

Assistant principal creates school anthem

BY KIM UNDERWOOD
WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH
COUNTY SCHOOLS

Thanks to the "Flat Rock Anthem" video, everyone can get a glimpse of Flat Rock Middle being a fine school.

The idea for creating a song for the school and a video to go with it came from assistant principal Daryl Florance. He readily acknowledges that it grew into something more through the collaboration of other adults and the students at Flat Rock. Eighth-grader Bryaunna Wright, seventh-graders Nasier Smith and Yadhaziz Perez were among the students Florance invited to offer ideas for the project.

"It was exciting," said Wright.

Wright said that when she thinks about what makes Flat Rock a good school, she thinks about how the teachers and others at the school do their best to help everyone. For the video, Smith came up with the idea of having a scene in which the students work in the classrooms. Then they start moving to the music when they listen to the song over the public address system.

"We're showing what we believe in at Flat Rock," Smith said.

Perez ended up being one of the students in the video. Knowing that people would be watching the video made her a lit-



(L-R) Bryaunna Wright, Yadhaziz Perez, assistant principal Daryl Florance and Nasier Smith.

tle nervous. But she thought it was important for everyone to know that at Flat Rock, students behave responsibly.

"The video turned out really well," said Principal Becky Hodges. "It's fabulous. Students relate to it and are excited to see themselves in it."

Music has been an important part of Florance's life. He started singing in church as a child.

"I remember being in the

choir when I was 7 or 8," said Florance. "My grandmother was over the choir."

When Florance went to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro as a N.C. Teaching Fellow, he joined the Neo Black Society Gospel Choir. After he graduated in 2003 and became a teacher at Page High School in Greensboro, he wrote a song called "Let the Banjo Play", while teaching his social studies

students about the black roots of the banjo.

"Ultimately we created a video in class in which we talked about the story of the banjo," Florance said. "I had so much fun with that."

After completing a master's degree in school administration at Gardner-Webb University in 2013, he was offered the job at Flat Rock. He began thinking about possibilities for helping to

instill pride in students and to increase the profile of the school.

"I wanted to create something that helped identify what we are all about," he said.

Flat Rock is one of the many schools in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System that has adopted a program known as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). By the end of his first year, Florance had written a song with lyrics that incorporated the PBIS guidelines.

After the song was played at an assembly at the beginning of Florance's second year, physical education teacher Jimmy Wormack choreographed a routine for the Flat Rock Middle School Step Team to perform with the song.

When it was time to create the video, teacher Noreen Cortez-Harrigan and Sheldon Beatty, a regular substitute, helped with the staging.

One of Florance's former students, Kierre James, also known as KJ the Kidd, sung on the video. Florance, his wife, Shonda and their two children, Damia and DaShaun, were involved with the video.

For the direct link of "Flat Rock Anthem", go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixucHsvLNog&feature=youtu.be>. The video is also being shown on the school system's station Cable 2.

Two students awarded book scholarships

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Sethos Court 105, an auxiliary of the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of the Nobles Mystic Shrine, Inc. (AEAON-MS), honored two young ladies with scholarships of \$250 each to assist the cost of books as they enter into college. Scholarship recipient Brittany Patrick is a graduate of Carver High School, who is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology /Pre-Med at Johnson C. Smith University. Amethyst Johnson, graduate of Parkland Magnet High School, is currently attending North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. The objective of Sethos Court 105 is to work in the community and assist in serving those who are in need in our community. Rosalyn Joyner serves as the Illustrious Commandress.



(L-R) Imperial Deputy of the Oasis Erica Woods, PC Veronica Sawyer, Maxine Gwyn (aunt of Brittany Patrick), Brittany Patrick, Illustrious Commandress Rosalyn Joyner, PC Larn Dillard and Dt. Hattie B. Fulton, Scholarship Committee Chairperson. Not pictured is scholarship recipient Amethyst ReMae Johnson.

Book Review

Book provides treatment tips to navigating life through depression or grief

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER
FOR THE CHRONICLE

You're tired of having red eyes.

