

UR RUN
UTICA ROADRUNNERS
AGAINST RACISM

**AN 8.46 MILE RUNNING
& WALKING ROUTE
THROUGH UTICA TO
HONOR BLACK LIVES LOST,
STAND AGAINST RACISM
AND TO LEARN ABOUT
AND CELEBRATE OUR
CITY'S BLACK COMMUNITY**

**For the full route and
to read the history:
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1836

UTICA RESCUE



On December 29, 1836, the “Utica Rescue” occurred in the office of Judge Chester Hayden which was on lower Genesee Street. You are looking at the back of the building.

Mr. Christian Miller arrived in Utica in pursuit of and with a power of attorney from the executor of the estate of John Geyer of Woodstock, Virginia, to arrest Harry Bird and George, two slaves seeking freedom, who resided in Utica. After a short time, Alvan Stewart, Esq. appeared as counsel for the men and was told that both had been brought before Judge Hayden without process, charged as fugitive slaves and were being held by the claimants. At the request of Stewart, the examination was postponed until that evening and the alleged runaways were then held in a back room of Judge Hayden’s building.

About 6:00 in the evening, a crowd of men and boys assembled around the door and on the stairs of Hayden’s office. Just before 6:30pm, a signal was given and the lights were extinguished. A door of the rear office, which had been locked, was forced open by breaking the lock and a number of men – black and white – made a rush for the room in which the prisoners were confined and burst open the door. After a struggle with the officers and citizens who were on guard, they succeeded in rescuing the fugitives.

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1945

CLUB GEORGE

George and Rachel Hamlett opened a business at 118 Liberty St. in 1945. They named it the Liberty St. Café. A year later, in 1946, they obtained a liquor license, and the Liberty St. Café became Club George.

In the 1940s and 50s, some of the biggest names in show business would perform in Utica at the Stanley Theater, including: Nat King Cole, Duke Ellington, and Count Basie who hobnobbed with patrons at the club after performing. J.R. Montrose, a native Utican, who was a well known saxophonist would bring them down to jam. It made it convenient for them, because they all stayed at Hotel Utica.

Club George closed in 2006, after being in business for 61 years, earning the title of the oldest black-owned business in this area.



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1836

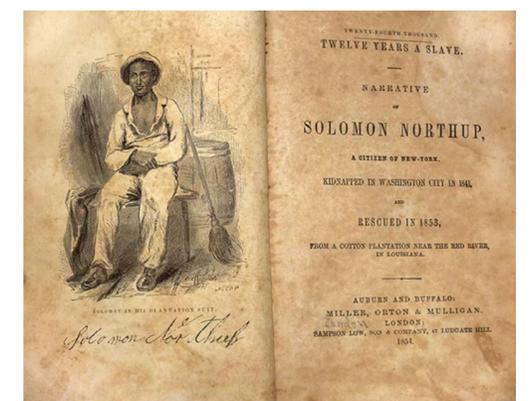
MECHANIC'S HALL



It was erected by the Utica Mechanics Association in 1837. The ground floor was intended to be rented for stores. The second floor contained a reading room and library. The third floor consisted of a 40' x 67' hall that was adapted for musical performances, lectures and public meetings.

It was the cultural, scientific, and educational center of Utica throughout the nineteenth century. It was host to manufacturing fairs, art exhibits, lectures, recitals, plays and operas. It also served as the early home of Utica's public library and art museum.

The hall was also the scene of many political gatherings including anti-slavery events, talks and conventions. Solomon Northrup, author of *Twelve Years a Slave*, read from his memoirs at Mechanics Hall on March 23, 1856. Susan B. Anthony was in attendance at a convention of Abolitionists of the Garrisonian School in 1857.



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1893

ELLEN ELIZABETH “LIZZI” LAVENDER



Ellen Elizabeth Lavender, a former slave, fled the south after being freed by Union soldiers in 1865. She eventually married one of the soldiers, Nicholas Lavender. In 1883, Ellen came to Utica as a member of the “Negro Jubilee Singers”, traveling with Arthur Dixon, a black revivalist. She would give lectures on a slave’s life.

