

# THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 28, 2023



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING *Opening Doors!*  
KIDS WINTER EDITION VOLUME 36!



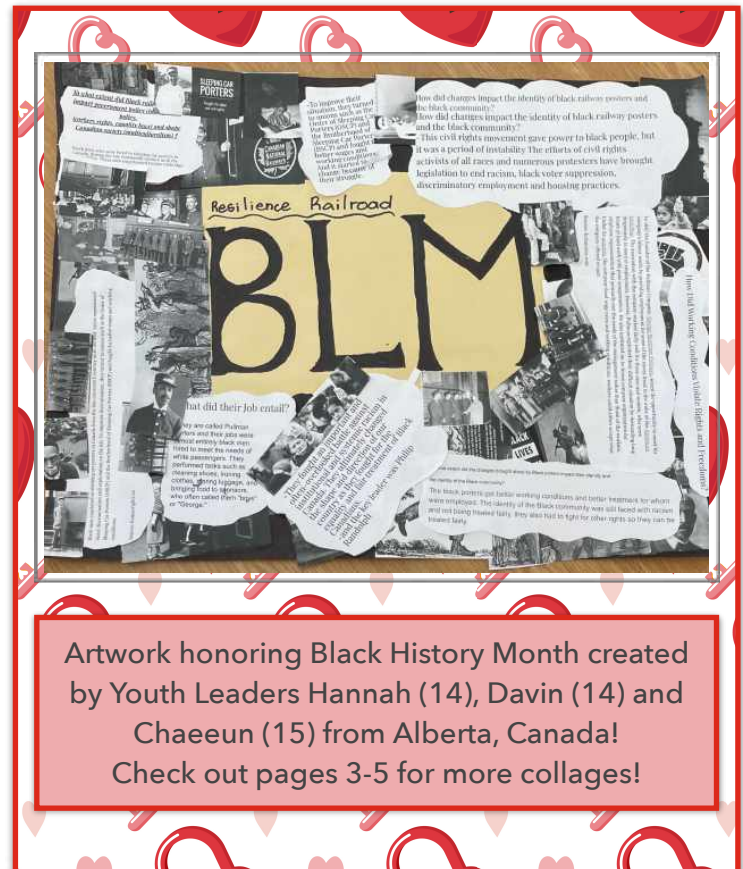
*"A generous heart is always open."*  
- bell hooks

## *Opening Doors:* Welcome to a World of Freedom

by Louis A. Craco III

Imagine what the world is like going through the Future: That imagination will happen when you open a door (this is called a Metaphor). The Meaning of this Metaphor is a Guidance into new things in your life. It doesn't matter what door you open. If you dream of something, open the door to your independence. Connected to this is the 2017 Film, *The Greatest Showman* and featured in the soundtrack, is a famous song, *The Other Side*, for looking into a door, with people being afraid to take matters in their hands, to show the Courage. Connected also with *Martin Luther King Jr.'s Dream* (more about that later). One of my dreams is going through the Entrance to the *Rock & Roll Hall of Fame*, the Doorway to going is to Get Proficient at Math (then I get rewarded with a trip!)

Here is a story of what happened to my Grandfather on Friday, February 3: During my writing for the "New"



Artwork honoring Black History Month created by Youth Leaders Hannah (14), Davin (14) and Chaeun (15) from Alberta, Canada!  
Check out pages 3-5 for more collages!

...continued from page 1

Newsletter he told me that while Grocery Shopping, A Random act of kindness happened. Another Customer made his day. His electric cart was loaded with Groceries, So she helped him put items on the Conveyor belt and ready to order. My Grandfather has a Disability after he survived from Cancer & Made his body weaker including weak balance, so for his responsibility in Grocery stores he has to use an Electric Mobile Cart to help navigate around the store. Afterwards when the lady helped him she made him very happy. She opened the door into his heart.

Speaking of Disabilities the Author of this Newsletter essay (Louis Craco) also has a Disability that is called Down Syndrome. In-Common with this reality some people that I know or not know stand up for me which is called Advocacy. They make me feel the same way that my grandfather felt when the lady was helping him, which also means we are Getting more Stronger and Independent Every Single Day. Now that I'm stronger (with my grandfather's advice) I can help people if they have run into Unsecured Issues or any Problem that they think that it's impossible, But not when I'm around because I'm here to make the impossible become possible. All of that meaning means that I'm becoming a Super Self-Advocate.

