

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

LAST SAY SO HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

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“I AM
DELIBERATE AND
AFRAID OF
NOTHING.”

AUDRE LORDE

RESILIENT

PHOTO MEMORIES FROM 2010

THE QUEEN OF SOUL COMES TO YALE

Yale honored Ms. Franklin with an honorary Doctorate of Music at its 2010 Commencement. I was fortunate to meet her. She truly is one of the best.

WHOOPI SPEAKS AT A MASTER'S TEA

Ms. Goldberg accepted an invitation to give a talk at one of Yale's residential colleges. She is a delightful and gracious person. Here I am in a photo with her following the talk.

JETS' QUARTERBACK, SANCHEZ, AT YALE

Mark Sanchez' brother, Nick, played quarterback at Yale. Nick is an active Yale alum, and at the invitation of one of our Deans, Nick was able to convince his brother, Mark, to join him at Yale to give a talk. I attended the event and met Nick and Mark.



With Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin



With Whoopi Goldberg

Jets' QB Mark Sanchez

“Beauty am I, Spirit am I,
I, I am the Infinite
within my soul, I can
find no beginning, I can
find no end, All this I
am.”





Having dinner with NBC Sportscaster, Bob Costas



ABC News' Ron Claiborne

Happy Holidays and seasons greetings from Hamden, Connecticut. I hope that your family, loved ones, and you are well.

I began writing this letter late one Sunday evening, during the first few days of December, from the comforts of my home. Somehow, I sensed that something was happening outside. When I looked out my window, it was snowing, and the ground was covered. It was quite beautiful to observe. I don't enjoy snow all that much, because growing up in the south, snow often created a driving nuisance. As my southern family and friends know, it might snow one day, and the next day, the snow has melted just enough to create an icy road and treacherous driving conditions. In New England, driving never has posed much of a problem for me--snow trucks are everywhere. By the time I leave to and from work each day, the roads have been cleared, making it safer to get to my destination. I've lived in New England since 1999, and I have to admit that I've now grown accustomed to the cold and to snow--a little snow a few times a year is okay with me. I've learned to adapt.

This year, I've really been thinking about all the ways that we humans have to adapt and adjust to our ever-changing conditions. Our personal and professional lives often are lived at a breakneck pace. At work, our job responsibilities might have changed, causing us to work longer hours. We also might have moved on from a job and accepted a position elsewhere, or have lost our jobs altogether and are searching for another position. At home, our children might be yearning to become more independent, yet we might not be ready to let them grow up so quickly. We watch as our family, friends, and ourselves grow older and experience aches, pains, and illnesses. The inevitability of our mortality becomes more real, yet we learn to adapt to our situation as best we can. The longer I live, the more I realize just how resilient we are. Though we become weary, we find the strength to keep pressing on. It is in this spirit of resilience, perseverance, and pressing on that I write this year's holiday newsletter. I invite you to read on--at your own pace. WMG

“Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it's the only one you have.”

Philosopher Emile Chartier

"OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING BUT IN RISING EVERY TIME WE FALL." Confucius

I am in my fourth year at Yale. This year has been a pivotal year for me professionally, because it is my contract and performance review year. Most senior level administrators at Yale have either a three or five year contract. During the penultimate year (the year before the contract ends), the Dean of Yale College selects a committee whose responsibility it is to conduct a campus-wide evaluation of the person under review. My

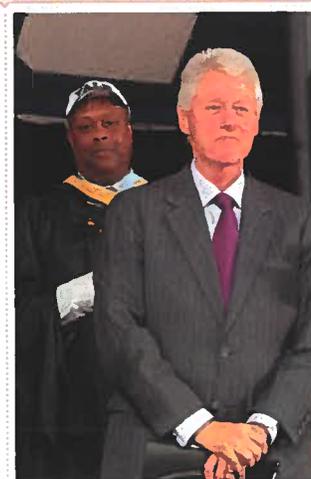
colleagues either submit a written or verbal evaluation of my work to the committee, and I, too, am asked to assess my own performance. It's a daunting process, yet we all have to endure it. It ensures a high level of performance, and it gives the person under review a chance to make people aware of his/her accomplishments. I met with the committee to hear their findings a few weeks ago. The meeting went quite well. I now will meet with the Dean of Yale

College, who will give the official feedback. I don't sense any concerns with my performance, but I still remain cautious until I know that I've been renewed for another term.

I've especially enjoyed this past year, despite the added responsibilities. I hired five new colleagues to fill various roles, and it has been rewarding to train and mentor them. One of my new hires is twenty-three years younger than I. Because I have to give him a bit more



With writer, poet, activist, and educator, Nikki Giovanni



Mr. Clinton at Class Day



direction and supervision than my older staff members, I feel like a father figure to him in many ways. This younger generation is very talented, though, and I learn so much from them. We need to continue encouraging and guiding them.

Due to my increased responsibilities in the office, this summer I didn't get a chance to take much vacation. I did, nonetheless, enjoy the company of a few visitors who stopped by over the course of the year.

