
Black Storytellers of San Diego, Inc. is excited to  
report another successful performance  
year. We gave performances at various venues,  
conferences, lead book discussions,  
celebrated/honored the Queen of the Kansas City Blues,  
hosted a train tour and more. In  
addition to our performances BSSD received our third  
NEA Big Read grant.

(\* ) Members of BSSD

PERFORMANCES:

LIBRARIES & MUSEUMS

Valencia Park/Malcolm X Branch

Logan Heights

Mountain View

New Children's Museum-Diversity Day

SCHOOLS

King Chavez High School

Fulton Elementary School

Johnson Elementary School

Herrick's Children's Center

Ujima Project

EJE Academy

OTHER COMMUNITY VENUES/EVENTS

George Stevens Senior Citizens Center

Private Party/Fundraiser for the Martin Luther King,  
Jr. CommunityChoir

San Diego Partnership Churches

Liberty Hall Theatre @Paradise Village 'Theme Black  
Women Heroines

Oak Park Library and South Bay YMCA: a dramatic  
presentation:

Behind the Scenes or, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four  
Years in the White

House written by Elizabeth Keckley

FUNDRAISERS:

TOUR & TRAIN RIDE (Fundraiser)

Special invitation to the Inauguration of the restored  
Jim Crow combination car,

Rockdale, Sandow & Southern #3@Pacific Southwest  
Railway Museum in

Campo, California. This is the only refurbished Jim  
Crow Car in America. (Feb.

2012) (the museum tour was included in the NABS San Diego--2006 event)

(April 2012) Hosted a tour through the refurbished Jim Crow Car, a train ride within 50 feet of the Mexican Border with lunch and storytelling too! \*Ms. Flo Edmunds was a lead organizer for this event.

#### A CELEBRATION HONORING

Jeannie Cheatham (NABS'Zora Neale Hurston awardee (2006)

The Queen of the Kansas City-Style Blues  
Author Meet Me with Your Black Drawers On

Proceeds from this fundraising event were used to purchase 100 books

(Ladybug Girl and the Bug Squad by Soman & Davis) in support of Jumpstart:

Read for the Record program. BSSD, Inc. has participated in this premiere national literacy program for early childhood education since the inception in 2006. Three reading sessions were presented at First Head Start Program. Each child and staff members received a brand new book! Also the school received a book with a signed bookplate by Jeannie Cheatham. (June 2012) \*Dr. McFarlin

and \*Linda Brown were lead tellers for this event.

#### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS-Big Read 2012

Book Discussions and events for Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien, an award

winning book that traces the tour of one American platoon during the Vietnam War''its brutal, sometimes funny and often a profound narrative about the human heart.'

Our partners: Malcolm X Library, University of San Diego and Grossmont College

The Kick-Off for the Opening Ceremony was led by members of the 92nd Buffalo

Soldier Calvary Color Guard and African American Iraq War veteran, Andre Carter.

Events included:

- . Hosting the author, Tim O'Brien
- . 32 book discussions at various locations

- . 5 film screenings,
- . 3 readings of a full-length play, 'Medal of Honor Rag' by Tom Cole--co-sponsored by the Association of Black Psychologists, Inc.
- . Photo Exhibit on Tour: Under the Radar: The Day Before I Left Vietnam'never before seen photos taken by \*George G. Clark III'showed at three locations: Springfield College Community Gallery, Grossmont College Digital Arts Gallery and the Balboa Park--Museum of Photographic Arts (<http://www.mopa.org>) see calendar for June 9, 2012.
- . A Celebration of Women in the Military @ Mira Costa College'\*Linda Brown and active duty Iraq soldier, Angela Jefferson, shared their stories as women being affected by the residuals of war. Also award winning filmmaker Phyllis Toben Bancroft, screened her critically acclaimed film 'Burned' and lead the Q & A with Joan Craigwell, highly decorated African American flight nurse who served Vietnam. She is a 2009 San Diego Women's Hall of Fame awardee and

recipient of the Bronze Star for Service presented President Obama for her unprecedented work during the Tet Offensive. (see YouTube'Joan Craigwell and [www.burnedthefilm.com](http://www.burnedthefilm.com).

