



June 2023

THE DEEP BENCH

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of African American Affairs

The Office of African American Affairs is proud to recognize the many Black professionals throughout New Mexico who are committed to impacting the lives of Black New Mexicans. Their education, expertise, and experience have poised them to be leaders in their careers, in the public and private sectors.

Each month we recognize individuals, spotlighting their accomplishments and their impact on New Mexico. If you would like to nominate a Black professional (including yourself) to be in the Deep Bench, please send your name and contact information to Charlycia.Strain@oaaa.nm.gov



Michael V. Baty

Degree and Alma Mater:

Eastern New Mexico University-
Bachelor of Science in Music with a
Minor in Communicative Disorders.

Masters in Special Education Pedagogy
and Learning.

Current Position:

Special Education Teacher k-12 for
Albuquerque Public Schools.
Director of Educational Activities for the
Iota Psi Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi
Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Community Involvement:

Member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
Director of the Alpha Mentorship Program
which provides mentorship opportunities for
highschool age young men along with
scholarship opportunities.

Michael Baty was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico to Vincent and Rayetta Baty. He has one younger sister Ebony Baty. Michael attended Albuquerque High School. During this time he participated in track, basketball as well as marching band, jazz band and concert-band. While in marching band he served as the Drum Major both his Junior and Senior years. Michael obtained both his Bachelor's and Master's degree from Eastern New Mexico University. While attending Eastern New Mexico University, Michael held the office of president of the Brothers and Sisters United organization during its inception and first year on ENMU's campus. During this time he also served as the Drum Major for the Greyhound Sound Marching Band both his Junior and Senior years.

Additionally, Michael served as the Director of Music for Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico for several years. Michael currently holds the Title of 2022-2023 Male Hip Hop Vocalist of the Year for the State of New Mexico for his work in the music community along with his original music creations and performances. With his background being mainly in gospel and jazz, Michael's personal music pursuits encompass aspects of Rhythm and Blues that are inspired deeply by these genres. Michael Baty is also a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. where he currently serves as the Director of Educational Activities. As a special education teacher, Michael takes pride in being able to provide students in New Mexico with positive learning experiences while advocating for the correct methods of teaching to be applied primarily for students of color within all educational spaces.

What can NM do to attract more Blacks to our state? I think it is important for New Mexico to be seen as a land of opportunity for black people. I also think that it is important for New Mexico to display more aspects of culture that relate to the black experience within this state. It would be great to see a deeper, more rich display of black art and ability in all spaces. However, this will rely heavily on other black people's ability to support one another. If we as a people are willing to continue to push and support one another we can continue to grow and utilize that growth and positive ways.

What do you believe are the strengths of the NM Black Community? I believe that the strengths of the Black Community in New Mexico include our talent, ability to adapt, and our consistent desire for growth. From what I have experienced, New Mexico is home to some of the most talented individuals in the world. These individuals often utilize these talents while continuing to provide for their families and sustain a high quality of life. I feel as though the Black Community's ability to adapt is also a strength. Understanding that many functions of society are not necessarily catered to our well-being, the Black Community in New Mexico has shown that we are not only able to adapt to the current state with which we are in, but we are able to continue moving forward and enhancing that state for ourselves and those around us. As a Black Community, the consistent desire for growth also resonates with me as a strength. Understanding that there is very little room for complacency within a forward moving society, the Black Community in New Mexico continues to push the envelope in spaces that encourage change and growth not only for the Black Community but for New Mexico as a whole.



What do you want your influence on the NM Black Community to Be? I would like for my influence on the Black Community to be one of positivity. I think it is important to highlight all of the positive aspects of being a black person in America along with the responsibilities that come with it. Being able to provide the youth with positive educational experiences is one way that I feel that I can do that adequately. Understanding that students of color may benefit from positive representation within their schools, it is imperative to me to exist within the educational space in whatever facet that I can. Through my music I would like for people to understand the importance of relaying emotion in positive ways. As as a black man sometimes it's hard to let go of emotions in ways that are accepted or understood by others, so through the utilization of music ,I'm able to not only cypher through my own emotions, but allow others the space to see that it is not only okay to do the same, but a positive step in self-realization and growth.



Toni Morgan

Degree and Alma Mater:

NA

Current Position:

Administrative Assistant

Community Involvement:

Community events singing for:
Asante Awards on June 24th, Toni Morgan and Soulful Sounds
Performing on July 8th at Solid Grounds Coffee Shop
Performing on August 27th in Sante Fe for a Gospel show
September 24, at the Plaza, opening for Charlie Musselwhite.

Toni Morgan was born in Waterloo, IA. Being the daughter of a musician and stepdaughter of a minister, she moved around a lot. She completed High School in Denver, CO. Many years later, in 1999, Toni moved to Las Vegas, NV where she was blessed to sing behind the Empress of Soul, Mrs Gladys Knight. She traveled with Lady G, as she calls her, until 2013. In August of 2013, she relocated to New Mexico. Since moving here, she has been involved in many events, sharing her voice whenever and wherever possible. Singing is her gift to the world. Something we all love and can share common ground. She likes to get involved and give back whenever she can.

What do you believe are the strengths of the NM Black Community?

I believe the strengths are endurance and resilience. Here in New Mexico, we are greatly outnumbered by other races of people, but what I like is we dig in and make things happen. We have the intelligence to create what we need. We could stand off to the side and complain about what's not, but we find ways to include ourselves. I find that the black community realizes that there is strength in numbers and when we work together, we create an atmosphere to feel accomplished and not set apart. We never give up.

What do you want your influence on the NM Black Community to Be?

I want my influence to be one of encouragement. It's easy to allow others to tell us what we can't do and make us feel the road is too rough to make accomplishments. I work around young people and every time I see our children, I encourage them to keep going. I remind them of how strong and beautiful they are. I tell them to see themselves in the position they want to be in. I also remind them to trust and believe that they can do all they set out to do.

What can NM do to attract more Blacks to our state?

I believe we have to work together to put people in charge who look out for all people. We have to be visible everywhere, not just one area. Take time to teach our children how to be good adults. All of these things make great communities. Having a great community and being visible is attractive. We love seeing our people helping, owning businesses, working hard, and making a difference.



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