Up in the first paragraph, the last thing I wrote was going through the Entrance to the *Rock & Roll Hall of Fame*, The Possibility of going is to Get Proficient at Math (Let's stop there). What does it mean by math? It's Educational. There are many other kinds of Educations that I've accomplished, but there are more than that to achieve at my school located in Harlem (*Cooke School & Institute*). ELA (English Language & Arts) is about being creative while writing. During Science we are talking about many kinds of usual or unusual knowledge about the digestive system. In Social Studies we are learning everything about the History of the Past event called the Harlem Renaissance. Entertainment classes like Gym help us through fun education like running around. Then at BKCM (*Brooklyn Conservatory of Music*), enjoying the time of Catchy Songs, learning how to play instruments and performing concerts in Music (True Fact!).



The Disability I have is called Down syndrome, which also means I'm included to *GiGi's Playhouse*, only for people with that disability. I'm also training how to play basketball which I'm becoming a part of my basketball team for my school's team, the *Cooke Tigers*. Coach Ryan, part of the Academy of the all-star NBA Team, *The Brooklyn Nets*, (that I'm already a fan of) has a motto: "**be inspired.**" Speaking of mottos, mine is "**never give up**".



*The Imagine Society* has their own door that they accepted me through. That entrance is where I make my writing dreams a reality every month. My writing is being more inspirational (even now), that people are finally understanding that I'm growing up with Strength, Independence & Maturity.



The month of February is *Black History Month*, and *Martin Luther King, Jr.*, had a dream that he needed to stop the name of Racism. He changed the lives of Black & White People. He began with what it was like for his Kids to share that to the world. He opened a humungous door to all lives Black & White with his words of wisdom. My dream for the world is to find freedom and putting an end to the war & violence. We can make laws legal to all countries in the world to live in freedom, peace, harmony which is a door to all things loved.

Louis A. Craco III  
Cooke School, 9th Grade  
Self-Advocate for Down Syndrome

Thank you Louis for sharing your dreams & your writing! Bravo! We believe in you!

**Louis A. Craco III (14) 9th grade at Cooke School and also on the Youth Editorial Staff at The Imagine Society Newsletter!**





The Imagine Society Celebrates

# Black History Month

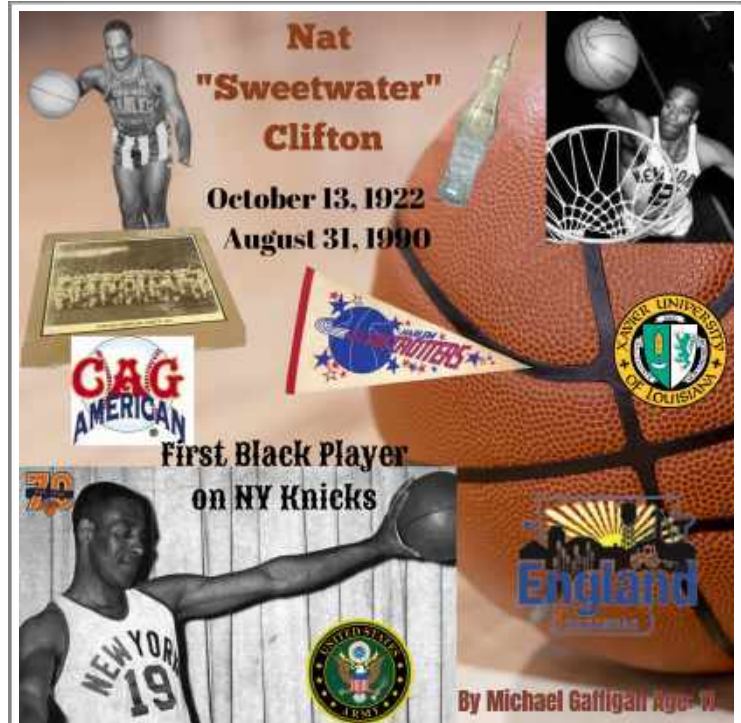


Imagine Kids are honoring Black History Month with collages inspired by the style of African American artist Romare Bearden and celebrating the profound and often underrepresented accomplishments of African Americans throughout history. Imagine Kids selected historical figures to research, then created unique art pieces paired with words and short bios. Combined, the art and words create meaningful works of art that have helped us all learn how much *Black History Matters*. Please see below a selection of their amazing artwork!

