

ONE-ON-ONE WITH JULIEANNA RICHARDSON A TRUE HISTORY MAKER

by Keisha Chavers

To understand the present, one must know your past. To live for the future, one must recognize the present, and that's what **Julieanna Richardson** is accomplishing as founder and executive director of **The HistoryMakers**.

A Brandeis and Harvard University grad, **Richardson** has taken her diverse background in corporate law, television production and cable television and packaged it into a soon-to-be 5,000 video oral history archive, representing the single largest archival showcase of individual African Americans across a variety of disciplines. "I didn't have children, and I really wanted to leave a legacy. I want this (**The HistoryMakers**) to be in Black hands and shared with the world," stated **Richardson**, who also established the City of Chicago's Cable Commission.

The HistoryMakers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit institution committed to "educating and providing living proof that African American history did not begin or end

with the Civil Rights Movement, but that **The HistoryMakers** number in the thousands, and that their names are not just Harriet Tubman, W. E. B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr., Sojourner Truth, or Ella Fitzgerald."

One motivating factor behind **The HistoryMakers** is **Julieanna Richardson** the success of the Shoah Foundation, under the guidance of Steven Spielberg. The Shoah Foundation recorded 5,000 Holocaust survivors, centering on the need to record their stories before they died, and their history died with them. The Foundation's mission has been woven into the goal of **The HistoryMakers**, and that's why **Richardson** expresses



a great affinity for interviewing some of our 90-year old icons, such as legendary choreographer, Katherine Dunham, photographer, Gordon Parks, Alonzo Petty, the oldest living Black cowboy, members of the Negro Baseball League and Pullman Porters, as well as the midwives of the South; to capture their place in history, in their own words.

Richardson acknowledged the support of Mike Hall (a former executive with Leo Burnett) and credits State Senator Emil Jones, Jr. and John Rogers, Jr., chairman & CEO of Ariel Capital Management for making **The HistoryMakers** a reality. She also

gives gold stars to Susan Taylor of **Essence** magazine, Earl Graves, CEO of **Black Enterprise** magazine and Clarence Avant, former chairman of Motown, for submitting letters of support in order for her to secure interviews with such notables as Ossie Davis and Maya Angelou.

Through referrals, a network of scholar consultants and delegating interviewing duties, **Richardson** has met the challenge of archiving 5,000 oral histories. "You have no idea what gives me the greatest joy. It's talking to people and hearing their stories. I'm learning every single day. Black people have nothing to be embarrassed about or ashamed about. We have a very rich legacy." Keep the legacy alive, the "true **HistoryMaker**," **Julieanna Richardson**.

Visit The HistoryMakers website:
www.thehistorymakers.com

Cory Simmons, 25, and his companion, Dominique Mapp, 21, were involved in a hair-raising, 30-minute chase by four off-duty sheriffs. Rounds of ammunition were discharged at the horrified couple. Crane admits the foursome withheld information and lied regarding the aspects of the police chase. However, Crane rationalized the acquittal of the rogue sheriffs by exclaiming in court during the bench trial that he couldn't be "convinced that they didn't think shots were being fired at them."

An acquaintance of the couple dismisses any contention that the

young man in question would fire a gun. "He is a very straight and narrow guy," she said on the condition of anonymity. She went on, "No one believes he would ever shoot at a police officer or a car full of drunken White men."

Longtime, West Side political activist, Richard Barnett, is joining a legion of community activists, elected officials and grassroots community-based organizations spearheading an anti-Crane movement that will vote him off the bench in the November general election. As of this writing, Rush was going for 100,000 signatures

on petitions to dump Crane in the November 5th general election.

Other leaders addressing this misconduct included Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., who met with Sheriff Michael Sheahan in a closed-door session, and Rev. Paul Jakes, who led a protest of about 100 outside the Criminal Court building at 26th and California.

Programs on WVON 1450AM, as well as talk shows throughout the city, were abuzz about the decision. At WVON, callers were restless and were calling for all Cook County residents to become more aware of

high-profile judicial decisions. The "Morning Miracle," Cliff Kelley, says that the "Bozo 5" (Crane and the four defendants), have raised the ire of the Black community. "Considering the facts as we know them, and the judge's own decision to exonerate four Bozos is inconsistent with the facts, his commitments and the fair system of justice," said Kelley. Kelley also noted that the failure to allow a 911 tape to be used as evidence during the bench trial was unacceptable. "When you hear Lanigan saying, 'Kill them, kill them,' the charges of attempted are serious."
