

**HIGHMARK**—Who's Who in Black Pittsburgh honorees from Highmark enjoyed the evening and the honor.

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## Community Calendar

### Humanae/ I AM AUGUST

JULY 22—The August Wilson Center for African American Culture will host the portrait-based art installation, "Humanae/I AM AUGUST" at the August Wilson Center, 980 Liberty Ave., Cultural District. Through July 25, the project seeks 150 individuals to have their portraits taken for the art installation that will feature the faces of Pittsburgh. The exhibit will be installed Sept. 25 for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust Gallery Crawl and remain displayed through August 2016. Groups, churches and organizations are also welcome. Reservations are required. For more information, call Deesha Philyaw at 412-363-3000 or email [deesha@kelly-strayhorn.org](mailto:deesha@kelly-strayhorn.org).

### Financial Literacy Symposium

JULY 25—The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh's Bank On Greater Pittsburgh in partnership with Neighborhood Allies will host a Financial Literacy Education Symposium from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at Hosanna House, 807 Wallace Ave., Wilkinsburg. There will be several breakout sessions, a proclamation and a gospel concert with Minister Trini Massie. This is free and open to the public, and reservations are required by July 17. For more information, call 412-227-4191 or email [BOGP@ulpgh.org](mailto:BOGP@ulpgh.org).

### Networking/Talent Show Luncheon

JULY 26—Shelly Bryant will host a Networking and Variety Talent Show Luncheon at 1 p.m. at North

Versailles Community Room, 1401 Greensburg Ave., North Versailles. Reservations are requested and food will be provided. For more information, call Bryant at 412-628-4958.

### Basketball Camp

JULY 29—P.R.O.M.I.S.E. will host the 5th Annual Jakim Donaldson Basketball Camp from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. at Oliver High School, 2323 Brighton Rd., North Side. For three days, through July 31, boys and girls ages 8-18 are welcome to this free basketball camp to learn necessary basketball skills. Lunch will be provided and campers must bring active gear and shoes as well as provide proof of income. Registration is required. For more information, call 412-321-1019 or visit [www.promiseonthemove.com](http://www.promiseonthemove.com).

### Fashion Show/ Pool Party

JULY 31— B. Marshall Productions will host Pittsburgh's Fashion Show & Super MODELS Pool Party from 5-10 p.m. at Sherwood Event Center, 400 Sherwood Rd., Wilkinsburg. The event will include celebrity hosts Vanessa Doss and Miyoshi Anderson, a Charity Basketball Game, a Fashion Show displaying various designers and other entertainment. Proceeds will benefit Stop the Violence-Pittsburgh and the 2016 Juneteenth Festival in Market Square. For more information, call William Marshall at 724-205-9376.

### Summer Enrichment Academy

ONGOING—5A Elite Youth Empowerment will host a Summer Enrichment Academy from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Park Community Center, 7300 Ridgeview Ave.,

Penn Hills. Every Friday through Aug. 28, youth ages 10-18 will participate in sports training, dance, peace building, personal awareness workshops and dinner. This is free and registration is required. For more information, call 412-867-5889.

*(To have items listed on Community Calendar, send information at least two weeks in advance to: 315 E. Carson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15219; Fax: 412-481-1360 or email: [newsroom@new-pittsburghcourier.com](mailto:newsroom@new-pittsburghcourier.com).)*





YOU SHOULD KNOW

# SABRINA SAUNDERS

The executive director of Strong Women, Strong Girls knows firsthand how powerful it can be to have a mentor.

**WHEN SABRINA SAUNDERS** was 14 and 15, she spent her summers volunteering as a candy striper at West Penn Hospital in Bloomfield. In the elevator one day, she talked with a group of teens and asked what they were doing there. Looking at her uniform, they told her they were doing the same kind of work. Unlike her, they were getting paid for it through YouthWorks via the Summer Youth Employment Program at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, which focuses on community involvement and revitalization.

The next summer, Saunders, who then was living in Garfield, inquired about getting a job through YouthWorks. The program placed her in the human resources department in the hospital. After she graduated from Oakland Catholic High School and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania (she also has a master's degree from Carlow University), the program hired her as its youth employment coordinator.

"That is so important to my story," she says. "The fact that an organization in my own neighborhood invested time in kids, and I had a relationship with [the program], is very important because everything I do circles back to that type of connection."

The belief in taking care of community stayed with her as she worked for U.S. Rep. Mike Doyle and as former Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's youth policy manager and director of education and youth development for the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh.

Since spring 2014, Saunders, 34, of Homestead, has been the executive director of Strong Women, Strong Girls, a South Side nonprofit organization that helps to create mentoring relationships between professional women and college women, who in turn mentor pre-adolescent girls in underserved communities.

"I'd be lying if I didn't say this mentorship program works because this is everything like what I benefited from," Saunders says. "I didn't have Strong Women, Strong Girls, but I had mentors. I know girls would not have that in that type of community we're serving if not for Strong Women, Strong Girls. I absolutely feel like that's going to be instrumental in the decisions they make for their future, because they'll be making decisions with a whole host of tools that unfortunately other girls don't have."