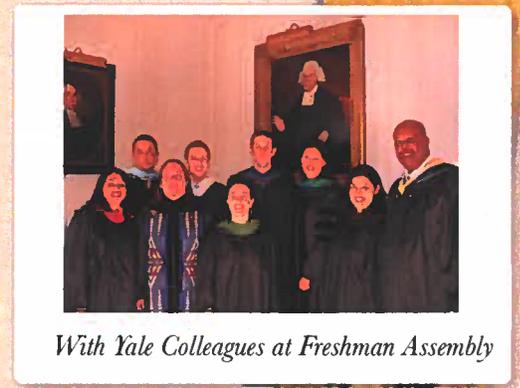
My North Carolina brother in Christ and friend, Marlon West, stopped by for a few days, as did my Vermont friend, Francois Clemmons, who drove four hours from Middlebury to New Haven to attend a fabulous dinner party at the home of one of my colleagues, Ryan Bamford, a senior associate director of athletics. It was one of those dinner parties in which the good humored conversation kept us

laughing so hard that our stomachs hurt.

During Marlon's visit, we took the train to see the Broadway musical, *Fela*, the recipient of several Tony Awards this past year. It was a well-done production.

A few months later, I attended a reception following a theatrical production held at the Yale Repertory Theatre. I was introduced to a woman and was told that she was a producer. Curious to learn more about her, I asked her what she had produced. She asked if I'd heard of the musical, *Fela*. To her utter satisfaction, I told her not only had I heard of it, I had attended and thoroughly enjoyed it. It was purely coincidental that I would meet one of the producers of such an acclaimed Broadway musical (Will and Jada Pinkett-Smith and Jay-Z also co-produced *Fela*).

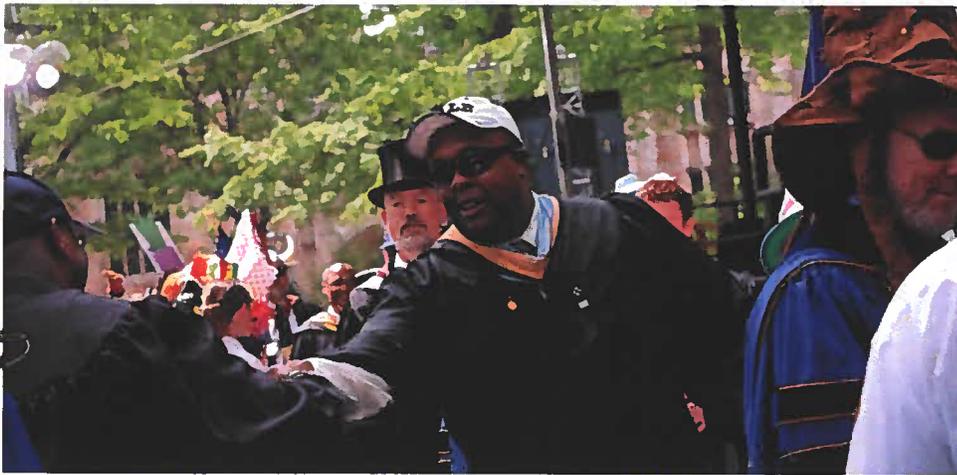
I also was able to return to



With Yale Colleagues at Freshman Assembly

“Ring the bells that still can ring, forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything; that’s how the light gets in.”

From the Leonard Cohen song, “Anthem”



Congratulating a graduating student at Yale's Class Day



Taylor and O'Brien



Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina (the first time in four years) to visit my friends, Mark, Maggie, and their three children, Hope, Jenkins, and Max Peeler. It was a relaxing visit, and I enjoyed hanging out with them. While I was at the beach, I spent time researching a speech that I recently gave in Mexico City, and yes, I did some writing on the *mysterious* novel about which I've spoken in the past. Last time I wrote to you, I'd written eight chapters. Though I don't get much time to write, I now have written twelve chapters. I'm slowly making progress, and I look forward to sharing it with you one day.

A former Sewanee basketball teammate and friend, Steve Kretsch, also stopped by, and we were able to visit for a few hours. He is an

executive for a shipping company, which is now based in Holland, though it still has an office in Connecticut. Steve moved his family to Holland when the company relocated, but his responsibilities allow him to return to the US from time to time, and also gives him an opportunity to visit his twin daughters who are studying in California, one at Pomona College, and the other at Harvey Mudd College.

My friend, mentor, and former Middlebury College boss, Ann Hanson, spent the weekend with me a few weeks ago. The featured activity of Ann's first night in New Haven included eating a delicious meal at her favorite restaurant, Carmen Anthony. The following day, we traveled to NYC and saw a

“Those who are not looking for happiness are the most likely to find it, because those who are searching forget that the surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