In 1893 she moved to Utica and began the mission of helping the needy. She performed “street corner” sermons for anyone to attend. She provided meals and a place to sleep for those in need. In 1900 she began a New Year’s Day dinner and at times fed as many as 900 people. The first of her New Years Day dinners were at her home and at African M E mission at 90 Hotel Street. After her death in 1928, the dinners continued in her name until 1968. She is buried in New Forest Cemetery on Oneida Street. The stone is similar to those given to a spouse of a Civil War Veteran.

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1943

WASHINGTON COURTS



Washington Courts apartment buildings were built from 1943-1944 and comprised of 147 apartments, as well as the Richard Frank building. They were first occupied by many African Americans that migrated north during the 1940s to work in agriculture. At one point, approximately 90% of Utica's African American population lived in Bagg's Square. Activities for tenants of Washington Courts included programs, recreation and meetings of up to 50 people. Offices were occupied by the housing project manager, tenant relations personnel and the maintenance department. They were demolished in 2005 and tenants were relocated.

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1938

BESSIE HICKS & THE COSMOPOLITAN CENTER



This music teacher came to the area from the Midwest and felt there should be a place where black children could study, play, sing and participate in social events. With assistance from others who supported her cause, she went door-to-door soliciting donations. With \$280, she rented rooms in a vacant house at Broad and Second Streets. That was in 1938.

With the motto, “Better character, better society, better citizens of tomorrow,” she founded what became known as the Cosmopolitan Center and opened on Whitesboro Street (behind the Aud). The Cosmopolitan Center became a haven for inner city youth.

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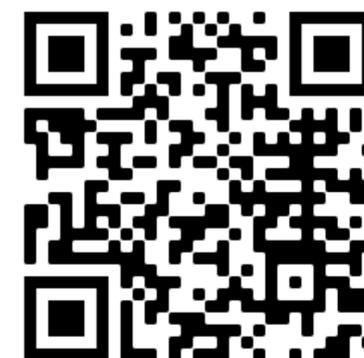
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2020
GRADY'S WAY



To learn more:



An initiative under Catholic Charities Oneida/Madison County, Grady's Way is a residential emergency shelter for young men, ages 12-18, in our community. This supportive housing program provides youth with a safe and secure living environment that also offers life skills activities and assists participants with performance based academics, job seeking skills, counseling, college applications and transitioning into permanent independent housing. Three Permanent Supported Housing Apartments are also available for young men ages 18-25.

Grady's Way is named after Grady Faulkner, a longtime parent liaison at the Utica City School District who recognized homelessness among teens in the community.

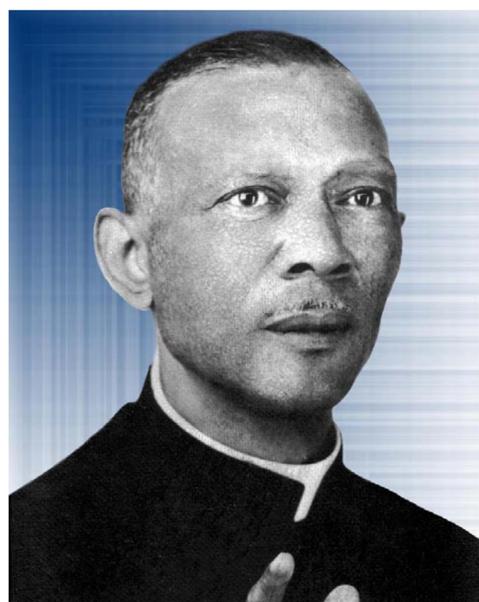
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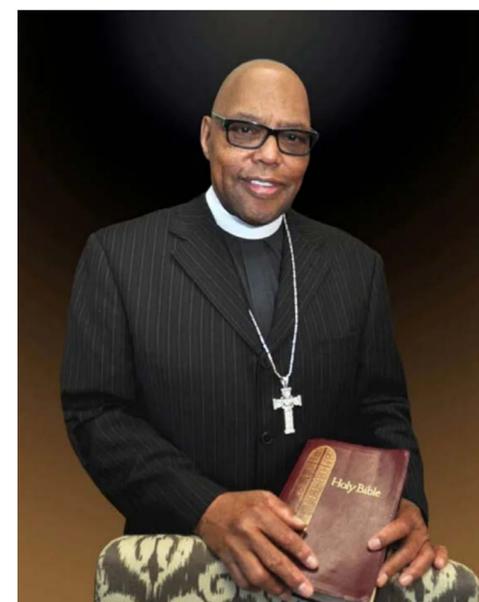
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1942