## AUGUSTA! FIRST!



**AUGUST SAVAGE** (left) Sculptor, Teacher, Community Art Leader "Augusta Savage is an artist who inspires me because I love art and I think it's amazing that she made a career doing what she loves." - art by Olympia (10)



**NATHANIAL SWEETWATER CLIFTON** (upper right) "I chose Nathaniel "Sweetwater" Clifton because I love basketball and my favorite team is the New York Knicks. In 1950 Nat Clifton was one of the first African Americans to play in the NBA and he was a star player. His family couldn't afford soda so he would fill bottles of water with sugar and that's how he got the nickname "Sweetwater." He is an inspiration for all athletes because he uplifts athletes around the world to show that anything is possible." - art by Michael (11)

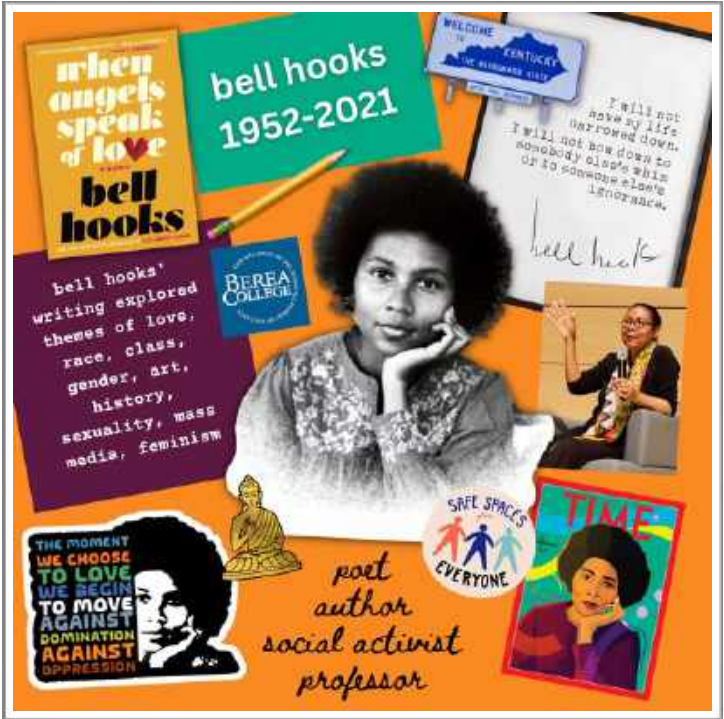




**RESILIENCE RAILROAD CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (left)**

Collage honoring the black men employed as sleeping car porters in Canada from the late nineteenth century thru the mid-1950's and their fight to end the racism and poor working conditions they were hired under. "The people who were the sleep porters fought for the same treatment and work conditions. We wanted to do this poster to show how the black community overcame these obstacles." - art by Hannah (14), Davin (14), Chaeun (15)

**NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON (right)** "I chose Neil deGrasse Tyson... because I look up to him as one of the smartest people in the world, and I feel like I could be like him someday. I really enjoy watching Star Talk on YouTube. It is funny and smart at the same time. Neil deGrasse Tyson is important to Black History for many reasons including that he was the first African American Director of the Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History." - art by Patrick (10)



**bell hooks (left)** Poet, Author, Social Activist and Professor. She's quoted on our cover "A generous heart is always open." Her writing explored themes of love, race, class, gender, art, history, and she looked to establish a safe space for students at Berea College in Kentucky where she was a professor.





