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Adult Category

Ramona Robbins Porter Newton was born in Lansing, Michigan, but has lived most of her life in Detroit, Michigan where she became a French and Spanish teacher. In her early years, she displayed an aptitude for art and writing. She wrote poems and essays for her high school paper and was given the art award when she graduated. In Detroit she took writing poetry seriously. She self-published a book of poems entitled *Soliloquy* and joined Dudley Randall's poetry club. Newton also was the ghostwriter for a friend's autobiography which has been published. As for her reasons for writing MOON DOGS II, she asks, how can a person love poetry and not love music just as well? They are so intertwined! In any case, she decided to express her admiration of Barry White and Sarah Vaughn. Barry's theatrical stage entries and presence attracted her and Sarah Vaughn's voice is truly divine. She doubts if they ever really sang together but decided to make it happen for her audience. Enjoy!

Sherlock Griffith. Born on the Caribbean Island of Barbados, Sherlock immigrated to the United States in 1972. He grew up in Ardmore, Pennsylvania and graduated from Lower Merion High school in Ardmore. A talented athlete during high school, he received various awards for his soccer and track and field prowess.

Sherlock now resides in Cherry Hill, New Jersey with his loving and supportive wife, Sheila Griffith (adjunct Professor), and owns two dogs Kacey Griffith (Bichon Frise) and Prince (Maltese). Sherlock has three sisters, Joanava, Sonja, Kaye and many nieces and nephews. Family and friends are important in his life; spending time with them is an inspiration.

Sherlock earned his B.A. and M.B.A from Eastern University and works for Merchants Insurance Group as the Local Branch Commercial Underwriting Supervisor. He has over 25 years working in the insurance industry in various capacities.

When not engaged in his professional pursuits, Sherlock enjoys writing poetry. He is expanding his collection of proverbs which he plans to have published in the near future. His article, "Psalm of Brotherhood," was published in the Philadelphia Inquirer's "Community

Voices” on January 20, 2002. Sherlock was the editor and publisher of his prior employer’s local branch newsletter, *Bearable News Grams*. For its final edition, he wrote and published a poetic tribute to victims of the September 11, 2001 bombing at the World Trade Center, entitled “Tribute to Those Whose Spirit Will Never Die.” His favorite books are uplifting and inspirational in content.

Joanava McDaniel. Joanava was the first of four children, born to Charles and Etheline Griffith in the Caribbean island of Barbados. She is the mother of one daughter, Shelley Johnson, and grandmother of five beautiful girls, aged eleven years to five months. After completing high school, she left the island in 1967, to study Nursing in England. In 1972 she graduated as a Registered Nurse from Middlesex Hospital, London, England. She is also a certified Midwife (certificate from Tercentenary School of Nursing, Barbados), a Public Health Nurse (certificate from West Indies School of Public Health, Jamaica, West Indies) and has other nursing credentials. In 1983 she resigned from her position as a Public Health Nurse with the Ministry of Health in Barbados and moved to the United States to pursue her spiritual goals and to join her mother (now deceased) and siblings.

Since arriving in the USA, Joanava has worked in various positions as a professional nurse, varying from private duty nurse to her current position, Clinical Support Specialist with Bayada Nurses, a national homecare organization. She is a member of The Royal Society for the Promotion of Health, England and a Fellow of the World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization. As an ordained minister in the Christian church, she has been an evangelist, director of a Bible institute, and missionary. Over the past decade, she worked as a missionary nurse, assisting in conducting health care clinics, and establishing schools and churches in the Caribbean island of Haiti. Her missionary nursing activities received acknowledgement by Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing and a summary was published in the 2004 issue of *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives-The Stories of Nurses*.

In 2000 she founded and currently presides over Project WORD Foundation, Inc., a non-profit missions-oriented organization, located in the state of Pennsylvania. She is completing a master’s degree in Theology, at the Palmer Theological Seminary, Pennsylvania, with a major in international missiology. In March 2006 she authored a book, *A Handbook for Missionaries*. Joan is continuously motivated by the greatest desire of her life, which is to offer help to her fellowmen, wherever and however possible, with a goal for their physical, emotional and spiritual wholeness.

Callistus Eluagu is a poet, a writer, actor, and director of African traditional comedy and drama. He was born in sub-Saharan Africa in Port Harcourt, Nigeria to Mr. and Mrs. Paulinus and Enwe Eluagu. An outstanding student in his high school days, he also was a skillful soccer player. In 1988 Callistus was admitted the University of UYO, Nigeria to study English. He graduated in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English (BA honors). He also received an honorary certificate as an actor and director from the university and a merit certificate from the National Youth Service in Nigeria.

His rare creativity, skill, and poetic artistry are manifested in his seven unpublished books. These he hopes to share with humanity and especially lovers of poetry, drama, and prose. His culture of writing is stylized. Callistus presently resides in Houston, Texas with his family.