ST. MATTHEW'S TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST



*Founder
Rev. Matthew Blackshear*



*Current Pastor
Rev. J.L. Griffin*

Rev. Matthew Blackshear bused migrant workers up the coast from the South to Utica for work digging potatoes and picking beans. Many workers, seeing opportunity to work in Utica's factories, made a home here. Blackshear started St. Matthew's Temple out of his home in 1942, then moved to a storefront on Washington Street with a ten-person congregation. At the time of their 70th anniversary in 2012, it was said that about 80 percent of the congregation originated from those southern roots. His powerful sermons grew the church into a fixture in the community and his son-in-law Rev. James Griffin, Sr. and grandson Rev. J. L. Griffin continued his legacy.

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2016

LEVITT AMP UTICA LADIES OF SOUL



The Levitt AMP Utica Music Series is a free, 10-week concert series that takes place right here at Kopernik Park. It fills the park with high caliber music, art, community and joy. Utica has won the competitive grant since 2016 and welcomes up to 1,000 each week to the Oneida Square Arts District.

The Ladies of Soul and their Gentlemen is comprised of some of central New York's best and most talented singers and musicians. They are all very active in their communities, churches and in the lives of many others and each one of them has conquered milestones in the music industry near and far, both individually and collectively. The powerhouse voices at the forefront of the group bring you strong sounds of soul, pop, R&B, Motown and more.

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1996
JUNIOR FRONTIERS



*Learn more about
this program's
impressive achievements*



The Junior Frontiers of the Mohawk Valley is the largest all voluntary civic youth organization predominantly for students of color that is based out of Central New York. It was established in 1996 as the student component of the adult civic service organization, Frontiers International of the Mohawk Valley, which is based out of the Utica/Rome area.

The Junior Frontiers addresses many of the issues facing children of color in our community. It focuses attention on academic excellence, professional development, civic responsibility and self-esteem. Since its inception, the program has grown from an annual membership of 8 students to over 160 student members per year. The program utilizes special projects, trips, speakers, events, historic Black college tours and more to expose the children to the many possibilities that exist for their future.

The program uses Watson Williams Elementary School as home base.

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1797

BIRTHPLACE OF GERRIT SMITH



Gerrit Smith, son of fur trader and early Old Fort Schuyler settler Peter Smith, was on this corner.

His life's work included social reform endeavors, including many temperance activities, religious endeavors and philanthropy. One such activity included his 120,000 acres in the Adirondacks that he partitioned into 40 acre plots and granted to 3,000 free African Americans living in New York State so they could vote. (In order to vote, you needed to own land.) Smith was a candidate

for governor of New York in 1840 and 1858 and a candidate for President of the United States in 1848, 1856 and 1860. Smith made woman suffrage a plank in its platform in 1848. He was a first cousin of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, founder and leader of the women's suffrage movement.

His involvement in abolition heightened when he witnessed the near riot of an abolition meeting in Utica in 1835. Smith invited the abolitionists to convene at his home in Peterboro, NY, which became a leading location on the underground railroad. Smith was one of a group of "secret six" who financed the efforts of John Brown including his raid on Harpers Ferry, West Virginia in 1859. The failure of Harper's Ferry led Smith into a period of depression causing him to become a patient at the Utica Lunatic Asylum for a short period of time. Smith's Peterboro Estate was declared a National Historic Landmark in 2001.



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2018

KEMBLE PARK

Kemble Park is two acres, or approximately one-half of a city block. It is the former site of James Kemble School, a larger, brick two story building constructed in the late 1880s that closed in 1992 and was torn down in 1996. Basketball courts and a soccer field were built after for the neighborhood and then in 2000, it was used as a holding area for construction equipment. In 2004, planning began to reclaim the park.

The Kemble Park Project was residentially led and driven by the Cornhill Neighborhood Association in conjunction with partners at the HomeOwnership Center and the City of Utica.

In November 2010, officials announced that the first stage of establishing a community park would be the development of a new soccer field. Cornell conducted visioning sessions and focus groups with residents and stakeholders to get ideas regarding the design of the park. Plans were developed through Cornell University's landscape and architecture program, the city and neighborhood association.

Kemble Park reclaims disused land, greens and revitalizes the neighborhood and creates a safe and welcoming space for residents seeking recreation, community gathering and contact with nature. The park was officially dedicated in October, 2018.