Con't'

Youth Read

Included book discussions lead by Tim O'Brien at Lincoln and Hoover High Schools

'Tween Read (companion /age appropriate books for Middle Schools)

Angel Child Dragon Child-Michele Maria Surat McPhatter Court School (4 classes)

Cracker the Best Dog in Vietnam-Cynthia Kadohata Chula Vista Main Library (2 sessions)

Little Read (the companion/age- appropriate book for Elementary Schools)

The Lotus Seed- Sherry Garland/Taturo Kiuchi  
Malcolm X Library (Tim O'Brien spoke to a group of 2nd graders from Nye Elementary) Each student (35) received the new book which was purchased with a grant awarded to Malcolm X Library. (2 sessions)

The Closing Ceremony was held aboard the USS Midway (CV-41) carrier ship that was active during the Vietnam War. It is now decommissioned and docked at the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum. Our special guest on board was Admiral Larry Chambers, the African American Captain of the naval ship in 1975 during the Fall of Saigon. Chaplain, \*O.J. Mozon, Jr. read an excerpt from the novel. \*George G. Clark III, Purple Heart-Vietnam Vet-- was honored with a plaque for his service to our nation. Victoria Burnett and Mitch 'Granddaddy June Bug' Capel, Master storytellers and members of NABS, presented a stirring presentation.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Black Storytellers of San Diego, Inc. maintains a Level 3'Seal of Approval

Arts Education Resource Organization- (AERO) is a community of arts organizations that work together to create a culture of arts education within San Diego County public schools. This organization, supported by the San Diego County Department of Education, incorporates three levels of proficiency in high quality standards-based programs in order to perform/present in the San Diego schools. To reach the highest level ---three'Seal of Approval: the arts organization member must: Attend quarterly meetings hosted by the San Diego County of Board of Education's Visual & Performing Arts Standards (VAPA) Department and maintain approval by participating in an annual evaluation process.

Annual BSSD, Inc. Retreat: held at the Coronado Public

Library Community Space.

Special seminar on copyright laws as related to professional performers was presented by Valroy Watson: songwriter, producer, musician. The full day retreat also included a workshops on--How to improve your artistic and creative performance. There was also a report on grants received and proposed. And bookkeeper Linda Farmer-Francis covered the organization and individual members accountability for reporting: dues, tax forms, calculating mileage, etc.

San Diego Foundation sponsored a series of workshops through their Business of The Arts Program. Members: \*McFarlin, \*Brown and \*Thomas attended the session: Arts and the Law: 'Intellectual Property Basics/An Introduction to Copyrights, Trademarks and VARA' led by Jeffery Slattery from Thomas Jefferson School of Law Arts and Entertainment Law Project.

Member, \*Esther Anthony Thomas was accepted into the inaugural class of The Old

Globe Theatre's Residency Program--Community Voices.

The eight-session program is dedicated to the creation and production of new short plays.

Old Globe teaching artists will work side by side with members of local organizations 'to help them create plays of their own. The project is focused on 'learning about theater and how that can be used in their lives and with their organizations'how to bring a story together and develop it.' The culmination of the program will be a reading of the new 10-minute plays, performed by professional actors at the Old Globe Theatre. (see San Diego Union Tribune article written by James Hebert'Sept. 30, 2012)

\*Floyd Meldrum, our Youth Member, is currently in his second series of classes (11-weeks each) for the Teen Producers Project. Classes are conducted at the Media Arts

Center of San Diego. Teens from 14-18 who are interested in filmmaking learn to film,

edit, create and produce a final product. Floyd's classes are paid for by a BSSD stipend.

Floyd will have a major role in BSSD's documentary projects. Floyd attends the

Community Court Schools in South Bay. See

[www.mediaartscenter.org/upcomingtpp](http://www.mediaartscenter.org/upcomingtpp)

SOCIAL JUSTICE, COMMUNITY ACTIVISM & OTHER COLLABORATIONS

. San Diego History Center in Balboa Park---(January) BSSD members performed

and conducted discussion after the showing of Hush, Hush'our documentary on

the oral histories and stories from San Diego native-born African-Americans, 79

years and older. The related exhibit: Portraits of a Proud Community: Norman

Baynard's Logan Heights 1939-1985. For a snippet of the first draft go to

<http://blip.tv/file/2912313> Country Boy. The first interviews for this project was

funded by a grant from the Alliance for California Traditional Arts'Living Cultures

Grant Program. We will seek future funding to complete the project in 2013.

. Members including \*Veronica Henson-Phillips and \*Gwen Chamberlain and

friends of BSSD, performed at the Kick-Off Event and the Closing Event for

Oceanside Public Library's Big Read event series of special programming based

on Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston.

. Members of BSSD performed during Common Ground Theatre's: African

American Masterpiece Series African American History Facts or Fiction @

Liberty Theatre/Paradise Village, National City, Ca.