**MICHELLE OBAMA** (left) Attorney, Author and former First Lady of the United States "I like how Michelle Obama made a club called "Let's Move." I think it's very productive and helps kids who aren't so active but want to be active and I think that's a great idea and that inspires me."  
 - art by Zuzu (8)

**ICE SPICE** (right) "I chose Ice Spice for my collage because she is extremely inspirational and talented. [She] has been penning lyrics since she was 6 and practiced her flow in poetry slams... Though she is still improving Ice Spice is talented and a great influence to young girls to be themselves."  
 - art by Katie (13)



**JORDAN PEELE** (left) "My collage is about Jordan Peele because I look up to him as a writer and director who can seamlessly move from hilarious comedy to terrifying horror and be excellent in both genres."  
 - art by Jack (17)

"Like comedy, horror has an ability to provoke thought and further the conversation on real social issues in a very powerful way." – Jordan Peele



# Muhammad Ali

by Dashiell Hall

Muhammad Ali is inspiring to me because despite the hate towards him, he kept fighting, became a legend and changed the world all in a lifetime. Ali was black, and the greatest pro boxer of all time. Ali advocated and fought for civil rights, and religious freedom. He was also a philanthropist and humanitarian. Because of all the helpful and amazing work Ali did, he earned the medal of freedom, and donated and supported organizations that include Make-A-Wish and Special Olympics. What inspired me the most about



Thank you Dashiell for writing such a wonderful essay about the inspirational athlete and activist Muhammad Ali!



**2022 Honoree Rev. Jeannette J. Phillips**  
**by Shelby Fenton**

*The Imagine Society is honored to be invited for the 3rd year to have our youth leaders involved with **The Clara Lemlich Awards!** This inspirational event honors female activists in their 80s, 90s, and 100s! Please see below an interview conducted by **Youth Leader Shelby Fenton (16)** 11th Grader at St. Timothy's High School in Alberta, Canada, and **2022 Honoree Reverend Jeannette J. Phillips**, Community Health Leader. To read the full interview, learn more about the 2022 Honorees, and the amazing **Labor Arts** please go to: [laborarts.org/exhibits/lemlichawards-2022](http://laborarts.org/exhibits/lemlichawards-2022)*

***Reverend Jeannette J. Phillips** has been a trailblazer in ensuring safe and accessible healthcare for marginalized people for over 50 years! In the early 1970s, Rev. Phillips was chosen by the African American women of Peekskill, New York, in the early 1970s to head their campaign to establish a community healthcare center that would offer access to affordable healthcare. The first **Sun River Health** location then called the **Peekskill Area Ambulatory Healthcare Center**, opened in 1975. Rev Phillips served as the organization's first Board Chair before joining the health center as its first Outreach director in 1977. Rev. Phillips is currently the Executive Director of the **Housing Preservation Company** and Executive Vice President of Community Development at **Sun River Health**. She is also a special advisor to the CEO and oversees Sun River Health's culture and heritage, community relations, and spiritual health and well-being. All of this is possible due to Reverend Jeannette J. Phillips' amazing efforts. - Shelby Fenton*

**Shelby Fenton:** *Does having a sense of community make it easier to be strong?*

**Reverend Jeannette J. Phillips:** Well, yes, it does make it easier and it can depend on how we use the word "community" because community can cover a very wide range depending on the issue that you might be looking at. But certainly having that community that can give a response whatever the issue or concern that you're speaking to work in.

**SF:** *What was the most significant setback you faced during your journey?*

**Rev. JP:** I would say in the early years, because regarding this healthcare initiative, it took us from 1971 when we first had a community meeting until 1974 when we were funded through a reasonable medical program to receive \$285,000 for a three-year period and President Richard Nixon impounded all of the healthcare. Community action programs, Headstart, and the grant we received to open our doors were equally impounded. This happened across the nation and that was a very significant setback for us. We had to later tell the lawyers to file a class-action suit against the government to have those funds released back to all of the different communities so while it was a setback we were then able to move forward after that lawsuit was settled.

**SF:** *How did you figure out where to begin? (Regarding the Healthcare center)*

**Rev. JP:** We began with one mother, in particular, leaving home to take a two-hour bus ride to a hospital that gave services to people who didn't have insurance or didn't have sufficient insurance. She had missed the bus on her way coming back and with three of her children with her. Now she had to wait and see who could come to help her, the next day she was so so upset about it she was talking to some of her friends and some others at the community action program which is a program that came out of the war on poverty. They said you could do something about it but you will need to get the community involved. So they created a service to have someone go around the different

communities to get answers on what people thought about healthcare, housing, jobs, and schools. Which covers an area much like areas we see in our country today. My door was knocked on as well. I filled out the survey. That survey was in November of 1971 and the next meeting that I attended was in January of 1972 which was you know just a couple of months after the holiday time. It was at that meeting that I asked if I would be willing to be Chair Woman and that **opened the door** for me and other community members to come together and submit a proposal to the federal government for funds for those most vulnerable in our community without healthcare.