The brand new mural you see here was just completed by four Black artists – it is a community quilt celebrating Black history, culture and contributions and empowering people to become the change they seek.

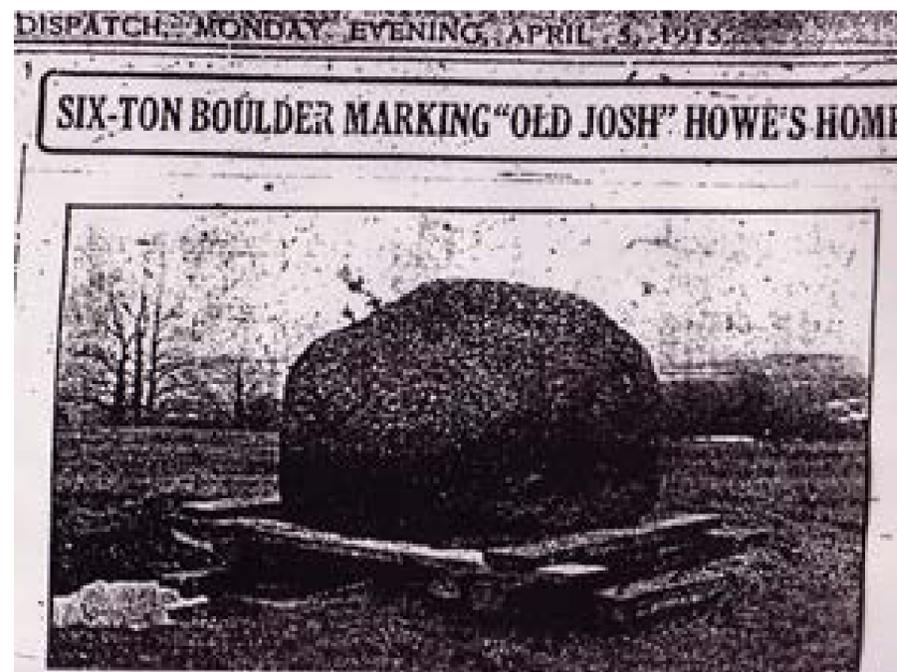
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1800S

JOSHUA HOWE



Joshua Howe was born enslaved in Branford, Connecticut, in 1776 and purchased his freedom from Henry Crane in 1803. Howe lived on what was called “The Gore,” with his family where they operated a station on the Underground Railroad. His cabin was located on the 5th green of what is now Valley View Golf Course in Roscoe Conkling Park. In 1915 Thomas Proctor dedicated a 6-ton boulder to Howe’s memory as an underground “station master.” The boulder and plaque are nowhere to be found.



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← 1113 LINWOOD PLACE

2002 – FOR THE GOOD, INC.

FTG founded in September 2002 to benefit the Utica community providing low-income residents and their neighborhoods with programs to overcome poverty through their own means. The Study Buddy Club was established in conjunction with Hamilton College in direct response to gang activity and has produced great academic improvement and social development for at-risk inner-city youth. FTG established the Mohawk Valley Contractors Guild in 2003 to increase hiring of minority contractors for government contracts. Community Gardens were established in 2008 providing fresh organic produce for the food insecure. In 2008 Academy Award winner Adrien Brody donated \$50k to produce the original musical Wonderful Wizard of Was at the Stanley Theater for inner-city youth. In 2011, For The Good launched the Oneida County Black History Archive, which was donated to Hamilton College in 2019 as part of its permanent collections.

2003 – UTICA PHOENIX

In 2003, For the Good, launched the Utica Phoenix which stands as the only Black-led publication in Upstate New York and the first Black-led newspaper in Utica's history. It has been an outspoken opponent to injustice and racism. Utilizing a talented team of writers and creators of all colors, the newspaper is full of current news and topics, opinions, highlights on Black history and human interest stories. It is free, published monthly and can be found throughout the region.

2018 – 95.5 THE HEAT

The first woman-owned radio station in the US built from the ground and the second Black woman-owned station in NYS, The Heat plays classic hip hop and R&B that also has news, talk, Latino, Jazz, Gospel, Soul and other programming including "The Hot Seat" with owner Cassandra Harris-Lockwood from 5-6pm Monday-Thursday.