This month, in addition to recruiting this year's group of professional mentors for the Strong Leaders program, the organization will host its Strong Awards Breakfast, which will feature

fashion designer Kiya Tomlin as the keynote speaker. One strong woman will receive an award for leadership, as will three strong girls.

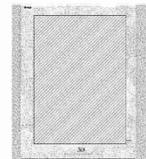
"I could give you facts and statistics all day, but I'm a living statistic of how mentoring works and why it's important," Saunders says.

**Q A** **You volunteered with SWSG as a mentor in 2008. What attracted you to the organization?** I found empowering girls and raising self-esteem really resonated with me. I also wanted the opportunity to build a relationship with college women who might need that support.

**How did you start working there?** [While working for the Urban League] I saw the posting for the executive director position [at SWSG], but ... it just wasn't the right time. Fast-forward about a half a year later, I was invited to facilitate a workshop for Strong Women, Strong Girls because someone canceled. They had not filled the position for executive director, but I didn't know that, and it turned out the [advisory] board was present at my workshop [and later invited me to interview]. I always say when something's meant, it'll keep following you until you give in. Clearly this was something that was meant because it was something I was interested in, and it came back and found me.

**What are some milestones from your first year?** We've been able to [have an impact on] 623 girls. We've grown to 32 sites (school or community centers where they offer programs) across Allegheny County. We're adding a chapter — historically we've had five university chapters, but we're adding Robert Morris University beginning this fall. We've also partnered with Carlow University to offer a women's studies class in which Strong Women, Strong Girls mentors can enroll and get credit. The class opens this fall, and it's full already.

**In 2009, Ebony magazine named you one of its Top 30 Young Leaders of the Future. Do you feel you've lived up to their expectations?** Obviously I'm an African-American woman, but being recognized by an African-American magazine but doing work that impacts the whole community — I felt that was rare. It was a huge milestone for me because it means something to be recognized. It's also a national magazine so I felt proud to bring exposure back to Pittsburgh because I love this city. I guess [the magazine was] saying we were people to watch, and I don't regret any steps I've made professionally. **PM**



“ I'm a living statistic of how mentoring works and why it's important. ”

BY LAUREN DAVIDSON | PHOTO BY LAURA PETRILLA



ELSIE HILLMAN · 1925-2015

## W.Pa. loses grande dame of GOP

*'Real doer' poured heart, millions into politicians, rights, community*

BY SALENA ZITO

Philanthropist Elsie Hillman, a Republican matriarch who rubbed shoulders with presidents and politicians but could just as easily befriend doormen and waiters, died Tuesday in Pittsburgh.

Despite her enormous wealth and influence, she loved simple things: Kentucky Fried Chicken, costume jewelry, driving her own car and calling people "dearie," even a president of the United States. A generous woman with a hearty laugh and indomitable spirit, she pushed for equal rights for blacks and women beginning in the 1950s, encouraging them to run for office, and later advocated for gay rights and women's reproductive rights.

"Everything needs a real doer — in other words, it needs a passionate person, somebody who is willing to do anything for the thing that they are passionate about," she told Robin Beckham, editor of the online Pittsburgh Urban Media, in a 2013 interview.

Mrs. Hillman, the wife of industrialist Henry Hillman of Squirrel Hill, died of heart

failure in UPMC Shadyside. She was 89.

"Elsie was happiest when surrounded by her family," her husband said. "Every person she ever met, she made to feel as though they were her best friend and that she would do anything for them, but her family always came first in her heart."

The family plans a private funeral and a public memorial service at 10:30 a.m. Sept. 19 in Calvary

Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh's Shadyside neighborhood.

Mrs. Hillman was a Republican national committeewoman from 1975 to 1996, though she grew disenchanted when the party's conservatives became more dominant.

She was "the last of a breed," someone who "made politics fun," said former Lt. Gov. Bill Scranton, a Scranton Republican.

"She was enthusiastic when it wasn't cool to be a Republican," said Scranton, who as the son of a governor knew her "since I was in short pants." Mrs. Hillman, he said, "was uninhibited in her beliefs. Whatever her ideals were, she lived them."

At the height of her involvement in politics, she had "the unique ability to talk to the president of the United States in the morning and to talk to the parking lot attendant in the afternoon and convince both of them she's their best friend,"

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said Allegheny County Republican Committee Chairman Jim Roddey.

A parking lot attendant, Roddey recalled, once told Mrs. Hillman, "I really appreciate your talking to me. After all, I'm only a parking lot attendant." And she said, "Oh, no. You are an automotive placement engineer."

Former President George H.W. Bush, whom Mrs. Hillman supported, told the Tribune-Review the country lost "one of the brightest points of light and finest political activists."

A "force of nature," Bush said, Mrs. Hillman "had the biggest, most caring heart. She seemed to know everyone. And she had respect and admiration even from those with whom she did not always agree on issues."

The Hillmans celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on May 12 at the Pittsburgh Golf Club. He attended, but she was hospitalized and spoke by closed-circuit TV, guests said. Seated in a wingback chair, with flowers next to her, she dressed up her blue silk outfit