**SF:** *What had motivated you the most to take this action?*

**Rev. JP:** What most motivated me to take this action was because I too had witnessed what it was like to not have affordable healthcare or not to have your insurance accepted because it didn't cover many of the doctors in the community. Therefore I had to rely on other health departments or hospital clinics that were set up that would offer some services. That was my motivation to be able to have better healthcare access for my family. Also during that period of time my husband and I had what we called a "community care home" where we would take care of veterans and senior citizens. We had witnessed the fact that they too didn't have all of the services that they should have had and so that was a strong motivation to me to pursue and what we say today: *healthcare is a right and not just a privilege to some.*

**Final Thoughts from Shelby Fenton:**

*The chance to speak with the Rev. Jeannette J. Phillips was a real delight and honour. She truly is an incredibly strong, compassionate, and lovely woman. It was so lovely and motivating to speak with her. Learning more about her story and the struggles she and her comrades endured to assist such a large population was incredibly fascinating and inspiring. I definitely appreciate the guidance she gave me on developing as a person while I grow older. She said there are a lot of things happening in this world will need a lot of advocacy of the current youth such as climate change to healthcare. She has also mentions that things such as healthcare and education make a family whole and we are all family and apart of many different families. Congratulations on your award and thank you so much for the advice and this opportunity, Rev. Jeannette J. Phillips!*



Thank you Rev. Jeannette J. Phillips for your time, inspiring words and inspiring our youth!



Thank you Shelby for this thought-provoking interview celebrating the advocacy of Rev. Jeanette!



♥ ♥ ♥ Loving all the Youth-Led Service! ♥ ♥ ♥

This winter, Youth Leaders have dedicated their time to incredible service projects. At The **Ascension** Food Pantry, the only 100% Youth-Led and Youth-Run Food Pantry in NYC, young people serve hundreds of food insecure neighbors every month. Thank you to **Woolco Foods** and **Economy Candy** for your critical donations. Young people across NYC volunteered together to create valentine cards for the food pantry clients. Another special project were handmade valentine gift baskets for the unhoused mothers and babies at our favorite family shelter lovingly assembled by Youth Leaders Olympia, Payton, Riley and Zuzu including handcrafted valentine cards from the youth group at Holy Name/St. Gregory's and **the Warriors of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral**.

♥ At **The Imagine Society**, our mission is to nurture youth service and volunteerism, while serving some of our most vulnerable communities and neighbors. ♥

We are 100% volunteer driven, and committed to help foster the future compassionate leaders of tomorrow. Please check out this link to **DONATE** to help support our work and programming!





FUN PAGES

Knock knock.  
Who's there?  
  
Will.  
  
Will who?  
  
Will you open  
the door?



Edited by  
Youth Leader  
Katie Gaffigan  
(13)

You want to  
come in my life,  
the door is open.  
You want to get  
out of my life,  
the door is open.  
Just one request.  
Don't stand in  
the door, you're  
blocking the  
traffic.



Knock, knock.  
Who's there?  
Needle.  
Needle who?  
Needle little help  
opening the door!





**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MATTERS**

**WORD PLAY**



HONORING  
**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

CELEBRATING  
**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

Edited by  
Youth Leader  
Katie Gaffigan  
(13)

**BLACK  
HISTORY  
IS**  
*American History*

Let's Celebrate Together  
**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**  
YESTERDAY. TODAY. TOMORROW.

# Opening Doors Word Scramble

YAWAEGT \_\_\_\_\_

LPRATO \_\_\_\_\_

NOTTIANSR \_\_\_\_\_

NRAEENTC \_\_\_\_\_

ESCSCA \_\_\_\_\_

DSNMOSIIA \_\_\_\_\_



ANSWER KEY

# Opening Doors Word Scramble

ADMISSION

ACCESS

ENTRANCE

TRANSITION

PORTAL

GATEWAY

DSNMOSIIA

ESCSCA

NRAENTC

NOTTIANSR

LPRATO

YAWAEGT