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MID 20TH CENTURY

BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES ON LIBERTY STREET

Daisy's Restaurant was across the street from Club George.
Daisy's husband Sonny Saunders was the first black firefighter
in the City of Utica.

Warmack & Pringle Grocery Store

Wang & Gen's Bar - corner of Liberty and Washington Streets

Minor's Grill - between Washington and Broadway

Griffin's Barber Shop

Thank you to Robbie Dancy for assisting!

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DAVE MENTUS & HANDSHAKE.CITY



Dave Mentus is an MVCC grad with a degree in Graphic Design and Fine Art. His awesome design and illustrative work has been seen throughout Utica on downtown banners, in shows at Inkorporated, this mural at Handshake.City, the new mural in Kemble Park and much more. His hobbies include finding and refurbishing old furniture, freelance graphic design, painting and drawing, along with exploring nature with his daughter London.

Handshake.City container park is a collaboration of green space, art gallery, urban marketplace and event venue. With three renovated shipping containers, a previously abandoned lot and an indoor warehouse, they offer an opportunity for community, culture and commerce to come together for the benefit of Utica and its residents.

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2019
SOUL 112



Photo by The Observer-Dispatch

Learn more:



Christopher Etheridge took his experience in catering, love for soul food and entrepreneurial spirit and opened Soul 112 on March 1, 2019. Named after the street he grew up on and located at 171 Genesee Street right behind Character Coffee on the first floor, they serve up the best soul food with southeastern U.S. flavor — fried chicken and waffles, shrimp and grits, macaroni and cheese and other favorites like jerk chicken, Po' boys and a Philly cheese steak wrap. Be sure to follow them on Facebook to keep up with special menus and other offers like Seafood Fridays and Sunday Brunch. Currently during COVID, orders are for take out only.

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1978

FREEMAN'S BARBER SHOP



Freeman's Barber Shop, which has been in the former Fenton's Shoe Store since 1978, was a neighborhood fixture. Henry Freeman is originally from Alabama but has made Utica his home since 1960. When he arrived, he was an apprentice barber and worked for Rev. James Griffith for 18 years before starting his own shop in 1978 on the corner of Liberty and Washington Street. Parents from Washington Courts used to call him and

tell them they were sending the kids over for haircuts and they would come up on the weekends to settle up – it was the way business was done back in the day! This favorite neighborhood barber shop closed its doors on May 27, 2017 but both the shop and its owner will be remembered fondly.

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2010 - CELEBRATING 10 YEARS IN BUSINESS!

MV WELDING AND CUSTOM TRAILERS

Learn more!



Owners Ryan McEwen (left) and Jaime Thompson (right)

Mohawk Valley Welding is a leading provider of custom food trailers – they handle everything from concept and engineering to project planning and execution.

Jaime Thompson and Ryan McEwen, who both have extensive welding experience, first met back in 2009 working for a local sheet metal company fabricating commercial exhaust hoods and ventilation equipment for the restaurant industry. After

being laid off in 2010, they decided to go all in and start their own venture. After about three years of fabricating for the restaurant industry, they were approached by a local business owner to see if they would be interested in building a mobile barbecue truck. They had never done a project like that before, but it turned out to be a huge hit and a pivotal project for their business. For the past seven years, Ryan and Jaime have dedicated their business to solely producing food concession trailers and outfitting all types of trucks and buses into restaurants for the mobile food business *NATIONWIDE*.

Recently, they had their first international sale to a customer in the Caribbean. They went from renting 4,000 sq. ft. to 20,000 sq. ft. in the building you see here and have been able to hire a handful of highly skilled tradesmen to help with the fabrication work.

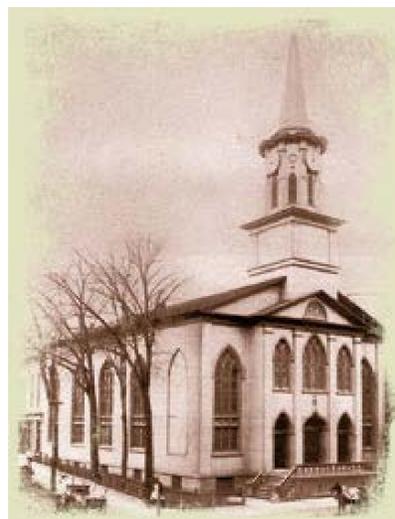
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1835

UTICA RIOT



In 1832 Alvan Stewart, an abolitionist lawyer, moved to Utica and started the Utica Anti-Slavery Society. He and Rev. Green issued a call for a State Convention to be held in Utica on October 21, 1835, for the purpose of forming a statewide anti-slavery society. Arrangements were made to hold the convention at the Second Presbyterian Church on the corner of Bleecker and Charlotte streets at 10 a.m.