. \*T. Ford was the Dramaturg for San Diego's Mo'olelo Performing Arts

Company's production of 'Hoo Doo Love' by Katori Hall. Her assignment

included presenting two pre-show talks: Zora Neale Hurston'The Collector of

Folktales'--this presentation included two tales told

by \*George G. Clark III. and  
'Women and the Blues'1930-40s' which showcased award-  
winning guitarist,  
Lisa Sanders. (June 2012)  
. \*Gwen Chamberlain, \*Kadumu Moyenda and \*Yiriba  
presented contemporary  
stories and shared coming-of-age wisdom for youth at  
the following three  
locations: North County Chapter of Jack and Jill &  
Cathedral Catholic High  
School in Del Mar. The topic was to help students  
understand and discuss what  
stereotypes are and how they define themselves. Youth  
Voice of San Diego'a  
Mid-City based organization that advocated for 'at risk'  
youth, many who have  
dropped out of high school and/or homeless. Educational  
Cultural Complex'  
Continuing Education Program'theme'dealing with life's  
challenges and the  
importance of education  
. During Banned Books Week, Malcolm X Library called  
upon BSSD, Inc. to be  
the host organization for an evening of dramatic  
readings of banned books by the  
Tucson, Arizona School District which primarily  
targeted books used in the  
Mexican American Studies classes. BSSD accepted the  
invitation in  
remembrance of author/ Ancestor James Baldwin when he  
spoke the immortal  
words on behalf of Angela Davis, when she was fired  
from UCLA in 1969''If  
they come for you at night they'll come for me in the  
morning.' \*Dr. McFarlin  
coached Mexican-American/MeCha students from Lincoln  
High School and  
assisted them in presenting a captivating performance  
of 'Yo Soy Joaquin.' An  
encore of readings by BSSD members was also presented  
at the Association of  
La Raza Educators forum. Note: Baldwin's The Fire Next  
Time is on Tucson's  
banned books list. His quote is reminiscent of Pastor

Martin Niemoller's words  
stated during WWII "First they came for the Socialists  
and I did not speak out,  
because I was not a Socialist' then they came for the  
Jews' I was not a  
Jew' then they came for me' and there was no one left to  
speak for me"  
BSSD stands in solidarity for excellence in literacy  
and education for all! See  
article in San Diego Voice & View Point newspaper (Oct.  
11, 2012)

. Community and Cultural Arts: Joe & Vi Jacobs Center  
Gallery (Sat. Oct. 27th)  
Rites of Passage' Our Journey Through Life: Celebrating  
our Cultural Rites of  
Passages through stories, song, drum and dance.  
[www.CommunityAndCulturalArts.org](http://www.CommunityAndCulturalArts.org)  
The BSSD, Inc. Ensemble presented the cycles of life  
from Africa, The Middle  
Passage to 'life upon these shores.' There were stories  
of birthing and death  
rituals, coming-of-age, graduation, education,  
religious rituals, renaissance and  
revolutionary movements. The evening fittingly closed  
with a story about a  
'Saturday Nite Fish Fry' and our overflow audience sung  
along with 'bless be  
the ties that bind our hearts" Special guests included  
Victoria Burnett, reg e  
gaines' two time Tony and Grammy Award nominee for,  
Bring in da  
Noise/Bring in da Funk, (Writer) Ernie McCray, Barry  
Townsend (Baritone),  
Elijah Delouches (Trumpet) Aminisha (West African  
Dancer) and members of  
the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Omega Psi Phi  
Fraternity, Inc.  
UPCOMING EVENTS  
Performances at Conferences  
. CalSOAP-UCSD-Dare to Dream @UCSD (Nov)  
. Fulbright Scholars International Meeting in Balboa  
Park (Nov)



Pending Project:

Completion of DVD re: Common Threads  
Festival/Conference (due Dec 2012)

MILESTONES

\*T. Ford accepted the nomination by BSSD, Inc. and received a 2012 Woman of Distinction Award from San Diego's Women, Inc. Honorees are selected for their civic advocacy in giving back to the community through their works and deeds. T. Ford was also accepted as a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Scholar (2012).

Her studies in Savannah, Georgia focused on 'The African American History and Culture in the Georgia Low Country: Savannah and the Coastal Islands from 1750-1950.'

\*Chaplain Ollis 'O.J.' Mozon, Jr. (Captain) retired from the United States Navy. He 'comes ashore' after 30 years of service, three deployments and countless interactions with Marines and sailors.

Board Member, Joyce Y. Suber, retired from a 38-year successful career in Education.

One of her many celebrations and honors included throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at Petco Park for the San Diego Padres (professional baseball team) in honor of her stellar work with Padres Scholars for over 12 years!