Marie Henry enjoys writing, yoga, and cooking for family and friends. She published her first poetry book in March 2004. Her poem “I Want a President” was written in the spring of 1972 and received a “Golden Poet Award” in 1989 when a friend submitted it to a poetry contest. Marie has been writing poetry since the eighth grade. She lives a quiet and peaceful life today after retiring from the noble profession of teaching.

Valton DeJuan Jackson is completed his undergraduate studies at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. He is from Columbus, GA and is a Theatre Performance major and a double minor in Business and Dance. Valton was selected as the Homecoming King for 2005 and was also crowned as this year’s Black Student Union Pageant Prince. He is a highly involved student on campus, and is President of the Berea College Dance Team. Upon attaining his undergraduate degree, Valton plans to attend the Julliard School for the Performing Arts in New York City, then pursue a long-lasting career in professional entertainment on both stage and screen. Valton thoroughly enjoys all forms of the arts and self expression, and also cherishes his family and faith with lots of love and importance. When not attending school in Kentucky, Valton resides in Columbus, GA with his mother and little brother Devin.

Kevin A. Stewart was born at Crozer Hospital, Chester, Pennsylvania in 1981. The first seven years of his life were spent living in Brookhaven, Pennsylvania. His family then moved to Sicklerville, New Jersey in 1988, which he still calls home. He started to write poetry his freshman year of high school.

Kevin always writes based on his feelings and what he sees happening around him. Poetry is his place, other than sports, for self-expression. Poetry is his utopia because of the many places it takes him, the images that it shows him, and the ability it gives him to share his thoughts with all people. His writing in high school has helped him later in life, aiding his communication and analytical skills beyond writing on paper. Kevin is a proud 2004 graduate from the University of Delaware, from which he earned his Bachelor of Science degree. Currently, he is a Performance Coach at Velocity Sports Performance.

Angela Young-Richie was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She grew up in a loving extended family that valued hard work, education and self-expression. She was educated in the Philadelphia public school system. In 1974 Angela was a member of the first graduating class of University City High School, at that time Philadelphia’s premiere high school. There her growing interest in creative writing and academics was well nurtured.

A strong interest in writing and working with children was combined in Angela’s successful college years. In 1978 she graduated magna cum laude from Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. She received a Bachelor of Social Welfare Degree. Three days after graduation Angela began her professional career as a child-life therapist at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). While at CHOP she also took a position as administrative assistant in the Planning and Development Department.

Angela worked at CHOP for five years. During that time she married Curtis Richie, a friend since seventh grade. Angela remained at CHOP until the birth of her first child. Motherhood presented a new element of self-expression. A passion to write children’s literature was also born.

Creative writing has been a continued interest while still working in social services and education. Angela is currently employed by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit as a

vocational evaluator, assessing vocational interests and abilities of special needs high school students.

Angela's writing endeavors have included: author of *ONCE UPON A FUTURE—Tales from the New World*, self-published in 2002, ISBN 0-595-25028-9; author of three children's short stories and novelty books provided as accompaniments to hand-crafted multicultural dolls for Coffeetots, Inc.; author of two manuscripts for children's books, *THE JOURNEY OF JAMAL JACOB JONES* and *GILBERT G. GILLIANS SICK BED*; consultant for Rose Metzger Fine Arts Company of Philadelphia, PA; developed brochure for a National Adoption Center conference; and writing for various employers' newsletters.

Youth, 12-18 Category

Cierra M. Robinson has been writing since she was in 7th grade. She says it's funny though because her love for this art started backwards. She used to dread writing. When the teacher said, "ESSAY!" — she sighed with the rest of the students. But now her pen hits the paper before the prompt is passed out.

Cierra began spoken word or performance poetry in the 10th grade. When she went to her first poetry slam she was shocked. She didn't understand the power of the human language just yet. From then on her writing evolved and would never quit. She is now 17 years old in the 11th grade. In the last week of April 2006, she and five other poets represented Ft. Lauderdale, Florida in a national youth poetry slam in New York City: Brave New Voices alongside 41 other cities. The youth are definitely speaking.

Motivation is released from the world's motion if people suddenly stop. Cierra sometimes wonders if she will stop too. She writes because the thoughts within her mind are colossal, like New York City buildings. If she waits too long they'd all come tumbling down and it wouldn't be a pretty sight. It is her birthright, her love, and her passion. Without words she'd have no idea where her life would be so she intends to write even when she's breathless. Not only does Cierra write but also she enjoys photography and drawing. She plans to major in journalism and forever keep the pen moving.

Brandi L. Hargette. A talented young writer, Brandi L. Hargette lives in Charlotte, North Carolina. Also fleet on foot, she is a dedicated member of her high school track and field team.