Anticipating resistance, Stewart and Green convened the convention at 9:00, an hour earlier than announced. A resolution was quickly passed that formally established the New York State Anti-Slavery Society. By 10:00, a large group of anti-abolitionists had gathered and proceeded to disrupted the convention, demanding that it disband immediately. When the abolitionists refused to leave, the riot ensued. There was much noise, hymn books and other missiles were thrown about, personal attacks were made, and violence threatened against Alvan Stewart.

Gerrit Smith, who had attended, was so moved by the actions of the mob that he invited the delegates to reassemble at his estate at Peterboro and continue the proceedings. They reconvened the next day at the Presbyterian Church in Peterboro, 27 miles southwest of Utica, and Gerrit Smith was selected as chairman. The creation of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society established Oneida County as an important center of the Abolitionist Movement.

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2017

REBUILDING THE VILLAGE



*Like them on
Facebook*



Rebuilding the Village is a black-run 501(c)3 that arose out of a series of meetings about how we can begin to create the change we are seeking for our people and in our own communities. The organization is a grassroots effort pushing for the construction of an African-American community center in Cornhill. They also work with youth primarily age 13-18 that are not connected to the community for a variety of reasons and give them hope. They have created a year-round program for youth where this summer they will be utilizing Kemble Park for a mix of outdoor activities, art, music, exercise and more.

The Street Team – a community policing initiative that mostly operates out of Utica's Cornhill neighborhood to reduce gun violence – is also part of the organization. They work around the clock “on the ground” to provide mitigation, conflict resolution and any issues that may involve residents and law enforcement.

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1836
POST STREET



In 1836, most of Utica's 240 black residents lived on Post Street, which was home to boarding houses and taverns. Post Street's residents were active in the Underground Railroad. For instance, in 1846, William Johnson, a black barber living on Post Street, worked with white abolitionist William Blaikie to spirit two fugitives out of Utica. In 1855 a local newspaper noted that a family of freedom seekers had passed through Post Street on their way to Canada.

From: Utica Walking Tour, 2013, written by historical sociologist Jan DeAmicis



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1996

THE SHOP BARBER SHOP

Owner Rick Williams was born and raised in Utica and is a graduate of Utica Free Academy. He started cutting hair in 1989 and started his own place in 1996. Since The Shop moved to Genesee Street in Oneida Square in 2002, it has become a mainstay on the block. Rick calls it “the best location in town” – it’s close by for pedestrian traffic from many of Utica’s neighborhoods and is on the bus route. Plus, Oneida Square is always bustling.

The Shop offers all of the traditional barber shop services – cuts, shaves, eyebrows, specialty designs and more. There are three barbers including Rick.

Rick and The Shop also give back to the community, providing back to school hair cuts and supporting patrons and neighbors in other ways. They are currently strategizing on starting a barber school when those interested in barbering can get the first step into the profession.

Also... Rick is not just a barber, he’s quite a talented fine artist as well - keep an eye out for his drawings!



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THROUGH UTICA TO
HONOR BLACK LIVES LOST,
STAND AGAINST RACISM
AND TO LEARN ABOUT
AND CELEBRATE OUR
CITY'S BLACK COMMUNITY**

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1961

HOUSE OF GOD CHURCH

The House of God Church was started on Third Avenue by Elder Pearl Bennett – the first black female pastor in the city of Utica. The congregation began with just three members. As the church grew, it moved to 714 John Street and then eventually to its current Oneida Square location in 1976, purchasing the building from the Unitarian Church of Utica.

Their current pastor is Gen. Elder Luther Robertson, who is based out of Rochester but travels to Utica for services. There are three House of God congregations in Upstate New York: Utica, Syracuse and Rochester, along with three downstate. House of God is based out of Nashville, but has sister churches all over the world, providing a far reach of faith and support.

House of God's doors are open and they welcome all as they work to spread God's word. They offer Sunday School, dinner, fundraisers and more in addition to regular church services.