You're tired of crying, too; tired of an empty soul, runny nose, and dry mouth but you know there are more tears inside you and they need to come out. Whoever said that big girls don't cry needs to know that that's not true: as in the new book "Welcome to My Breakdown" by Benilde

Little, sometimes crying is only the beginning.

For many years, Clara Little liked to say that she knew her last child would be a girl. She predicted it, and it happened - perhaps through force of will because, says her daughter, Clara was that kind of person: self-reliant and strong.

Clara worked long overnight shifts, but made sure that her house was spotless. She helped care for her neighbors and her family, giving her children

a good upper-middle-class life at a time when that was a rare thing in their mostly-African American New Jersey community. Her giving spirit and her no-nonsense personality remained well-known for the rest of her life, and when Clara died, her many friends mourned along with her family.

For Benilde Little, the death of her mother was a crushing blow - the biggest in a series of events that bruised her already-fragile, sensitive soul. Two months prior, Little lost her father-in-law. After her mother's death, her best friend's mother died, the financial market collapsed, the Littles' income fell, Little's dog got sick, menopausal symptoms exacerbated, and her husband was diagnosed with cancer.

For months, Little could barely function without dissolving in tears. She had trouble getting out of bed, she stopped calling on friends, and her writing career all but halted. Seemingly everybody had advice and most offered support but, powerless to pull herself up and knowing that this was more than just grief, Little began seeking help for a diagnosis of clinical depression. She tried therapy sessions, prescriptions, distractions and exercise, but she still couldn't stop crying and she couldn't erase certain mental images that plagued her. There were good days, but they were eclipsed by

the very, very bad days - until she began to see things that further opened her eyes.

We've all had times in our lives when nothing goes right. "Welcome to My Breakdown," shows what it feels like when one of Those Days lasts for years.

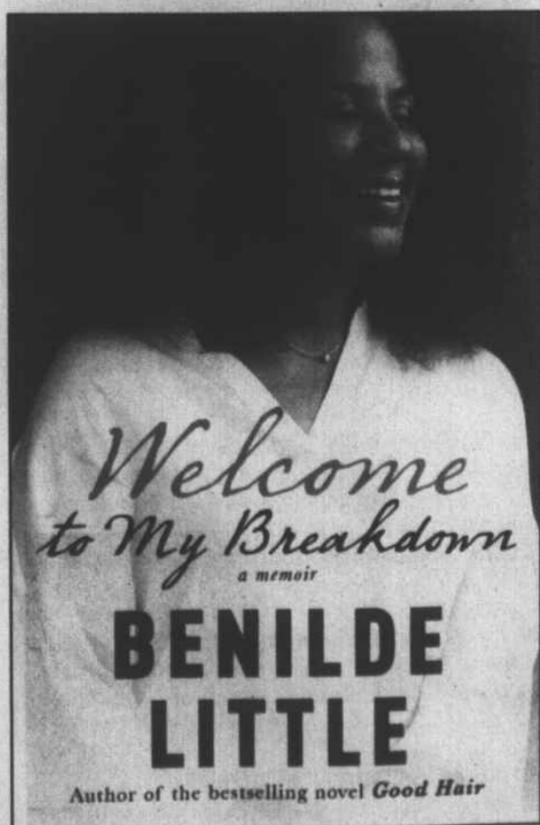
Indeed, although it's hard to accurately explain the depths of depression or grief, author Benilde Little still gives readers a good

sense of the senseless, and of the confusion that's felt when one is completely, totally powerless to explain why certain harmful emotions are so sticky and can't abate. We're also taken on a trip through a few of the various treatments that work - and don't - before Little finds a shaky conclusion.

Be aware that there's quite a bit of back-story filler and empty name-dropping here but since this

book could be a comfort to anyone experiencing grief or depression, the pay-off might be worth the journey. For that person, "Welcome to My Breakdown" could be a memoir well-read.

The Bookworm is Terri Schlichenmeyer. Terri has been reading since she was 3 years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 14,000 books.



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