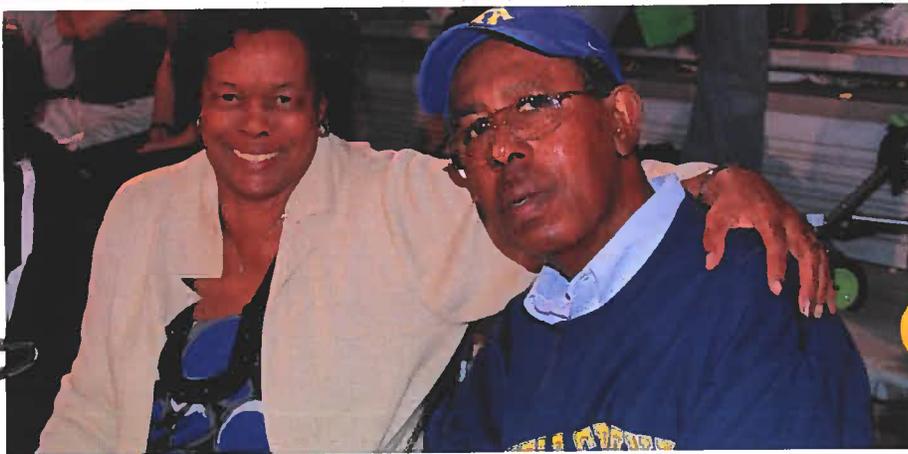
“MANKIND NEVER HAS MADE ANYTHING AS RESILIENT AS THE HUMAN SPIRIT.” Bern Williams

moving performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Having the opportunity to attend an Alvin Ailey performance this year meant a lot to me. Judith Jamison, perhaps the most famous of all Alvin Ailey dancers, and who took over as the company’s artistic director when Mr. Ailey died, plans to retire this year. Since 1989, Ms. Jamison has preserved the artistic vision that Mr. Ailey imagined when he created this unique dance company.

I also have really enjoyed returning home to Tennessee and visiting with my family and friends. My parents, now retired, are facing some health issues. Their faith in God is as strong as ever, and they remain resilient and in good spirits. My brother, Terry and his wife, Amy, are doing well. Terry is one of the chief administrators at his company, and Amy owns a successful childcare center, called, *Be a Sport*.

My nephews, Taylor (17) and O’Brien (9 3/4) are growing to be fine gentlemen. They work hard in the classroom, are good athletes, and are well-rounded and grounded young men. When I’ve gone home, I’ve been able to attend some of their sporting events. They have lots of family and friends at their games cheering them on.

As a proud uncle, I am pleased to report that Taylor, a junior at Battle Ground Academy, has received several



Mom and Dad at BGA Football Game



*Nobel Peace Prize Recipient
Rajendra Pachauri, Mexico City*



letters from various colleges and universities who are interested in him as a student/athlete. O'Brien, a fourth grader, joined Cub Scouts this year. He's also in the chorus at his school. O'Brien loves animals, and he cares for his dog, Benny, and his three pet frogs. He once had some crabs as pets, but they recently died. He fed them regularly, but he might not have realized that they were thirsty, too. 😊

One of my favorite yearly activities is attending at least one drum corps competition somewhere in the US. For the past three years, I have attended a competition that takes place in Allentown, Pennsylvania, a three hour drive from New Haven. For two days, I get to see and hear some of the world's best young musicians who play complex music themed for a visual show which takes place on a football field. Many people

confuse drum corps with the movie, *Drumline*, but it is not the same. Drum corps is like watching a Broadway musical performed on a football field.

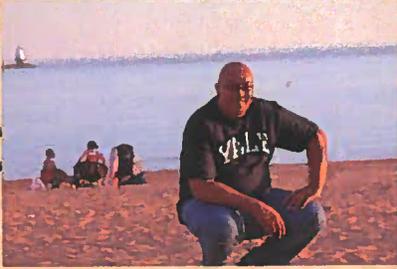
In August, I was in TN for a few days, and there happened to be a competition taking place in Murfreesboro, my brother's hometown. I persuaded my brother and his family to join me in the "lot" to watch the corps warm up before they took to the field for competition. It was fun, particularly, to watch my nephews' reaction to what they were seeing. I appreciated their willingness to experience something new, and to agree to join me at an activity that has, for years, meant a lot to me.

Finally, I've lived in Chatterton Woods a little more than a year now. Having my own home has made a positive difference in my life. Maintaining a home is constant work, but it feels good to leave

the office after a difficult day to return to a comfortable home. I live about twenty minutes from work, so when I leave my office, I am able to get some healthy distance from my job. My staff and other colleagues have come for dinner, and it's been fun hosting large events in my house. I've also developed some really good relationships with the neighbors on my street. Oliver and Aeden (spelled that way), the sons of one of my neighbors, volunteered to collect my mail and keep watch over my house when I'm away. Their parents, Margie and Glenn, wisely supervise their work. I am fortunate to have such caring neighbors.

That's all for this edition of the Last Say So Holiday Newsletter. As always, may God bless you richly, and may the joy of the season give peace to your heart. With love, WMG

Photo Memories from 2010



“How do we begin to come into ourselves fully, in all our perfectly imperfect glory? By letting go of who we thought we had to be, to make way for who we might become.”

Oprah Winfrey

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

FROM TOP LEFT:

Marlon, Max, Jenkins, and Hope, Yale Colleagues, Mark, Marichal and John, Terry, Taylor, O'Brien, and Greg, The Peeler's