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1848

HOPE CHAPEL AME ZION CHURCH



Hope Chapel was founded in 1848 by Rt. Rev. J.W. Loguen the great abolitionist, to spread the Gospel to Utica and has been a beacon of faith, hope and liberation. For over 74 years, Hope Chapel was the only house of worship for people of color in the city of Utica. During the past 172 years, Hope Chapel has been a strong voice promoting justice, the word and the love of God. The current pastor, Rev. Sharon Baugh, is the first female pastor in the church's 172 year history and is new to Utica. We welcome her to our great city!

The church is located less than a mile east at 751 South Street.



Learn more!

Founder Rt. Rev. J.W. Loguen

Rev. Sharon Baugh

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SIGNIFICANT SOULS EXHIBIT



The large scale banners on display at Handshake.City were created by Utican Patrick Fiore and they are on display 24/7. The series explores a different side of history, focusing on the oppressed.

Patrick found inspiration through the engaging text, *A People's History of the United States 1492 – Present* authored by historian and activist Howard Zinn. Dr. Zinn's

moving narrative honors those who stood up and resisted, demanded, by offering their well-being and lives to make the changes that allowed all to benefit. These banner murals are created for this site to depict local history representing the Haudenosaunee, world immigration and refugee arrivals.

Patrick states, "By engaging our American story, we revisit our relatives, friends and our ancestors in discovering our common journey. My goal for *Significant Souls* is to illuminate, nudge, inspire, agitate and move people to action while encouraging the viewer to question, think, act and express their own truth, in their own way".



Learn more!



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2002 HOOPS & DREAMS PROJECT

“Empowering & Rebuilding Black America”

Patrick Johnson founded The Hoops & Dreams Project in 2002 and still serves as its director today. The project’s foundation is basketball – showcasing talented young men in middle and high school – but it was also created to be a vehicle that educates and raises awareness of opportunities. It welcomes guest speakers, recruiters for trade jobs and more to enhance the program.

Here are the top issues Hoops & Dream addresses:

1. Inner city gun violence
2. The value of education
3. The impact of drugs and alcohol
4. Discovering one’s true talents and gifts

Working in partnership with the Oneida County Youth Bureau, the program continues to strive to inspire the players and spectators that almost any dream is possible if you work hard, get an education, play by the rules, and have a good attitude.



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2008
**FOR THE GOOD, INC.'S COMMUNITY
GARDENS - LINWOOD PLACE**



Learn more!

For The Good, Inc.'s Community Gardens were begun in 2008 with a generous donation from Richard Pertz, Esq. The gardens are on city-owned property and enjoy the support of both the Utica Fire Department, which fills the water tanks and the DPW which handles curbside refuse and some infrastructure needs.

The beds are made with native rough-hewn lumber, are 4'x16'x16" and are filled with a compost of horse manure, wood shavings and hay. The Gardens are organic and available for participation by any and all members of the community. There is great volunteer effort from the greater community as well as City residents. There are community beds for general use as well as individual beds for more experienced gardeners. There is no cost for membership, just participation in commonly needed functions like weeding watering and planting. Tools are kept in the shed and children and elderly are welcome to come and enjoy the safe green space and the produce. The beds are also spaced to be wheel chair accessible.

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2008 FOR THE GOOD, INC.'S COMMUNITY GARDENS - JAY STREET



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2019
THE GRILL AND CHILL



Located just a block up on Eagle Street, The Grill and Chill is a new spot to grab some great food at reasonable prices and to enjoy the atmosphere of “art and community” and “positive vibes only”. Owner Dave Bonaparte is originally from Brooklyn, but has been upstate since 1999. He has a background in social services and looks forward to making his restaurant a “second home” to the kids in the neighborhood that need a place to chill and have a listening ear. As for the cooking part of the business – Dave credits his mom who made sure that he and his two brothers and 3 sisters knew how to cook. She sold dinners on Sundays in Brooklyn and would require the kids to come in the kitchen to watch and help. At Grill and Chill, Dave offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, 7:30am-8pm Monday - Saturday and even catering. The menu is full of the favorites – mac ‘n cheese, oxtail, griddle wings, burgers, chicken, fish and chicken sandwiches and more.



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2015 EMPOWERMENT CENTER

The Empowerment Center is a community-driven establishment for people to utilize for activities and other community related meetings/functions, seminars and a variety of programs through partnerships with organizations, financial institutions and colleges that is overseen by the HomeOwnership Center (HOC).

HOC has been serving the Cornhill community for over 40 years and has a mission to see revitalization and growth of neighborhoods. HOC envisions communities in Oneida, Herkimer, Madison, Fulton, Montgomery & Otsego counties that thrive by encouraging homeownership with education, financially responsible and empowered individuals, to create safe, stable and prosperous neighborhoods.

The mural on the exterior was created by local artist Tony Thompson. His signature art style has been formed through a mixture of the artistic inspirations he grew up with as well as life changing events of his recent past.



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1979

LEISURE TIME ACTIVITY CENTER

The Leisure Time Center was started in 1979 Rev. Upthegrove at St. Paul Baptist Church mainly as a day care for disabled adults. It later turned into a day care for children and continued after that as a community center. Annette McClary kept it going for quite some time and Harold McLeod also assisted greatly in keeping it moving and getting people back involved. Today, it exists primarily as a senior center and has programming on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays – Zumba, Bible study, arts and crafts and more. The space is used for organizations to have meetings there and it is also available for birthday parties and other special occasions. It remains a self-funded organization. Right before COVID, there were some young people working on getting a music program going at the center - they are hoping to resurrect plans for that soon.



SOUTH STREET BUSINESSES

South Street was once the center of Black enterprise with shops, businesses, clubs and lounges:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Ebony Hut | The Tropicana | DeDe's Lounge |
| House of Rhythm | Kojak's | Frank's Place |
| Ann's World | Wilson's Cleaners | Club Havana |

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2018

CAROL L. CROOMS CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CENTER



The Carol L. Crooms Cultural Activities Center (CLC) is a community safe haven encompassing the education and cultural enrichment that Carol L. Crooms dedicated her existence to for the City of Utica for over 60 years. In that time, Carol has been instrumental in the Utica Headstart program, the public school system and Utica Community Action. She pioneered the Mid York Library “Book Mobile” to bring books into the communities that did not have access to the library or books that were by or about people of color. Carol retired from SUNY College of Technology in 1990 as their Director of Activities and Housing after more than 17 years.

The CLC is an alcohol, smoke and drug free establishment. The CLC operates as an educational, recreational and health and wellness space as well as providing a meeting space which has primarily been used by the Black, African American, African, Latino and Urban communities of Utica.

The three story, 5,300 sq. ft. building has a full size commercial/catering kitchen, a large capacity event/banquet room, conference room as well as a space designated as a cafe area. This massive space has been serving the community and has been booked by various community groups, clubs and families for meetings, rehearsals, religious celebrations, cultural activities, sporting events, memorial services, birthday parties, baby showers and many more events. The CLC serves as a staging place for other organizations to meet and launch events and activities around the Greater Utica Area.

The CLC embodies a social enterprise concept. The owners plan to expand their mixed use facility to include not only housing cultural and community activities and programming, but expanding to include a small business incubator, and shared office space with basic administrative support.



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2000 & 2006

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DREAM PARK & THE REV. FRANKLIN J. UPTHEGROVE MEMORIAL HALL OF FAME

Planning began in 2000 for the park you see in front of you - Ed Jackson and others involved at the time in the Cornhill Community for Change organization planned and fundraised. The wall was built in partnership with the Mohawk Valley Construction Unit, the City of Utica completed the sidewalks and gazebo and grant assistance came from Oneida County which helped erect the archway and plaques. The park was dedicated on November 25, 2008 at a 2pm ceremony. The original mural was painted by Marques Phillips when he was in high school and the one you see today was painted by Jane Grace Taylor.

The park is also home to the Rev. Franklin J. Upthegrove Memorial Hall of Fame, established on May 25, 2006 to honor people who have made great contributions to the community. Hall of fame inductees have passed away, but have left behind a great legacy having contributed to community initiatives such as education, politics, culture, and religion. The Cornhill Community for Change hosts an annual event for the Hall of Fame.

Reverend Upthegrove served as pastor of St. Paul's Baptist Church in Utica, New York, from 1966 until his retirement in 1995. In the words of one observer: Reverend Upthegrove "spent countless hours working with different groups making sure the public was well represented in the decisions that were being made about them."